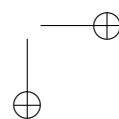
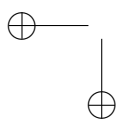
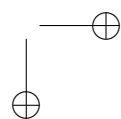
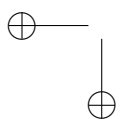
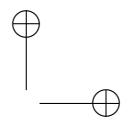
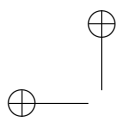
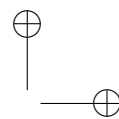
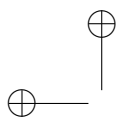


**DAY OF FIRE**



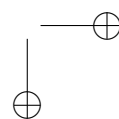
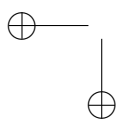


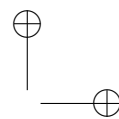
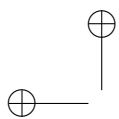


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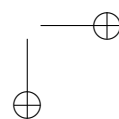
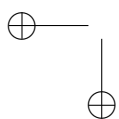
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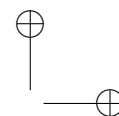
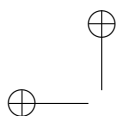
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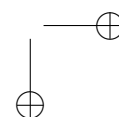
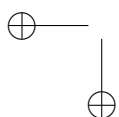
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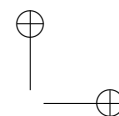
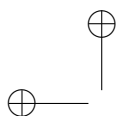




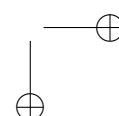
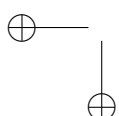
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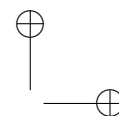
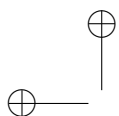
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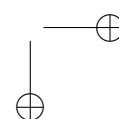
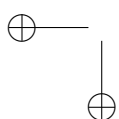


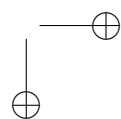
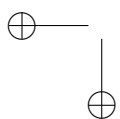
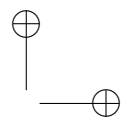
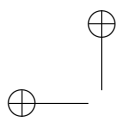
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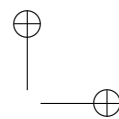
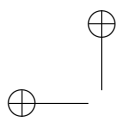
The author makes his grateful acknowledgments to the editors of the New York *Herald-Tribune*, the *Providence Journal*, the *Saturday Review of Literature, Promenade*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Pontefract*, and the *Yale Review* for permission to reprint many of the verses in this volume.

L.B.

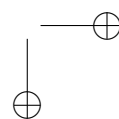
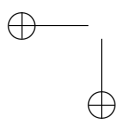
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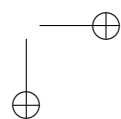
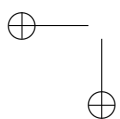
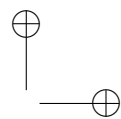
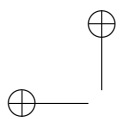


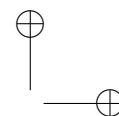
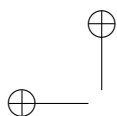




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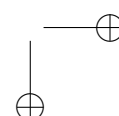
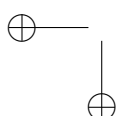


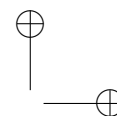
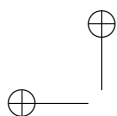




## DAY OF FIRE

This is the day of fire when much can burn,  
Whatever the day had, sufficient to it.  
That which was stable crumbles. That which was crumbling  
Has vanished in ash. Have you noticed any phoenixes  
Nurtured in the flame? the gold and scarlet coverts?  
Or the white incandescence of a divine  
Resurgent creature? That's but the dream of poets,  
Escapers from realities, which have wings  
And seek out quiet places, quiet no more.  
This is the day of fire. The yellows and reds  
Darken declining light of the sun turning south.  
We move, as the dreamer said, through the strange heart  
Of a gigantic jewel. Above us the roar  
Comes through autumnal silence, terror and music  
Men hear in the European twilight.





## THE CHILDREN

After our long and not too splendid proem,  
After the ghastly night,  
Dear children, you are going to write the poem  
We could not write.

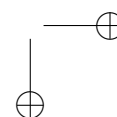
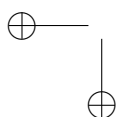
There will be in it dogwood never lost  
For all the ill we did,  
White shoals of music in seas by us uncrossed,  
Our future hid.

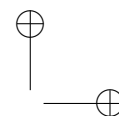
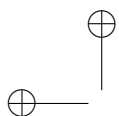
You will declare these things to who come after,  
Past even your presaging,  
Who will, perhaps, not understand your laughter  
More than our raging.

Yet do not mock us. We are the mad, whose madness  
Loosed what was not desired  
By us, who now must disappear in sadness,  
Embittered, tired,

Though, in our failure, never at all forgetting  
What it is that endures,  
We, by prevision, while our sun was setting,  
Imagined yours,

And so are not so utterly defeated  
As it, perhaps, might seem  
To them, who, on the thrones we dreamed of, seated,  
Shall live our dream.



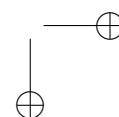
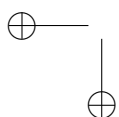


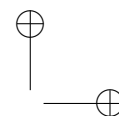
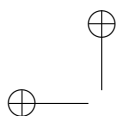
## MEN AND POETRY

Men write poetry,  
If they can.  
Poetry! Poetry!  
What a thing is man,  
Dreaming, scheming,  
In the gloom or in the gleaming,  
To find redeeming  
In a line's thin span!

'A cry that echoes,  
An echo that cries,'  
Takes him, wakes him  
To Paradise.  
The strong verse, thundering  
Through the brain blundering,  
Sets him wondering,  
Unseals his eyes.

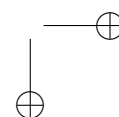
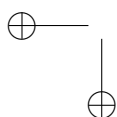
Wars bellow round him.  
They will blow by  
And be forgotten  
Before the cry  
Of a voice lifted  
Over the rifted  
Desert, sand-drifted,  
Where the bones are dry.

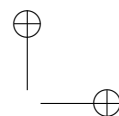
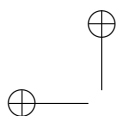




## THE PACIFIST

In the green and gracious wood  
    It is too hard to believe  
For what burning and blood  
    Other men grieve,  
For whom no light divine  
    Can have much meaning  
In the face of fact malign  
    And overweening.  
Do they know better than I,  
    Understand and know,  
For whom this wood is a lie,  
    This green not so?  
They must cower and hide,  
    Unchancy and unsound,  
Quaking, terrified,  
    On quaking ground.  
All that rage unclean  
    Is far away  
From the quiet and the green.  
    Do I know better than they?





## EVIL DAYS

The field constricts,  
The view narrows.  
Poor Hope conflicts  
With the slings and arrows.

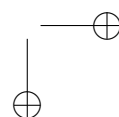
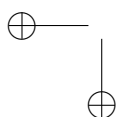
The storm rises  
And overtakes.  
The squall surprises,  
The wave breaks.

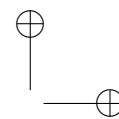
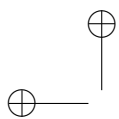
Ours is no light  
And healthy mood.  
Old griefs bite.  
Sick thoughts intrude.

What we did ill  
Is written plain,  
Against our will,  
Across the brain.

What we did well  
Can play no part  
In the strange Hell  
Of the strange heart,

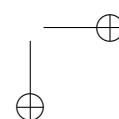
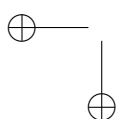
To itself a stranger,  
Staring with dim  
Eyes at danger  
Beyond the rim

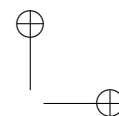
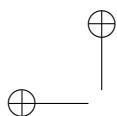




That all things known  
Obscurely girds  
And will not own  
The rule of words.

Though Hell unchain  
The cataract,  
Never complain!  
Act! Act! Act!





## THE BULWARKS BREAK

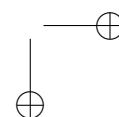
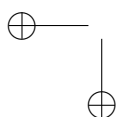
Now all the bulwarks sunder  
That stood so strong before.  
We and our kind go under  
The slow wave of war.

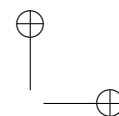
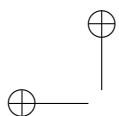
We shall not judge all matters  
Henceforward from afar.  
For now disaster batters  
At all we were and are.

The instant of decision  
Too openly has shown  
The dullness of our vision,  
Our thought's dim monotone.

The scheme of things that fitted  
Some pattern that we knew  
Now proves device half-witted,  
Which we ourselves see through.

What if our every blunder  
Show clear in ghastly light?  
Though all the bulwarks sunder,  
Now look alive and fight!

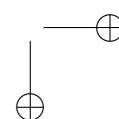
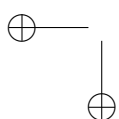


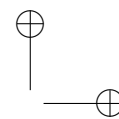
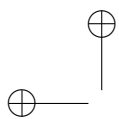


## PLEASURE

The only pleasure is in manly things.  
This may be best discovered in defeat,  
That takes away the gust in drink and meat,  
Trammels the flying foot and clips the wings,  
That shuts the singer's lips, and quite unstrings  
The harp that tingled lightly. Nay, the heat  
And burden give it better than the beat  
Of music where the bright dance dips and swings.

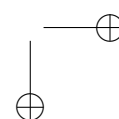
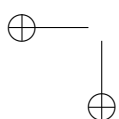
The only pleasure! I shall taste it yet,  
Who have shunned it, as it were the burning pest,  
Seeking like an idiot an imagined zest  
To brighten boredom, when on every hand  
Lay that which I had managed to forget,  
Or what, till late, I did not understand.

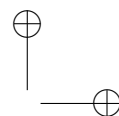
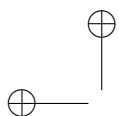




## THE REASON

The reason why our work is brittle  
And shatters at the slightest touch?  
We think so much about so little  
And think so little of so much.

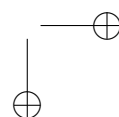
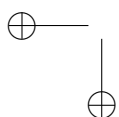


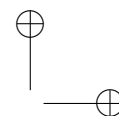
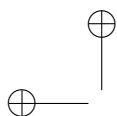


## FIRST FLIGHT

Just on the razor-edge of March, a moth  
Flew in my wood, because an undertone  
Echoed once more from ancient and unknown  
Lepidopterous Baalim and Ashtaroth.  
Dominations, to whose will one cuts one's cloth,  
Commanded in that manner all their own:  
'Up! try the wing that never has been flown,  
Fly forth, our servant, lest your Gods be wroth.'

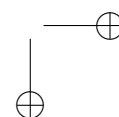
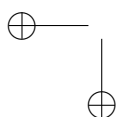
Echo of an echo! What is instinct else,  
Leading like Ariel's music to some fate  
We cannot understand or expiate?  
What wire, to what obscure harmonic, twangs  
Through the mind where thought solidifies or melts,  
While a moth in the headlight glare his second hangs?

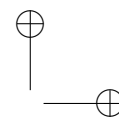
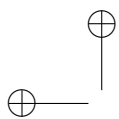




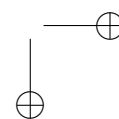
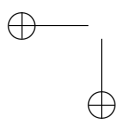
### AIRPLANE SPOTTER — FEBRUARY NIGHT

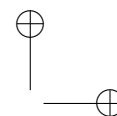
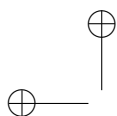
It was so still, lacking  
All sound. Then I heard beyond  
‘Pure silence’ the ice cracking  
In Tucket’s Pond,  
Half a mile off, odd battery  
On the unaccustomed ear,  
Rich with unchancy flattery,  
Saying: So you might hear  
Some harsh, gross noise unknown,  
Sharp fear nothing can blunt,  
Mechanic, far-off drone  
Of a wild hunt,  
Hateful, a ghastly torrent,  
Begetting dread confused,  
Unspeakable, abhorrent,  
‘To darkness used.’  
Silence in the night!  
The ‘cello boom from the lake!  
Wintrily thrilling, despite  
Whatever may stand or break.  
There once in times secure  
That like all times must pass  
I brought to the glistening lure  
The green-brown bass,  
Saw the azalea draw  
Her veil milk-white.





Nor was that all I saw  
In the summer light.  
Things not to be lost  
As never wholly won,  
Not to be chilled by frost,  
Nor blistered by the sun,  
Things that are always there,  
Not remembered like griefs,  
Not laid aside like care,  
Not denied like beliefs.  
And those things venture back  
Though men despond,  
Who hear the black ice crack  
In Tucker's Pond.





## PILOTS OF 1942

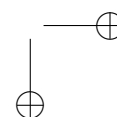
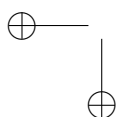
All the day long I hear their far bleak thunder  
Overt ous woods, 'sonorous metal' ringing,  
And wonder in my soul if the young men wonder  
What this year's bringing.

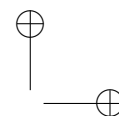
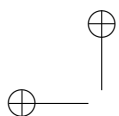
Youth's intranslatable. To understand them  
Is what we have forgotten. But understood  
Or not, they hasten as the fates command them  
Over our wood.

Hurling through Heaven, where is their fancy ranging?  
Tennis they played once? Girls at a post dance?  
Uncharted landscapes underneath them changing?  
Iceland or France?

Trout in a pool rising with indolent motion  
Under dark banks white drifts of laurel veil?  
Or what's to do over some sky-wide ocean  
Where a steel whale

Breaches from the blue at dusk? What do they think of,  
The valiant, the effective, the young, the proud?  
This much we know: They'll take the cup they'll drink of,  
As now, uncowed.

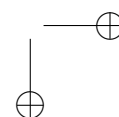
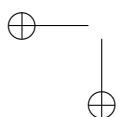


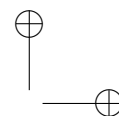
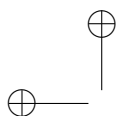


### WHAT OUR ENEMIES IGNORE

By force or indirection,  
    In ignorance unchecked,  
They seek their own subjection,  
    Who labor to subject.

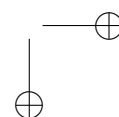
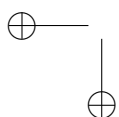
To the Huns and those who lead 'em  
    This never has been known:  
Only in others' freedom  
    Can nations find their own.

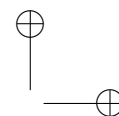
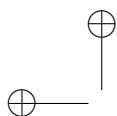




## HIGH SUMMER

There is no escape  
From the swamp honeysuckle and wild grape.  
Whatever powers may daunt you,  
Those splay leaves and witch'd odors still will haunt you.  
Forgotten, they endure in the unknown,  
Fragile, concealed, outlasting marble-stone.  
Though labor and anxiety obsess,  
The ghostly wilderness  
Still lurks behind,  
Biding its time to overtake the mind.  
And men troubled by penitence or grief  
Find out the lost divine in fragrance or a leaf.





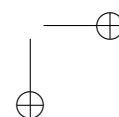
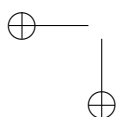
## DOWN HILL

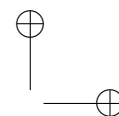
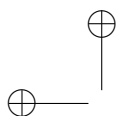
Consider now the old and vulgar man  
Descending slowly and without much dignity  
Where the expressionless dumb shadows scan  
His coming with malignity.

Of old they knew him, reckoned his pretences,  
And felt that they would catch him unaware,  
The slave of his false thought and falser senses,  
For all his anxious care.

Oh, he had always put up a brave front,  
Spoken out at times and made some show of learning.  
Nay, feigned a thing like wisdom, loosed a hunt  
After a daydream burning,

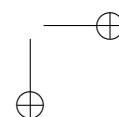
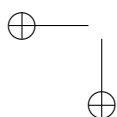
Mere marsh gas of the mind. Now the man's tired,  
Stumbles, and halts. Weariness manifold  
Oppresses him. And the skies myriad-fired  
Seem far, unkind, and cold.

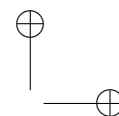
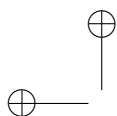




## THE PLACE OF ECHOES

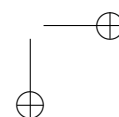
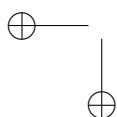
There's a name in the Bible (Anathoth, I thought,  
But memory tricked me), which, interpreted,  
Means 'Place of Echoes.' There a tall crag wrought  
Reverberation of the voice or tread.  
And sound came back tenfold, then fell off, dwindling  
Into tense silence, while some prophet dreamed  
Of living chariot-wheels and huge eyes kindling  
In Heaven over Israel redeemed.  
The Place of Echoes! How the tag takes the mind!  
Every word we hear or utter, nothing more  
Than echo – echo of no subtle kind.  
It might not be un wisdom to explore  
The Place of Echoes where shades of sounds combine  
In thoughts you and I think are yours and mine.

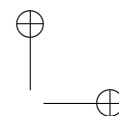
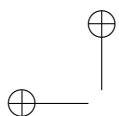




### YANKEE CLIPPER

We're making sail on the yankee clipper.  
Blow! Blow! Blow the Man down!  
Though the gale that's rising is a white eyed ripper.  
Blow! Blow! Blow the Man down!  
It's a living gale, but we're making sail,  
For we've sighted Moby Dick the whale,  
Sighted him over the combers booming  
On the far horizon fuming and spuming,  
Seen his flukes on the skyline flailing,  
And we'll make him sorry we took up whaling.  
About we come, to the windward reaching,  
Away to the place where we saw him breaching,  
Heaving up from the deep profound.  
And we're going to hit him before he can sound.  
For we have conned and learned the part,  
And we'll sock it to him with the bright long dart.  
Nantucket, New Bedford! Be not afeared  
Of such a whale as never was speared.  
Deep though he sound, we know his path  
And the iron shall smite him beyond cape wrath.  
High though he breach, we'll do him under,  
For all he may wallow and batter and thunder.  
And we'll eat our chowder in New Bedford town.  
Blow! Blow! Blow the Man down!





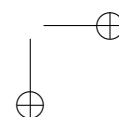
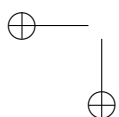
## LABRADOR

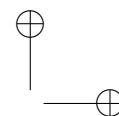
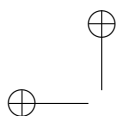
Now the wild geese, high-hanging  
In the ungenerous sky,  
Have heard a fiercer clanging  
Than the clear mating cry

And sheer far off in panic  
Toward Labrador the lone  
From wedges more titanic  
Than any they have known.

Grant to their wings the power  
And will to take them through.  
So to us in this hour  
The will and power too,

For we, mid rage and rumor  
And wasting of the wars,  
Along with sense and humor  
Must keep our Labradors.



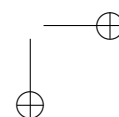
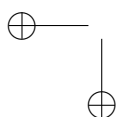


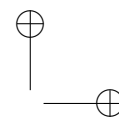
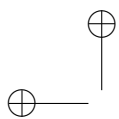
## IN MEMORIAM

I never liked what he believed,  
Or trusted what he trusted to,  
Or saw what he perhaps perceived,  
While what I know he never knew.  
His hopes were sterile and fell through.  
Men mocked at what he thought or said,  
But that means little in my view –  
Because my friend Jack Wheelwright's dead.

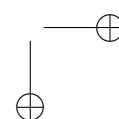
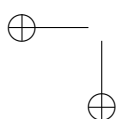
New England twisted and askew,  
Wild heart and maggots in the head,  
Consorting with a cock-eyed crew  
Ultra-violet or infra-red.  
All this, at half a glance, was clear  
To the well balanced or well bred,  
But is cold comfort now and here,  
Because my friend Jack Wheelwright's dead.

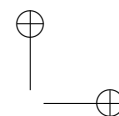
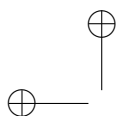
Reality was not for him.  
Intangibilities of faith  
Dragged into conflict great and grim  
That affable familiar wraith.  
Gulled by his own intelligence,  
Two thirds a genius, half a bore,  
He never knew in any sense  
What there was so much shooting for.





The sort of thing he said to me  
I lacked the wit to comprehend,  
Except it always seemed to be  
Mad metaphysics in the end.  
Always inspired and always wrong,  
He's gone, and rarity has fled  
With wayward thought and wingless song,  
Because my friend Jack Wheelwright's dead.





### POET, NEW STYLE

Secret our ritual,  
Lonely our road.  
Who fathoms our habitual  
Rhythm and code?

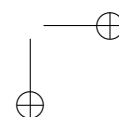
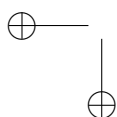
Who by what art shall pierce  
To the heart of our enigma?  
Feel in his hands our fierce  
And novel stigma?

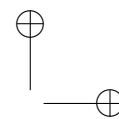
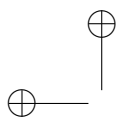
Before the Gods we burn  
On solitary pyres,  
So far that few discern,  
So dim that none desires.

We have left the day,  
Yet fear the night.  
Clearness has fled away,  
Sense dropped from sight.

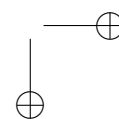
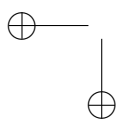
It is strange bronze we smelt.  
Wild metal was alloyed.  
By spectral heat we felt  
Vibrating through the void.

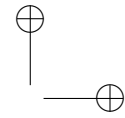
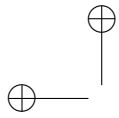
Our pleasure and distress  
Mean nothing in the street.  
If we know the emptiness,  
So too we know the heat





Across the abysm stealing,  
Piercing us through and through,  
Invisible, revealing  
As lightnings Homer knew.





## **TROUBLE OF MIND**

Trouble of mind! It harried  
The spirit of John Donne  
For a dream miscarried,  
Some strife not won.

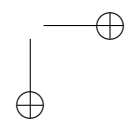
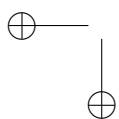
Yet the white wings are hovering  
In the great gleam  
Of some strong discovering  
Better than dream,

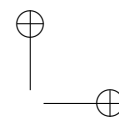
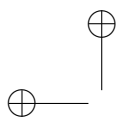
Where powers and principalities  
Give light and glow  
Among bright realities  
No dream can know.

Age, change, that brightness dying,  
Truth, short of breath,  
Have meaning, and sweet life crying  
Against oblivious death

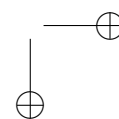
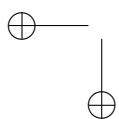
Takes on the positive,  
Affirms, asserts,  
And has 'more zest to live  
The more it hurts.'

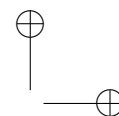
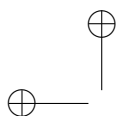
For the slow cowardice  
Of time adrift  
Always possesses this  
In its strange gift,





That from the planet waning  
We learn what light we lacked  
And know, through twilight straining,  
The spirit of the fact.



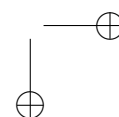
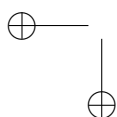


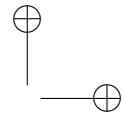
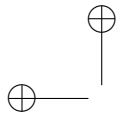
## O MOTHER DEAR JERUSALEM

O little man of little sins  
And little griefs and fears,  
How will you stand when Peace begins  
Her beautiful bright years?  
Safe in that New Jerusalem  
For which your soul is fit?  
Thinking from time to time of them  
Who died redeeming it?

Right through the streets with silver sound  
The living water runs  
For you who never heard the pound  
Of bleak contemptuous guns,  
Who never saw the black smoke tower  
Where the blockbusters fell,  
Yet would take Heaven by the power  
Of men who burned in Hell.

Our Lady sings 'Magnificat.'  
You think to find release  
From trouble that you trembled at  
Whether in War or Peace,  
From sordid evil that you made,  
From dullard misbelief,  
From trickery of the mind's poor trade,  
From boredom harsh as grief.



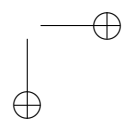
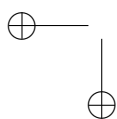


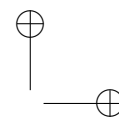
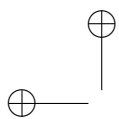
How should your faint hope come to good,  
    However hard you toiled,  
When truth has been misunderstood,  
    When beauty has been soiled?  
In vain you reach with shaking hand,  
    Peer through the dimming lens.  
That truth how should you understand  
    And how that beauty cleanse?

No place of flight, no nook concealed  
    Where you forget the loss  
Of Queen Anne's lace that whites the field  
    Or cranesbill in the moss.  
And if there were a place to flee  
    Better that you were dead  
Than that you proved yourself to be  
    One who would fain have fled.

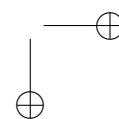
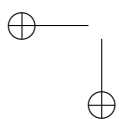
Though it be worse than very death,  
    Yourself you filled the cup  
That will not pass for a little breath.  
    No! you must sip and sup.  
You must drink and drain that cup alone,  
    That is wormwood on the tongue,  
For the last trumpet has been blown  
    And the last song been sung.

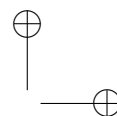
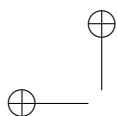
Not the last song! Not the last song!  
    A better is left to sing,  
If to yourself in the teeth of wrong  
    You dare to own the thing.  
If to yourself, dethroned, discrowned,  
    You speak the truth you know,  
Then once again with silver sound  
    Might living waters flow.





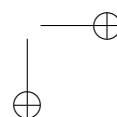
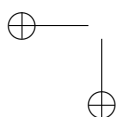
Dream of no banks of lily flower,  
If you blench before the flame  
That lights gross darkness of the hour,  
The sorrow, and the shame.  
Never think of Jerusalem  
If you lack heart to learn  
Who reach the city follow them  
Who dared in Hell to burn.

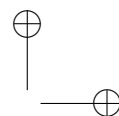
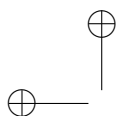




### BARREN COUNTRY

This we desire, that under trees which sprang  
Out of the jack-straw wreck when the great wind blew  
Our children's children may hear the west Wind's twang  
And know even better than we the grace we knew.  
May they love in some measure unknown the balanced stone  
wall,  
Draw the sweet ancient strength from the earth under heel,  
They need not own these empty acres at all.  
But we hope and trust they may own the breath and the  
feel,  
And be aware, for all of their great new lore  
And understanding past what we can understand,  
Of rain falling and northeast gales that roar  
Across the wild clean wetness of the land,  
Still keeping wisdom that never will impugn  
The thin birch under the January moon.





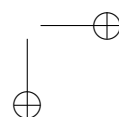
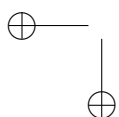
## OCEAN SEA

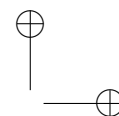
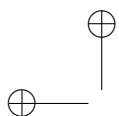
Still have you ruled man's fortune,  
Superb and constant Sea!  
Atlantic of the Battles!  
Ever divine to me.

Under the grey storm rolling  
Or blue as Heaven's deep,  
You are the very freedom  
That we were born to keep.

The captains of old triumph  
Kept faith there for our sake,  
That the sea might be for ever free,  
No damned imperial lake!

And the noble channels open  
Where their like go forth once more  
To bring all true men homeward,  
All sailors safe to shore.





## THINK OF RELIGION

Think of Religion, America. It is not  
What they accuse us of,  
Material contentment with our lot.  
It is vehemence and love.

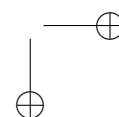
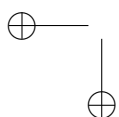
Vehemence for things they say are superseded,  
That touch us and that teach  
(And which in bad times may have gone unheeded),  
In Lincoln's speech,

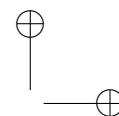
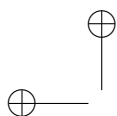
And love for the great land, mountain and waste,  
River and lake and wood.  
Now the dark towns and wildernesses chaste  
Must be made good,

Defended so that a lone man may speak,  
In his own voice aloud,  
His wisdom or his folly or his pique  
Against the crowd.

What threatens that must perish. Now if we can  
By valor and by pain  
And labor we must wake the Rights of Man  
In the stiff brain,

Make that religion, remember, keep in mind,  
And choke it down their gorge,  
Who do not know what force superb and kind  
Wintered at Valley Forge.





## **ZERO-HOUR**

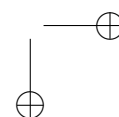
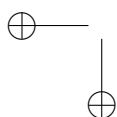
Now in the hour when our hopes tremble,  
When they whom we abhor decide,  
It does not help us to dissemble,  
Though triumph be as yet denied.

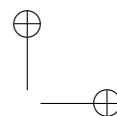
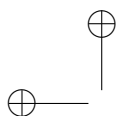
Their conquest? In the end what victory  
Can crown a system and a plan,  
In every aspect contradictory  
To the vision and the hope of man?

To every faith, to every dream,  
That moves sweet creatures young or old?  
We must not pander to that scheme,  
Accept the domination cold

That palsies man into a type,  
A marionette in uniform,  
Contented with a Sergeant's stripe,  
And 'kept mechanically warm.'

God send we keep ourselves as free  
As the great woods our fathers knew,  
As waters of 'the Ocean-Sea'  
Their crank blunt cock-boats blundered through.





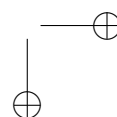
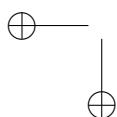
## THIS WOOD

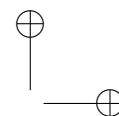
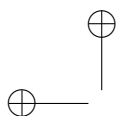
This wood is different from the world men talk about.  
They say indeed untruly I escape in it.  
I only know this manless land I walk about  
Has feel and shape in it,

That captured me altogether when I was little,  
And will not let me go now that I'm older,  
Never relaxing its power one jot or tittle,  
Constant at my shoulder;

Not understood yet beloved, and with me here,  
The sure protection of all that our folly banishes.  
This wood is different. Nor will it disappear  
Whatever else vanishes,

Being an eternal sanctuary that will harbor us,  
Whatever hurricane strike. It stands in the mind  
Against thought or act that has failed us, however barbarous,  
Dull, or unkind.

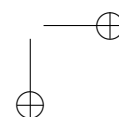
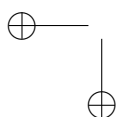


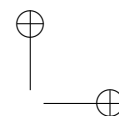
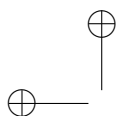


### WINDFLOWER IN THE SUNDERLAND, 1940

Bow your head,  
Small windflower pale!  
Beauty's dead  
As a coffin-nail.  
Vanished her power,  
No man knows why.  
Sunderland flower,  
The truth can die.

Not by science,  
Not by art,  
But by bright defiance  
In the heart,  
Anew in her hour,  
By pride and pain,  
Shall the Sunderland flower  
Whiten again.





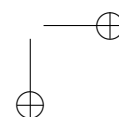
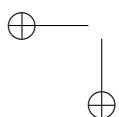
## **R.A.F.**

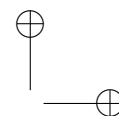
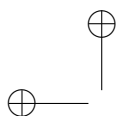
Frobisher, Drake,  
    High overhead  
Flies what can wake  
    Heroic Dead.

Howard sees fame  
    On skylines red,  
The Armada came.  
    It saw. It fled.

A Churchill guides  
    The storm again  
And Nelson rides  
    A Hurricane.

And boys dare fate  
    Withouten dread,  
Who are grown as great  
    As the Great Dead.





## OUR TIME

Nor in our time, America light-hearted,  
Shall you smile at the sun.  
Not in our time, for glory is departed.  
That day is done.

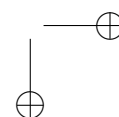
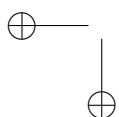
Where is the spirit that is not convulsed  
With bitterness of hate?  
The burning blood that in the hot vein pulsed  
Runs cold of late.

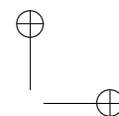
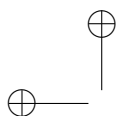
Toss off your cocktails at the beach-club bar!  
Dive in the breaking wave!  
Next year you will not do these things. They are  
Not for the brave.

For brave we must be, past all heroism  
That we as yet have dared,  
Against 'raw horror and the blank Abysm  
Of death,' prepared.

But Death may give protection sacrosanct.  
How ran the poet's cry?  
'That no man lives for ever.' God be thanked  
That gangsters die.

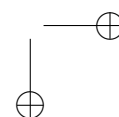
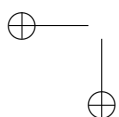
But even if we see them underground,  
We shall not make much mirth,  
Having profoundly known the too profound  
Grief of the Earth.

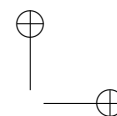
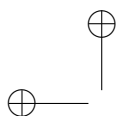




Yet in harsh times we must renew the gentle  
And burnish bright the soul  
With courage, vivid and unsentimental,  
And self-control,

Count on true things, on wisdom and on loyalty,  
From servitude of strife  
Win for our spirits liberty and royalty  
Of Death and Life.



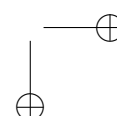
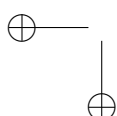


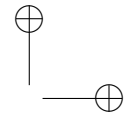
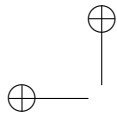
## BALLAD OF SOLOMON EISENBART

Solomon Eisenbart wished me ill,  
And if he were living would hate me still.  
I don't know why and I never will,  
But he seems to have viewed me as moral carrion,  
Reactionary, and smugly Aryan,  
Opposed to everything which the new  
Radical intellect hoped to do,  
Which, so men suffer under the sun,  
The laboring mind has seldom done.  
He said that I strutted in Byron's mantle,  
That my rhyme was awkward and 'consonantal,'  
That smirked and gibbered and mugged and posed  
And belonged to a chapter happily closed.  
'All right,' he said, as a well worn fling,  
'For people who like that sort of thing.'

It would be quite hard for me to describe  
My thoughts as I read that diatribe.  
I kept my temper, but it is a fact  
That few men relish being attacked,  
Though dabblers in ink must take the rough  
With the smooth, which itself is hard enough.  
But I freely admit that the damned thing hurt  
Like a stroke in the face from a riding quirt.  
And I thank my maker I had the wit  
Not to show that I noticed it.

It's thirteen years since I felt that way,

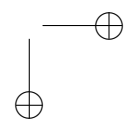
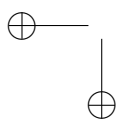


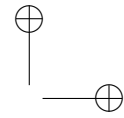
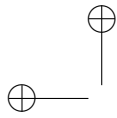


But I read the passage over today,  
A dismal reminder of the past.  
For Eisenbart 'made the headlines at last.'  
Verse gets one nowhere. That is clear,  
But reporters hustle from far or near  
When a poet with a broken brain  
Grapples the pilot of his plane,  
And the ship comes down like a shot duck  
And they drag a corpse from the bottom muck.

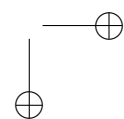
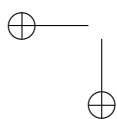
    If I were wiser I might have known  
That, when that David fitted the stone  
In the sling for such a Goliath as I,  
There might have been several reasons why,  
Some of them better, some of them worse,  
And not wholly related to me or my verse,  
Even supposing he might opine  
I was the original Philistine.  
For one I believe that a power of pain  
Arched always between the poles of his brain,  
That something for ever stood in his path,  
Which 'robbed him of everything but wrath' –  
Achilles dipped in the stygian stream  
No iron could injure. But it would seem  
If you're dipped in Poetry's water of life,  
A grass-blade turns to a naked knife,  
And thrusts right into the living heart.  
It was so with Solomon Eisenbart.

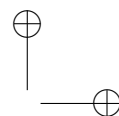
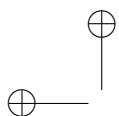
    I know that a talent, perhaps low-powered,  
In process of time gets pretty well soured,  
I think it requires no vision sublime  
To guess he felt that process of time,  
Though himself Shakespeare knew, we know,  
How steep the gradient, the power how low.  
I think it didn't take off the curse,





If the blithe *New Yorker* printed his verse,  
A thing like that wouldn't tip the scale  
When the play he slaved at was set to fail,  
And he heard the hush in the Nether Pit,  
'That doesn't suggest the crash of a hit.'  
He was a Jew, and some swine obscene  
Spat on his Gimbel gabardine.  
He was a man and small things saddened him.  
He was a poet and they maddened him.  
Small things! Small things like dream and rhyme!  
Process of time! Process of time!  
Seconds that crawl and paralyse  
With slime what's exquisite and dies.  
Minutes that murder as they go  
Beauty one never is to know.  
Hours, days, months, years, the whole lot boring!  
What wonder if a man go soaring  
Where there's an end at the end of all,  
'Wings tilted to a dying fall'?  
Material symbols shrunk to a token  
Of horror and the bright dream broken!  
Mad, no doubt, and maladjusted,  
Much to be pitied, not to be trusted,  
Sick of effort and the waste of learning,  
Now dinged Hellward, burning, burning,  
Negative Icarus, murdered by things,  
Only desiring to ruin wings  
That are baffled gliding and baffled hovering,  
And fall like lightning where's no recovering,  
Somehow wrecked at the taking-off.  
If I do not pray, I shall never scoff.

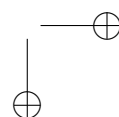
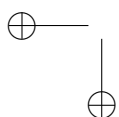


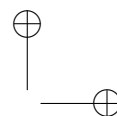
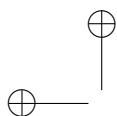


### CLUB CAR

We sit in the club car, far better fed  
Than we deserve. It seems that trains run late,  
A fact we are at pains to deprecate,  
Shaking on this account the dubious head.  
Business, we say, is being badly bled,  
But the world Series will have quite a gate,  
Though money can't be made, and human fate  
Depends on our not being in the red.

And at this moment while we idly speak,  
*Our* aircraft carriers through dense darkness drive,  
With all the Republic ever hoped, alive,  
Farragut, Paul Jones, loose in a broken field,  
Wild with immortal will, not for the weak,  
And courage never to submit or yield.

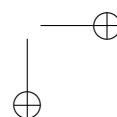
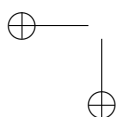


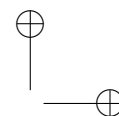
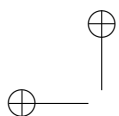


### WYOMING CLEARINGS

Once, once, I saw them in a Wyoming clearing,  
Two deer that watched us. A mountain towered behind,  
Black with sharp pines up to the chill blue spearing.  
It was like the beginning of things beyond the mind.  
They stood poised like thistledown when no gust is veering,  
Curious, howsoever we were human and unkind,  
Delight that yet possessed us when we rode from sight and  
hearing,  
Clear as truth to the true, bright as music to the blind.

The man who rode with me, the tamer of horses,  
Knew all their secrets, knew but did not tell.  
He had watched fawns drink at white watercourses,  
Or in autumn dusk had heard the rutting buck bell.  
He knew them, and all their devices and resources,  
The pleasure and the danger in sound and sight and smell.  
And his look was like their look. O, if I had felt those forces  
As he and the deer felt the rhythm and the spell!





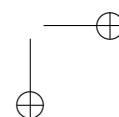
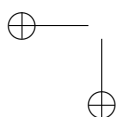
### FLYFISHERMAN IN WARTIME

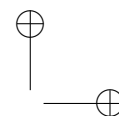
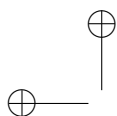
Shall I ever see it, the Queen's River  
With the Hathaway pitches rifling down?  
Or is it lost to me now and for ever,  
Where the laurel whitened, the hackle was brown?

Perhaps my grandson may cast his fly  
Where the straight bronze current skews at the turn.  
Luck to his fishing! Light to his eye!  
Strength to his wrist! And the wit to learn!

I was not wise, and my thought was simple,  
Quick to be read by a hasty reader.  
May he know more, where the eddies dimple,  
Than I when I darted the dry-fly leader.

May he know, as I knew, the hard drops pounding  
That hammered the black pool silver-white,  
Pan's shout through the summer squall resounding,  
And the trout that struck in the thunder light.





## GRIEVED MEN

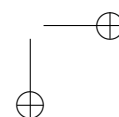
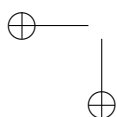
Better than grieved men mumbling  
Their sad clandestine speech,  
We like the grey tides tumbling  
Seaweed on stinking Beach,

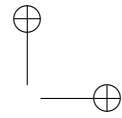
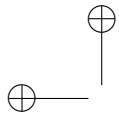
For in a black time, battered  
And weak from wrench and shock,  
We trust the arched swell shattered  
On Narragansett rock,

And the gull down the wave-front curving  
Before the comber can break.  
These take us beyond deserving  
And bless all men they take.

There is no interdiction,  
No voice of grief or war,  
Shall alter the conviction  
And spirit of the shore.

Nothing that made us kindly  
But it shall make us stern,  
Where we watch the wave break blindly  
And the straight wings of the tern.





## CHANGED TIMES

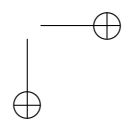
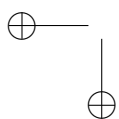
O weak the heart and hard the toil,  
And trivial to boot.  
Yet I dream I touch south County soil  
Under my aimless foot.

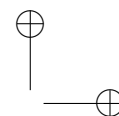
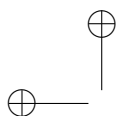
All chat I see is blank and drab  
And ruled by a stupid code.  
But I who tread the concrete slab  
Knew the Queen's River road.

I saw the woodcock in his season  
And the wall of laurel flower.  
And Horace had never better reason  
To think he had had his hour.

O weak the heart and the toil is hard  
And my Washington boss is a fool.  
But he never saw Arethusas starred  
On the edge of a black trout pool.

He exercises a sort of command  
And tells us wherefore and why for.  
But so far he doesn't quite understand  
That what men love they will die for.





## EASTER EVENING, 1942

Is this the time to speak? Shall we tell the strong  
What they already know? Or tell the weak  
What not to fear? Divide the right and wrong  
With the musical tongue in the poetic cheek?

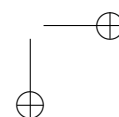
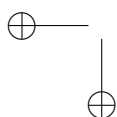
Shall we lift up some outcry, when our fate  
Moves on us like a hurricane or flood?  
With a few syllables make more delicate  
The spectacle of violence and blood?

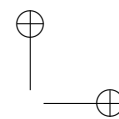
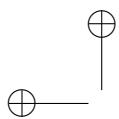
No! There is only this. And no Tyrtæan  
Sentence is worth the expenditure of ink.  
We need no marching song, nor any pæan,  
Only reality in what we think

And the mere valor of the common man,  
That always will continue and persist,  
That can endure all grief, and knows it can,  
And, till it wins, will not unclench the fist.

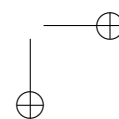
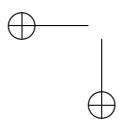
It is beginning of wisdom when we withdraw  
From the pleasant places where all things went well.  
That's over. We obey the ancient law  
That makes strange Heaven in as strange a Hell.

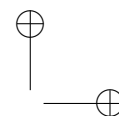
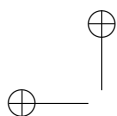
Many are cowards. Many others lie.  
The cowards must learn courage, the liar learn  
Not to invent disasters in the sky,  
Where, he has said, only cross planets burn.





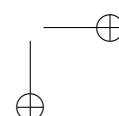
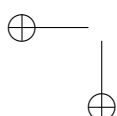
'Not for some victory,' not for any race,  
Or dull dominion of this world we fight  
But for all strength of thought, kindness, and grace  
That made 'the feud with chaos and old Night.'

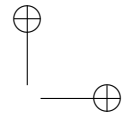
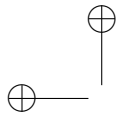




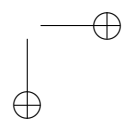
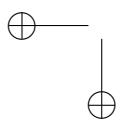
### LOVELY EARTH

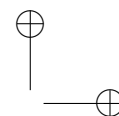
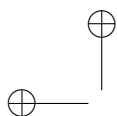
Whether by our grief or mirth,  
We have lost the lovely earth,  
Let the tang and let the savour  
Fall away by fear or favour.  
Our remote but troubled hearts  
Have forsworn the sacred arts  
That, implicit in the root,  
Bring the flower and bring the fruit.  
Was it curse or was it spell?  
We have lost the world too well.  
Pleasure's but a type of pain  
Till we find that world again,  
Where men live with birth and growth,  
Intimately linked with both,  
Where there's something more in death  
Than 'idle end of idle breath,'  
Something in existence rife,  
Lacking which, there is no life.  
That we lost, our birthright's worth,  
When we lost the lovely earth,  
When we blenched and stood aside  
From the stream of things, denied  
We were portion of the stream.  
That denial's but a dream,  
Yet a dream not fit to tell  
To an imbecile in Hell.





How express the Panic loss?  
'We gave the gold. We kept the dross,'  
Swearing always to exclude  
From our souls all solitude,  
Hoping so to 'scape the grip  
Of mountainous companionship,  
That no river might contrive  
To seize our laggard souls alive,  
That no essence of the soil  
Might our sodden minds turmoil.  
Not one flower in us wrought  
Toward a 'white celestial thought.'  
Life's a horror to us. Breath  
Is no sure antidote for death.  
And fear has us by the throat,  
Screaming for an antidote.  
At our throats would clutch no fear  
Had the lovely earth been clear,  
Not lost in the ignoble night  
Of the fancy heteroclite.  
Had we been by honor told  
Exquisitely to grow old,  
And at fifty had not been  
Silly as at seventeen,  
Had we kept the strangeness known  
In some silence of our own,  
Dream should still deny the dearth  
In now lost but lovely earth.



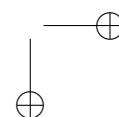
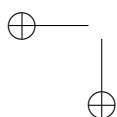


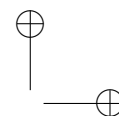
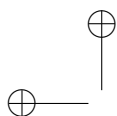
**TO A BEGINNER  
FROM ONE WHO FAILED TO START**

If you could fetch that apple-tree,  
Chill, naked, and deformed,  
Out of your universe to me,  
By your young fancy warmed,

Why there would be no more to say,  
And, furthermore, my lad,  
You would have had in your odd way  
Whatever Shakespeare had.

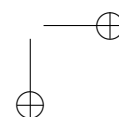
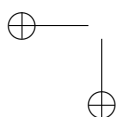
But you in your own universe  
Lonely devices try  
Against the Gods who laid the curse.  
And good God! So do I.

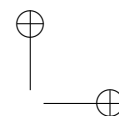
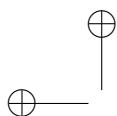




## NEW ENGLAND GEORGIC

At fifty-six I learn to hoe  
The brown soil which I do not know  
More than the thrusting spear of corn,  
Though I too from this dust was born.  
I have discovered rather late  
One sense of the verb cultivate,  
Which either strayed or had been lost.  
Look on the weedy holocaust  
I make between the tremulous lines  
Of insecure potato vines  
That lack the vigor and morale  
Of rivals immemorial.  
Guerrilla docks against them storm  
And phalanxes of chadlocks form,  
Till I, where the ranks wilt and reel,  
Even the fight with the cold steel.  
I can half guess what the damp loam  
Half hints at. 'You are coming home,'  
It almost says, 'Make a beginning  
After the singing and the sinning,  
After the laughter and the grieving,  
The believing and the unbelieving.  
You must begin, if you would balk  
Mullein root or burdock stalk.  
There is no logic but the knife  
Against that green and hairy life.

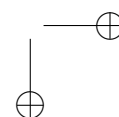
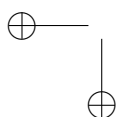


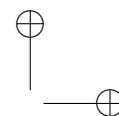
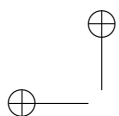


No words the thorn or burr appease,  
Reasonless as Japanese.  
Seek not for answers in your head.  
Too little's known. Too much is said.'

I have come home. And I add up  
My errors by the buttercup,  
Timidly that quakes and bends  
Where the longest furrow ends.  
No one has ever taught the art  
Subtraction to the contrite heart.  
Looking back I see the hooked  
And thorny tare I overlooked,  
The ragweed's braggart leaf upthrust,  
Not, as it should be, in the dust,  
Like a bad green memory haunting  
His spirit who has been found wanting.

But in the wood a flicker's tapping  
And mating kingbirds, wings o'erlapping,  
Hover till quick ecstasy  
Hurries them out of sight from me –  
So beautiful that I grow blind  
To any ill witching the mind.





## THE MOUNTAIN WHIPPOORWILL

Let no man tell us  
In a world thus wrenched  
That when we most need it  
The great light is quenched.

For he knew our custom,  
Right or wrong,  
And Melora Vilas  
Became a song.

He knew our trouble,  
The wherefore and why.  
Dan'l Webster will save us  
And Johnny Pye,

And through mountainous moonlights  
As clear as the day,  
Your whippoorwill calls to us,  
Stephen Benét!

