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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DAWN PATROL, AND OTHER POEMS OF AN AVIATOR ***

The Dawn Patrol And other Poems of an Aviator

PAUL BEWSHER, R.N.A.S., D.S.C.

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THE DAWN PATROL

[1]

Paul Bewsher, R.N.A.S.

To My Father;
My Best Friend,
My Best Critic.

[2]

P.B.

SEPT., 1917.

[3]

The Dawn Patrol

And Other Poems of an Aviator

By
PAUL BEWSHER, R.N.A.S.



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The Dawn Patrol

Sometimes I fly at dawn above the sea,

Where, underneath, the restless waters flow—
Silver, and cold, and slow.
Dim in the East there burns a new-born sun,
Whose rosy gleams along the ripples run,
Save where the mist droops low,
Hiding the level loneliness from me.

And now appears beneath the milk-white haze
A little fleet of anchored ships, which lie
In clustered company,
And seem as they are yet fast bound by sleep,
Although the day has long begun to peep,
With red-inflamed eye,
Along the still, deserted ocean ways.

The fresh, cold wind of dawn blows on my face
As in the sun's raw heart I swiftly fly,
And watch the seas glide by.
Scarce human seem I, moving through the skies,
And far removed from warlike enterprise—
Like some great gull on high
Whose white and gleaming wings beat on through space.

Then do I feel with God quite, quite alone,
High in the virgin morn, so white and still,
And free from human ill:
My prayers transcend my feeble earth-bound plaints—
As though I sang among the happy Saints
With many a holy thrill—
As though the glowing sun were God's bright Throne.

My flight is done. I cross the line of foam
That breaks around a town of grey and red,
Whose streets and squares lie dead
Beneath the silent dawn—then am I proud
That England's peace to guard I am allowed;—
Then bow my humble head,
In thanks to Him Who brings me safely home.

Luxeuil-les-Bains, 1917.

[8]

The Joy of Flying

[9]

When heavy on my tired mind
The world, and worldly things, do weigh,
And some sweet solace I would find,
Into the sky I love to stray,
And, all alone, to wander round
In lone seclusion from the ground.

Ah! Then what solitude is mine—
From grovelling mankind aloof!
Their road is but a thin-drawn line:
Their busy house a scarce-seen roof.
That little stain of red and brown
They boast about!—It is their town!

How small their petty quarrels seem!
Poor, crawling multitudes below;
Which, like the ants, in feverish stream
From place to place move to and fro!
Like ants they work: like ants they fight,
Assuming blindly they are right.

Soon their existence I forget,
In joy that on these flashing wings
I cleave the skies—O! let them fret—
Now know I why the skylark sings
Untrammelled in the boundless air—
For mine it is his bliss to share!

Now do I mount a billowy cloud,
Now do I sail low o'er a hill,
And with a seagull's skill endowed
Circle, and wheel, and drop at will—
Above the villages asleep,
Above the valleys, shadowed deep,

[10]

Above the water-meadows green
Whose streams, which intermingled flow,
Like silver lattice-work are seen
A-gleam upon the plain below—
Above the woods, whose naked trees
Move new-born buds upon the breeze.

And far away above the haze
I see white mountain-summits rise,
Whose snow with sunlight is ablaze
And shines against the distant skies.
Such thoughts those towering ranges bring
That I float on a-wondering!

So do I love to travel on
Through lonely skies, myself alone;
For then the feverish fret is gone
Which on this earth I oft have known.
Kind is the God who lets me fly
In sweet seclusion through the sky!

France, 1917.

The Crash

[11]

The rich, red blood
Doth stain the fair, green grass, and daisies white
In generous flood ...
This sun-drowsed day for me is darkest night.
O! wreck of splintered wood and twisted wire,
What blind, unmeasured hatred you inspire
Because yours was the power that life to end ...
Of him, who was my friend!

This morn we lay upon the grass,
And watched the languid hours pass;
A lark, deep in the sky's blue sea,
Sang ecstasies to him and me.

And with the daisies did he play,
As on the waving grass we lay,
And made a little daisy chain
To bring his childhood back again.

And while he watched the clouds above
He drifted into thoughts of love.
He said, "I know why skylarks sing—
Because they love, and it is Spring.

And if I had a voice as they,
So would I sing this golden May,
Because I love, and loved am I,
And when I wander through the sky,

I wish I had a skylark's voice,
And with such singing could rejoice.
Oh, happy, happy, are these days!
My heart is full of deep-felt praise,

[12]

And thanks to God who brings this bliss!
Oh! what a happiness is this—
To lie upon the grass and know
In two short days that I shall go

And see my Love's fair face again,
And wander in some flowery lane,
Forgetting all the world around,
And only knowing I have found

A Spring enchantment, which is mine
Through God's sweet sympathy divine, ...
May these two days now swiftly pass!"
He laughed upon the sunlit grass.

The days have passed, but passed, alas! how slow!
See down the road a sad procession go!
Oh! hear the wailing music moan!
Why? Why such grief am I to know?
Dear God! I wish I were alone.
For by the grave a girl with streaming eyes
Doth make mine dim.
While high among the sunny springtime skies,
The larks still hymn.

France, 1917.

The Night Raid

[13]

Around me broods the dim, mysterious Night,
Star-lit and still.
No whisper comes across the Plain,
Asleep beneath the breezes light,
Which scarcely stir the growing grain.
Slow chimes the quiet midnight hour
In some unseen and distant tower,
While round me broods the vague, mysterious Night,
Star-lit, and cool, and still.

And I must desecrate this silent time
Of drowsy dreams!
On mighty wings towards the sky,
Towards the stars, I have to climb
And o'er the sleeping country fly,
And such far-echoing clamour make
That all the villages must wake.
So must I desecrate this quiet time
Of soft and drowsy dreams!

The hour comes ... soon must I say farewell
To this fair earth.
Then to my little room I go
Where I perhaps no more shall dwell.
Shall I return?—The Gods but know.
Perchance again I shall not sleep
On that white bed in silence deep.
For soon the hour comes to say farewell
To this fair, friendly earth.

[14]

I stand there long, before into the gloom
I take my way.
There are the pictures of my friends
And all the treasures of my room
On which my lamp soft radiance sends.
And long with lingering gaze I look
Upon each much beloved book.
I stand, and dream—before into the gloom
I sadly take my way.

And now I gain the field whence I must part
Upon my quest.
My Pegasus of wood and steel
Is ready straining at the start.
The governor is at the wheel—
And, with an ever-growing roar,
Across the hidden fields we soar.

So, with one envious look from Earth I part
Upon my midnight quest.

Beneath me lies the sleeping countryside
Hazy and dim,
And here and there a little gleam,
Like stars upon the heavens wide,
Speaks of some wretch who cannot dream—
But on his bed all night must toss
And hear me as I pass across,
In droning flight above the countryside,
Hazy, and huge, and dim.

[15]

And in the great blue night I ever rise
Towards the stars,
As to the hostile lands I sail
High in the dark and cloudless skies
Whose gloom our gloomy wings doth veil.
Beneath, a scarce-seen ribbon shows
Where through the woods a river flows,
As in the shadowy night I ever rise
Towards the scattered stars.

Now high above War's frontiers do I sit—
Above the lines.
Great lights, like flowers, rise and fall:
On either side red flashes spit
Hot death at those poor souls which crawl
On secret errands. O, how grim
Must be that midnight slaughter dim!
And happy am I that so high I sit
Above those cruel lines!

Each man beneath me now detests my race
With iron hate.
Each tiny light I see must shine
Upon some grim, unfriendly face,
Who curses England's name and mine,
And would be glad if both were gone—
But steadily must I fly on,
Though every soul beneath me loathes my race
With stern, unceasing hate.

[16]

I see a far-flung City all ablaze
With jewelled lamps:
I trace its quays, its roads, its squares,
And all its intermingled ways,
And, as I wonder how it dares
To flaunt itself,—the City dies,
And in an utter darkness lies,
For I have terrified that town ablaze
With twinkling, jewelled lamps.

But, see!—the furnace with its ruddy breath
Which I must wreck!
The searchlights sweep across the sky—
Long-fingered ministers of Death—
I look deep in their cold blue eye,
Incessant shells with blinding light
Show every wire, clear and white!
There is the furnace with its ruddy breath
Which I must wreck;—

It lies beneath—my time has come at last
To do my work!
I wait—O! will you never stop
Your fearful shells, that burst so fast?—
And then—I hear destruction drop
Behind my back as I release
Such fearful death with such great ease.
Burst on, you shells! My time has come at last
To do my deadly work.

[17]

Then do I turn, and hurry swiftly back
Towards my home.

I gladly leave that place behind!
No more I hear the shrapnel's crack—
No more my eyes the searchlights blind.
I cross the lines with lightening breast
And sail into the friendly West.
How glad am I to hurry swiftly back
Towards my peaceful home!

I reach the field—and then I softly land.
My work is o'er!
I leave my hot and panting steed,
And clasp a comrade's outstretched hand,
And with him to my bedroom speed.
Then, over steaming beakers set,
The night's fierce menace soon forget.
How great a welcome waits me when I land—
When all my work is o'er!

But ere I search shy sleep on my white bed
I greet the dawn,
And think, with heart weighed down with grief,
How cruel this dawn to those whose dead
Lie shattered, torn—whom, like a thief
At darkest midnight, I have slain. [18]
Poor, unknown victims!—real my pain!
What widows, orphans, sweethearts see their dead
This cruel, hopeless dawn?

France, 1917.

Despair

The long and tedious months move slowly by
And February's chill has fled away
Before the gales of March, and now e'en they
Have died upon the peaceful April sky:
And still I sadly wander, still I sigh,
And all the splendour of each Springtime day
Is dyed, for me, one melancholy grey,
And all its beauty can but make me cry.

For thou art silent, Oh! far distant friend,
And not one word has come to cheer my heart
Through these sad months, which seem to have no end,
So distant seems the day which bade us part!
Oh speak! dear fair-haired angel! Spring has smiled,
And I despair—a broken-hearted child.

FRANCE, 1917.

The Horrors of Flying

The day is cold; the wind is strong;
And through the sky great cloud-banks throng,
While swathes of snow lie on the ground
O'er which I walk without a sound,
But I have vowed to fly to-day
Though winds are fierce, and clouds are grey.
My aeroplane is on the field;
So I must fly—my fate is sealed,
And no excuses can I make;
Within its back my place I take.
I strap myself inside the seat
And press the rudder with my feet,
And hold the wheel with nervous grip
And gaze around my little ship—
For on its wire-rigging taut
Depends my life—which will be short

[19]

If it should fail me in the air;
Swift then my fall, and short my prayer,
And these my wings would be my pyre—
So well I scrutinise each wire!
Then out across the field I go
In shaking progress,—noisy—slow;
And turn, until the wind I face,
Then do I look around a space;
For fear to-day is at my heart
And nervously I fear to start.
The field is clear—the skies are bare—
Mine is the freedom of the air!
And yet I sit and hesitate,
Although each moment that I wait
Brings to my soul a greater fear.
To me the grass seems very dear—
Dear seems the hut where dreams have crept
To me each midnight as I slept—
Dear seems the river, by whose brink
I oft have watched brown pebbles sink
Deep in the crumbling bridge's shade,
Where in the evening I have strayed!
My restless hands hold fast the wheel;
Once more the wing-controls I feel.
I move the rudder with my feet,
And settle firmly in the seat.
I start, and o'er the snowy grass
In ever quicker progress pass:
On either side the ground streaks by,
And soon above the grass I fly.
I feel the air beneath the wings;
At first a greater ease it brings—
But soon the stormy strife begins,
And if I lose, 'tis Death who wins.
The winds a thousand devils hold,
Who grasp my wings with fingers bold,
And keep me ceaselessly a-rock—
I seem to hear those devils mock
As I am thrown from side to side
In unseen eddies, terrified—
As suddenly I start to drop,
And when my plunging fall I stop,
Up am I swiftly thrown once more!
Like no great eagle do I soar,
But like a sparrow tempest-tost
I struggle on! My faith is lost:
My former confidence is dead,
And whispering fear has come instead.
Death ever dogs me close behind—
My frightened soul no peace can find.
I feel a torture in each nerve,
As to the right or left I swerve.
And now Imagination brings
Its evil thoughts—I watch the wings,
And wonder if those wings will break—
The tight-stretched wires seem to shake.
I see the ghastly, headlong rush,
And picture how the fall would crush
My helpless body on the ground.
With haggard eyes I turn around,
And contemplate the rocking tail,—
My drawn and sweating cheeks are pale.
Fear's clammy hands clutch at my heart!
I try, with unavailing art,
To summon thoughts of peaceful hours
Spent in some sunny field of flowers
When my half-opened eyes would look
On some old dream-inspiring book,
And not on this accursèd wheel,
And on this box of wood and steel
In which at pitch-and-toss with Death,
I play, and wonder if each breath
I tensely draw, will be my last.
The happy thoughts are swiftly past—
My frightened brain forbids them stay.

[20]

[21]

[22]

Dear London seems so far away,
And far away my well-loved friends!
Each second my existence ends
In my disordered mind, whose pace
I cannot check—its cog-wheels race,
Like some ungoverned, whirring clock,
When, frenziedly, it runs amok.
I have resolved that I will climb
A certain height—how slow seems time
As on its sluggish pivot creeps
The laggard finger-point, which keeps
The truthful record. O, how slow
Towards the clouds I seem to go!
And then ambition gains its mark at last!
The little finger o'er the point has passed!
I can descend again. With conscience clear
And end this battle with persistent fear!
The engine's clamour dies—there is no sound
Save whistling wires—as towards the ground
I gently float. My agony is gone.
What peace is mine as I go gliding on!
Calm after storm—contentment after pain—
Soft sleep to some tempestuous, burning brain—
The soothing harbour after foamy seas—
The gentle feeling of a perfect ease—
All, all are mine—though yet by gusts distressed!
Near is the ground, and with the ground comes rest.
Above the trees I glide—above the grass,
Above the snow-besprinkled earth I pass.
I touch the ground, run swift along, and stop—
Above the wheel my tired shoulders drop.
I leave my seat, and slowly move away ...
Cold is the wind: the clouds are grey,
I only wish my room to gain,
And in some book forget my pain,
And lose myself in fancied dreams
Across Titania's golden streams.

[23]

France, 1917.

Dreams of Autumn

[24]

When through the heat of some long afternoon
In blazing August, on the grass I lie,
And watch the white clouds move across the sky,
On whose azure is faintly etched the moon,
That, when the evening deepens, will be soon
The brightest figure of those hosts on high,
My heart is discontented, and I sigh,
For Autumn and its vapours; till I swoon

Upon the vision of October days
In dreaming London, when each mighty tree
Sheds daily more brown showers through the haze,
Which lends each street Romance and Mystery—
When pallid silver Sunshine only gleams
On that grey Lovers' City of Sweet Dreams.

Isle of Grain, 1916.

To Carlton Berry

[25]

KILLED IN AN AEROPLANE ACCIDENT, JULY, 1916

It was Thy will, O God. And so he died!
For seventeen sweet years he was a child
Upon whose grace Thy loving-kindness smiled,
For he was clean, and full of youthful pride;

And, when his years drew on, then Thou denied
That he by man's estate should be defiled,
And so Thou call'st him to Thy presence mild
To be with Thee for ever, by Thy side.

Nor is he dead! He lives in three great spheres.
His soul is with Thee in Thy home above:
His influence,—with friends of former years:
His memory with those he used to love.
He is an emblem of that Trinity
With whom he lives in happy ecstasy.

Isle of Grain, 1916.

London in May

[26]

Two long, full years have passed since I have smelt
Sweet London in this happy month of May!
Last year relentless War bore me away
To Imbros Isle, where six sad months I dwelt
Beneath a burning sun—nor ever felt
One breath of gentle Spring blow o'er the bay
Between whose sun-dried hills so long I lay
A restless captive. Now has Fortune dealt

More kindly with me: once again I know
The drowsy languor of the afternoons:
The soft white clouds: the may-tree's whiter snow:
The star-bound evenings, and the ivory moons.
My heart, dear God! leaps up till it is pain
With thanks to Thee that I am here again.

London.

A Fallen Leaf

[27]

When Death has crossed my name from out the roll
Of dreaming children serving in this War;
And with these earthly eyes I gaze no more
Upon sweet England's grace—perhaps my soul
Will visit streets down which I used to stroll
At sunset-charmèd dusks, when London's roar
Like ebbing surf on some Atlantic shore
Would trance the ear. Then may I hear no toll

Of heavy bells to burden all the air
With tuneless grief: for happy will I be!—
What place on earth could ever be more fair
Than God's own presence?—Mourn not then for me,
Nor write, I pray, "*He gave*"—upon my clod—
"*His life to England,*" but "*his soul to God.*"

Isle of Sheppey, 1917.

The Star

[28]

I stood, one azure dusk, in old Auxerre
Before the grey Cathedral's towering height,
And in the Eastern darkness, very fair
I saw a little star that twinkled bright;
How small it looked beside the mighty pile,
Whose stone was rosy with the Western glow—
A little star—I pondered for a while,
And then the solemn truth began to know.

That tiny star was some enormous sphere,
The great cathedral was an atomy—
So often when grey trouble looms so near
That God shines in our minds but distantly,—
If we but thought, our grief would seem so small
That we would see that God's great love was all.

France, 1917.

Islington

[29]

Here slow decay with creeping finger peels
The yellow plaster from the grimy walls,
Like leprous lichen, day by day which falls,
And, day by day, more rotting stone reveals!
Here are old mournful squares through which there steals
No cheerful music, or the heedless calls
Of laughing children; and the smoke, which crawls
Across the sky, the heavy silence seals!

Lean, blackened trees stretch up their withered boughs
Behind the rusty railings, prison-bound,
In vain they seek the summer sunlight's gold
In which their long-dead fathers used to drowse:
For pallid terraces lie far around,
In gloomy sadness ever growing old.

Ochey-les-Bains, 1917.

The Country Beautiful

[30]

I love the little daisies on the lawn
Which contemplate with wide and placid eyes
The blue and white enamel of the skies—
The larks which sing their mattin-song at dawn,
High o'er the earth, and see the new Day born,
All stained with amethyst and amber dyes.
I love the shadowy woodland's hidden prize
Of fragrant violets, which the dewy morn

Doth open gently underneath the trees
To cast elusive perfume on each hour—
The waving clover, full of drowsy bees,
That take their murmurous way from flower to flower.
Who could but think—deep in some sun-flecked glade—
How God must love these things that He has made?

Eastchurch, 1916.

Chelsea

[31]

How many of those youths who consecrate
Their lives to art, and worship at her shrine,
And sacrifice their early hours and late
In serving her exacting whims divine
Have gathered in old Chelsea's shaded peace,
Whose faint, elusive charm, and gentle airs,
Bring inspiration fresh, and sweet release
From Trouble's haunting shapes and goblin cares?

O! tree-embowered hamlet, whose demesne
Sleeps in the arms of London quietly,
Whose sparrow-haunted roads, and squares serene,
From all the stress of life seem ever free—
O! are you more than just a passing dream

Beside the city's slim and lovely stream?

Luxeuil-les-Bains, 1917.

K.L.H.

[32]

DIED OF WOUNDS RECEIVED AT THE DARDANELLES.

Where stern grey busts of gods and heroes old
Frown down upon the corridors' chill stone,
On which the sunbeam's amber pale is thrown
From leaf-fringed windows, one of quiet mould
Gazed long at those white chronicles which told
Of honours that the stately School had known.
He read the names: and wondered if his own
Would ever grace the walls in letters bold.

He knew not that he for the School would gain
A greater honour with a greater price—
That, no long years of work, but bitter pain
And his rich life, he was to sacrifice—
Not in a University's grey peace,
But on the hilly sun-baked Chersonese.

*H.M.S. "Manica,"
Dardanelles, 1915.*

The Fringe of Heaven

[33]

Now have I left the world and all its tears,
And high above the sunny cloud-banks fly,
Alone in all this vast and lonely sky—
This limpid space in which the myriad spheres
Go thundering on, whose song God only hears
High in his heavens. Ah! how small seem I,
And yet I know he hears my little cry
Down there among Mankind's cruel jest and sneers.

And I forget the grief which I have known,
And I forgive the mockers and their jest,
And in this mightly solitude alone,
I taste the joys of everlasting rest,
Which I shall know when I have passed away
To live in Heaven's never-fading day.

Written in the Air.

Three Triolets

[34]

COLOURS.

How bright is Earth's rich gown
None but an Airman knows
Yellow, and green, and brown—
How bright is Earth's rich gown!
I see, as I gaze down,
Its purple, cream, and rose.
How bright is Earth's rich gown
None but an Airman knows!

THE SEA.

Sad is the lonely sea—
So vast, and smooth, and grey
It stretches far from me.
Sad is the lonely sea!

Its cheerful colours flee
Before the fading day.
Sad is the lonely sea
So vast, and smooth, and grey!

DISILLUSION.

[35]

You mortals see the sky—
I only see the ground,
As through the air I fly.
You mortals see the sky,
And yet with envy sigh
Because to earth you're bound!
You mortals see the sky—
I only see the ground!

Written in the Air.

Cloud Thoughts

Above the clouds I sail, above the clouds,
And wish my mind
Above its clouds could climb as well,
And leave behind
The world and all its crowds,
And ever dwell
In such a calm and limpid solitude
With ne'er a breath unkind or harsh or rude
To break the spell—
With ne'er a thought to drive away
The golden splendour of the day.
Alone and lost beneath the tranquil blue,
My God! With you!

Written in an Aeroplane.

Autumn Regrets

[36]

That I were Keats! And with a golden pen
Could for all time preserve these golden days
In rich and glowing verse, for poorer men,
Who felt their wonder, but could only gaze
With silent joy upon sweet Autumn's face,
And not record in any wise its grace!
Alas! But I am even dumb as they—
I cannot bid the fleeting hours stay,
Nor chain one moment on a page's space.

That I were Grieg! Then, with a haunting air
Of murmurs soft, and swelling, grand refrains
Would I express my love of Autumn fair
With all its wealth of harvest, and warm rains:
And with fantastic melodies inspire
A memory of each mad sunset's fire
In which the day goes slowly to its death
As through the fragrant woods dim Evening's breath
Doth soothe to sleep the drowsy songbirds' choir.

That I were Corot! Then September's gold
Would I store up in painted treasuries
That, when the world seemed grey I could behold
Its blazing colour with sweet memories,
And each elusive colour would be mine
That decorates these afternoons benign.
Ah! Then I could enshrine each fleeting hue
Which dyes the woodland, and enslave the blue
Of sky and haze, with genius divine.

[37]

How sad these wishes! When I have no art
Of poetry, or music, or of brush,
With which to calm the swelling of my heart
By capturing the misty country's hush
In muted violins; I cannot hymn
The shadowy silence of the copses dim;
Nor can I paint September's sky-crowned hills.
Gone then, the wonder which my vision fills,
When all the earth is bound by Winter grim!

WESTGATE.

To Hilda:

[38]

ON HER SEVENTEENTH BIRTHDAY.

Now has rich time brought you a gift of gold—
A long sweet year which you can shape at will,
And deck with roses warm, or with the chill
And heartless lilies—GOD gives strength to mould
Our days, and lives, with fingers firm and bold,
And make them noble, straight and clean from ill,
Though few are willing, and their years they fill
With dross which they regret when they are old.

What splendid hours of your life are these
When youth and childhood wander hand in hand,
And give you freely all which best can please—
Laughter and friends and dreams of Fairyland!
Mourn not the seasons past with useless tears,
But greet the pleasure of the coming years!

FRANCE, 1917.

Clouds

[39]

'Tis strange to leave this world of woods and hills,
This world of little farms, and shady mills,—
Of fields, and water-meadows fair,
Upon some sad and shadowy day
When all the skies are overcast and grey,
And climb up through the gloomy air,
And ever hurry higher still, and higher,
Till underneath you lies a far-flung shire
All sober-hued beneath the ceiling pale
Of crawling clouds, whose barrier soon you reach,
And through their clammy vapours swiftly sail,
Their chill defences hoping soon to breach—
To see no skies above, no ground below,
And in that nothingness toss to and fro
Is no sweet moment—will it never cease?—
Climbing and diving, thrown from side to side,—
All suddenly there comes a sense of peace
And o'er a wondrous scenery we glide.
O! what a splendour! Deep the cloudless blue
Whose sparkling azure has a gorgeous hue
On earth you know not—flaming bright the sun
Which shines upon a landscape, snowy-white
With all its power of unsullied light!
Deep in the shadowy valleys do we run,
And then above the towering summits soar,
And see for far-thrown miles yet, more and more,
Great mountain-ranges, rolling, white and soft,
With shadowy passes, cool, and huge, and dim,
Where, surely, angels wander as they hymn
Their happy songs, which wing their way aloft
To Him who made the sun—the azure deep—
And all this gleaming land of peace and sleep.

[40]

Alone I wander o'er this virgin land—
All, all for me—below the ploughman plods
Along his furrows, and with restless hand
The sower hurls his seed among the clods—
They cannot see the sun—grey is their sky,—
I see the sun—the heaven's blue—on high!
But I am human, and must e'en descend;
I bid farewell to all this lovely scene,
And plunge deep in a cloud—When will it end,
This hazy voyage?—See! the chequered green,
The scattered farmsteads, and the quiet sea,
Sunless and dim, come hurrying up to me.

France, 1917.

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