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A742

R6

1921

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1921

FOREWORD

I neither went to France, nor remained there to write poetry. I seemed too busy to try to market it. I had to see and hear and feel. Etchings and photographs, slides and the films of the life passed before me. Songs and strains and symphonies fell upon my ears. Many pictures are yet undeveloped; many songs unwritten are still ringing in my ears.

Herein are included a few snap-shots and a few bars of music. They have been named from my poem "Rough and Brown," because the experience at the Communion in the American Church in Paris was not of the transfigured Christ, so transcendent as to be unknown; not of the pale faced teacher whose scripture has been made so academic as to be often obscure; but of the one who was out in the weather, becoming tanned, sinewy, and hardened in the service of his humble fellows. He was a great reality in which the human and divine blended.

The visions and voices and sounds and experiences that came to me were of reality. At the expense of form and technique and even a satisfying idealism, it is my greatest wish that these lines ring true with reality.

The Author

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THE NEW YEAR BOOK.

1

Today, I have a brand new book,
Paged eighteen score and five; but look!
Before I hide it on my shelf,
Its blank! Ah, write herein myself!

2

Upon the top of every page,
I'll write some saying of a sage;
Then quietly with reverent care,
Compose an earnest, morning prayer.

3

To help me really live it then,
I'll end it with a real amen;
So I can always justly treat
The many people whom I meet;

4

But e're I turn each blotted leaf,
Indelible with grief and joy;
I'll have a smile and story brief
And tell it to some girl or boy.

GOD'S EASTER

1

I would not send one symbol
To veil this Easter-tide;
Like rabbits, romping nimble,
Or white eggs, richly dyed.
My message could not speak well,
If here your eyes espied
The songbird, chick or chime-bell,
With lilies intertwined.

They cover up the picture;
God's master colors hide;
They mar the scene from Scripture;
See Joseph's Tomb,—Christ Died!
But hark! The earth's a tremble,
It mourns the Crucified;
Then see Heaven's Host assemble,
With Christ throned by God's side.

CHRIST IS DEAD!

1

(A. D. 30)

Your Christ is dead,
The Romans said;
Into the land of Galilee,
His frightened, frail
Disciples fled.
But Caesar's guard
Were sleeping, hard.
Again along The Syrian Sea,
The Risen Christ
His followers led.

There were two great world contests between Militarism and Democracy.

(A. D. 1918.)

Your Christ is dead,
The Prussians said;
No more the man of Galilee,
With regal steps
The earth will tread.
But Kaiser's arm
No more can harm;
Again there rules from sea to sea
The Risen King
Of Kings, instead.

CHRIST OR NAPOLEON

1

Brush by the beggar
And enter the door,
Heed not the guide
At the souvenir store;
Silent and rev'rent
With uncovered head,
Come to the tomb
Of the high, honored dead.

The ideals of France are not those of Monarchy and Militarism, but the ideals of Him whose name was last upon the lips of France's real hero or heroine, Joan of Arc.

2

Soft and pale blue,
Is the delicate light,
Touching the crypt
Of the Monarch of Might;
Brilliant, bold rays
Through the window's gold stain,
Shine on the Cross
Of the Prince of Peace, slain.

3

Shells of the great
Hostile guns from afar;
Bombs of the enemy
Planes, from above;
Daily and nightly have
Threatened the dust
Of the great hero,
The populace love.

4

Hid is the dark, granite
Tomb of the Soldier;
Buried in hundreds
Of sand-laden bags;
Bared on the Cross
Is the form of the Saviour,
Only his frail limbs
Are covered with rags.

5

Desperate, dark, is the
Hour of the nation;
War-worn and weak
Is the Army of France,
Seeking the source
Of some miracle power
To stem and hurl back
The invaders' advance.

6

Soldier of Corsica's
Isle, is it you,
You whom the Army
Would summon "arise"?
Gird on your sabre
And mount the gray steed;
Fling the frail flags
To the shot-shattered skies?

7

God-Man of Bethlehem's
Town, is it you,
You who should lead
In this blood-laden hour?
Not on a charger,
But in every free breast
Moving men on
With a passion and power?

8

Christ or Napoleon,
Conquest—Crusade?
Dust or Divinity,
O tomb of the dead?
Elbe or Bethlehem—
Speak, France and say—
Who will it be
At the great Army's head?

9

History says,
Napoleon,
When all his deeds
On earth were done,
His face turned towards
The setting sun,
Said "Man of Nazareth,
You have won."

Beneath the bags
His ashes lay,
And there his flags
All dusty stay.
But—the Choir in
The Chapel sings
'Jesus lives,
He's King of Kings.'

“BORN ACROSS THE SEA”

1

In a land of vines and lilies,
Near a Sacred Syrian Sea;
Where caravans and armies came
From Rome and Araby;
In the fields of ancient battles,
Near the Shores of Galilee,
“In the beauty of the lilies,
Christ was born across the sea.”

I cannot conceive how Christ can ever come to the earth again except as his ideals and practices of life are reincarnated in the lives of men and nations.

In another land of lilies,
Near a war-beridden sea;
Where Nations came to guard the crib
Of Human Liberty;
In the fields of modern battles,
“Millions died to make men free;”
In the France of vines and lilies,
Christ’s reborn across the sea.

OUR CHRIST

1

I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe,
Could in the God-head be;
I only know the Manger Child,
Has brought God's life to me.

This was a Harvard Prize Christmas hymn, sung to "St. Agnes." With no premeditation it is a chronological Christology—a faith in the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection not based on arbitrary dogma, not an agnosticism but a testimony both naive and scientific—: experience.

2

I know not how that Calvary's Cross,
A world from sin, could free;
I only know its Matchless Love,
Has brought God's love to me.

3

I know now how that Joseph's Tomb,
Could solve death's mystery;
I know there is a Living Christ,
Our Immortality.

ROUGH AND BROWN

1

There walked the Son of God today,
Along the altar of His shrine;
Men saw Him as they stooped to pray,
And felt Him through the bread and wine.
The silver cup was shining bright,
The linen cloth was clean and white;
But as the plate was handed down,
They saw the bread was rough and brown.

There came the Son of God one day,
To worship in His Father's shrine;
Men saw Him drive the thieves away
Who profited in doves and kine.
His righteous eye was shining bright,
His seamless robe was clean and white;
But as He cast the tables down,
They saw his hands were rough and brown.

There walks the Son of God today,
Along His world's last battle-line;
Men see Him as they stop to pray,
And find Him human, though divine.
His saddened eye is shining bright,
His robe, though torn, is clean and white;
But men thank God that He sent down
A Son, whose hands were rough and brown.

THE EMPTY CUP

("Drink ye all of this.")

1

The priest stood robed in white and red,
Before the altar's cross of gold;
And held the cup above his head,
For all the people to behold.
He blessed the wine when they drew nigh,
To sip it from the vessel's rim,
Then drained the silver chalice dry
In token of the blood of Him.

Dedicated to the late Arch-deacon Stuck, missionary to Alaska, who was the celebrant at the Communion in St. Michael's, New York. There is no complete communing until His life within our life has issued in conduct that spends us as it did men like Arch-deacon Stuck.

Christ came in garments worn and rent
To greet within the Upper Room
His frail disciples, 'ere He went
To meet His own impending doom.
In symbol of the Cross and Nail,
He gave the blessed and broken bread,
Then passed the wine-filled Holy Grail;
"Now drink ye all of this," He said.

Thick, sluggish, unspilled blood of mine,
Which weekly at His sacred tryst,
Takes by transfusing of the wine
The sacrificing blood of Christ;
Leap through my veins and make me bleed
In conflict for the human need;
Hot surge with ceaseless discontent
Until each drop is spilled and spent.

THREE GIFTS

1

I wish I had a world of things
Like books and toys and gowns.
I would I had the wealth of kings,
In jewels, robes and crowns;
For if I were the man, who brings
The soldiers, drums and clowns,
And fills the Christmas stockings,
In hamlets, burghs and towns,
I'd bring or send you just the thing
You long have waited for;
And that would make two hearts to sing
Now could I ask for more?

Yes,—in this world of things and stuff,
Three priceless gifts are mine;
And were they yours 'twould be enough.
I come to make them thine.
One, is my own; the next, a hope;
The third, I point you to.
They are: my love, the love from friend,
And the love that dies for you.
So had I every gift to send,
And thine to be but three;
I'd send my love, the love from friend,
And the love that dies for thee.

THE WISE MEN

Of three wise men,
One was a king
Who ruled and owned
Most everything:
Fields and flocks
Both near and far,
Deepest mine
And distant star.

The second wise man
Was a priest,
Who gave the laws
For man and beast.
All the people
Raised their hands
And bowed the knee
At his commands.

Of these three men,
One was a sage,
Whose wisdom was
From age to age;
Young and old
Had rarest treat,
To come and listen
At his feet.

These three wise men,
Priest, sage, and king,
Who owned, ruled, knew
Most everything;
Found the Babe
Of Bethlehem,
To be the King
Of all of them.

HELP OF THE HILLS

1

Into thy bosom, thou
High Alpine Hills,
Wearied and worn with
The war that I flee;
Gladly I come, for thy
Quietness stills
The tense throbbing tumults
That sent me to thee.

While on leave, the words of the Psalmist were often suggested: "I will look unto the hills. Whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth."

2

Capped with the chaste clouds,
Clear lakes at thy feet,
Girded with garments of
Green grass and tree;
Sound is the slumber
And soothing the sleep,
Given to guests who
Go up unto thee.

3

Fare, fare thee well, thou
Faint forested forms.
Source and the symbol of
Strength unto me;
Seeing thy sides shroud
With sunshine and storms,
Helped me to Him, who
Made Heaven and thee.

THE TOAD STOOL

1

Despised, shunned whenever seen
The wretched toad-stool stands,
And leper-like, cries out "unclean"
And lifts its horrid hands.

2

"But look," it says, "I'm not a toad,
Be kind, seal not my doom;
Put back your hand, and sheathe your goad,
I am a lone mushroom."

3

Beware, despise the toad-stool man
Who lures thee with his guile,
And tries to poison thee, he can,
For he is low and vile.

4

“Hands off,” cries one, “I’m not a brute,
Beneath this grime, and tan,
And cotton of a toiler’s suit,
May live an honest man.”

“WHY COULD WE NOT?”

1

When Jesus lived
Upon the earth,
The people blind
And halt from birth,
With all the bent
And pale and lean,
Mangled in the
World's machine,
In simple faith
About Him kneeled,
Waiting to be
Touched and healed.

A layman living
In this hour,
Is found with wondrous
Healing power.
And now the crooked,
Crippled poor
Are thronging at
The Temple's door,
Pleading, hoping
That again,
The Church of Christ
May heal from pain.

The power of God
Is potent still,
To give to men
His healing skill.
The simple faith
Of pastor, priest
To use this gift
Has almost ceased.
And those who would
Their health receive,
In neither priest,
Nor God believe.

And now the source
Of greatest hope
Is current, knife
And microscope.
Physician and
The chemist toil
To find the herb
With healing oil.
But men forget
The Saviour's way,
To anoint with oil
And then to pray.

THE INTERCESSION

I know
As sure as falls the night,
At home, across the sea;
There kneels
A slender form in white,
To ask God's care of me.

PICKINGS

1

(New York Before the War.)

Little city children,
With bare and dirty feet,
Gathered lumps of fuel
That fell into the street.
Loud the stones were crying
When coal trucks rumbled by;
Frightened lumps leaped over
Like manna from the sky.

(France During the War.)

War-Pinched rich, and peasants,
Low-bending in the road,
Picked the tiny wire-nails
That fell from passing load.
Eager, trailing people
Who sought those trifling things,
Seemed to think them jewels
And coins thrown out by kings.

These pictures are absolutely faithful to the facts.

(Armenia After the War.)

Hordes of Near-East exiles,
With children on their backs,
Trudged from every village
To reach the rail road tracks.
Sand between the cross-ties
Was searched for every grain
Of precious wheat that filtered
From every passing train.

(Grace)

Reverently they bowed the head,
Thanking God for daily bread,
Prayed in words their fathers caught
From ancients whom the Saviour taught.

“I CANNOT SLEEP.”

1

All through the night
Frail figures creep
Before my sight:
Children, children, children stare
With sunken eyes and glassy glare:
Stunted, starved and spiritless,
Huddled in their helplessness.
Go, go, sweet sleep,
With speed of light
Across the deep,
To-night! To-night!

I cannot eat,
At every place,
My glances greet
A famished face:

Children, children, children stand
From each stricken foreign land,
Marking every move I make,
Watching every bite I take,
Up bread and meat,
Away, and race
With death! Defeat
Him: else, disgrace.

I cannot smile.
For aught I try,
I hear the while
A bitter cry:

Children, children, children pray
Shorn of strength to laugh and play;
Calling for their clothes and bread,
Finding cold and stones instead,
Then mile on mile,
Like lightning fly!
Go, bid them smile,
For help is nigh.

I cannot spend
Or hoard away;
I cannot lend
My gold for pay.

Children from across the seas,
See me in my wealth and ease;
How can I escape their eyes,
Or muffle their heart-rending cries?

God help me end
It! Here I lay
Half my goods. Send
It! To-day!

THE TIDES

1

When the tides of the sea go out,
Out where no one knows;
Barnacled bowlders, and sea-weedy stones,
Queer, crawling crabs, and dead fish-bones;
Litter the floor
Of the uncovered shore,
When the tides of the sea go out.

When the tides of the sea come in,
No one knows from where;

Wind-wrinkled eddies, surf born of the breeze,
Quick, creeping currents, and swelling seas;

Cover the floor

Of the unsightly shore,

When the tides of the sea come in.

A picture from the rock coast. Rather than the symbol of the alternating tide-like recurrence of war and peace, which after leaving a world with all of its horrors, covers it up by a flood of idealism, I would have the figure that of an ugly and broken life, covered by the divine forgiveness and united with that larger life which reaches into the beyond.

COMMUNION

One
Of those nights
When
The cannon were still,
A
Thought that I had
Was
Big as a hill.
It
Grew to a mountain,
Then
Leaped to the sky;
And
Made me lose fear
Of
My "next turn" to die.

SERGEANT SAMPSON

The finest sermon that I got
Was from old Sampson on his cot;

An army sergeant twenty years,
But not the kind a private fears.

The day he died he turned to me,
I knew he could not really see;

“Farewell,” he said, “may I forget
A world, where life is rule and get;

I’m glad that where I soon will live,
It’s natural to serve and give.

Our dead and missing gone across
Won’t have an army sergeant boss.”

One way to try to get an idea of who’s who and what’s what in Heaven would be to seek to conceive an individual or a society where it is actually habitual and instinctive to “serve and give.”

FORGIVE US

1

Little Mother, if you but knew
Of all the things that we went through:
The thrilling, chilling squeal of shells
That shattered to shreads our nervous cells;
The vermin flying around your head
Just come from what was lying dead;
The things you never like to tell—
Well, No-Man's Land, that sickening smell;

This is neither preachment, nor propaganda nor philosophy,
it is a photograph, the psychology of privates.

You would not join those pious folks
Who talked to take away our smokes.
You see now, why we fought to get
Our cut-plug, chew and cigarette?
You think it sin to smoke and chew
In all those places we went through?
Well if you do, sure as we live, Little Mother,
We'll give it up; will you forgive?

Minister Man, now you have been
Right down in the places we were in:
The shell-hole, pill-box, dug-out, trench,
With carcasses and human stench;
The water convoys hit by shells,
And all around you poisoned wells;
Your buddies flat with eyes all set,
Men wanting stuff to help forget;

Would you call one a drunken hog
Because he filled on Tommy's grog?
Lakowski's dead. Will it go hard
On him for swilling French pinard?
Say Chaplain, really do you think
It was a sin for us to drink?

Well if it was, sure as we live, Minister Man,
We'll give it up; will you forgive?

Good Lord Jesus, now you were there;
And heard the fellows curse and swear;
With Germans close, machine guns jammed,
You know the way we cursed and damned.
And when they pulled that "Kamerad" stuff,
'Twas "damn the cowards, treat 'em rough,
Butt or bayonet, ram 'em, jam 'em"
Right and left you heard "God damn 'em."

And if about their homes they'd yell,
We'd stick 'em through with "give 'em Hell."
Yes times and places "over there,"
The fellows did not have to swear.
But when our job was fighting "Fritz,"
'Twas like your Scribes and Hypocrites.
You understand we're positive, Good Lord Jesus,
We'll give it up, for You'll forgive.

BILL HODGE

I can't believe Bill Hodge "went west,"
He seemed so different from the rest.

The hardest thing to think of Bill,
Is that he's somewhere, lying still.

His body might be buried, dead,
But Bill is pushing on ahead;

For he was live from top to toe,
Always up and on the go;

This is but a foot-note to my revered teacher Prof. Royce's
argument for immortality, namely: "the unfinished task."

If Heaven's a place to sit around,
It's not where Bill Hodge will be found.

But if St. Peter lets him through,
I wonder what he'll find to do?

Not a clapping with his palms,
Playing harps and singing psalms.

It's not in Bill to loaf or shirk,
I know that he is hard at work.

For first among our entering mob
You'll see Bill looking for a job.

I'll find the place where he "went west"
And scratch off his tomb "at rest."

I see him now as he went out.
Bill Hodge won't halt and face about.

Whatever Heaven's created for,
Bill will fight some kind of war.

Give him to choose one of the stars;
His war-like soul would pick out Mars.

I guess the place he's going to,
Will have enough for all to do.

God could not look Bill in the face,
If Heaven was just a loafing place.

THE QUEST FOR A THEME

If I but had such human words,
That sing as sweet as song of birds;
Which make a picture for the eyes,
Alluring as Italian skies;
Yet clear, transparent for the sight,
As air upon a star-lit night;

I would always wish to print this at the end of any and every volume I may write—And yet I did find a theme, a symbol, a fact and a life which is a challenge to the integrity of the individual, and the solidarity of the human race. It was Helen Gray Cone's poem "The Coat Without a Seam."

I'd paint and sing a picture-song,
For all the child-like human throng;
With greatest theme, the sweetest sound
That man has ever sung or found.
A poem not so dark and deep,
That children will not love or keep;
Nor sound from music of the spheres,
Which earth's frail childhood never hears;
But color for the dullest eyes,
Which in the memory never dies;

And voices for the dullest ear,
Whose tones shall last from year to year,
From early morn till evening late,
I listen, dream, implore and wait,
Each day I hold an empty cup;
I guess I'll have to give it up.
So come with me, and let us look
At Out-of-Door's real picture-book;
And for the sound more sweet than words,
I'll stop. Let's listen to the birds.

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