



CYRUS CASWELL JOHNSON

Collected Poems

THE COMPLETE RECOVERED POETRY

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

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ARCHIVAL IMAGES

The poet and the material history of his book



Cyrus Caswell Johnson, from the family-history dossier preserved in the project files.

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POOLS OF GLASS
AND OTHER POEMS

BY
CYRUS C. JOHNSON



Los Angeles
The TIMES-MIRROR Press
1924

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Original from
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Title page of Pools of Glass and Other Poems (1924).

INTRODUCTION

Blacksmith, soldier, police officer, public reader, and poet

Cyrus Caswell Johnson made poetry from a life that almost never allowed him the leisure of a literary career. Born in Kansas and brought to Los Angeles as a child, he left school at nine for a blacksmith's shop, served in the United States Army, joined the Los Angeles Police Department, and became locally famous as the city's "policeman-poet." His verse moved through newspapers, club programs, church services, radio broadcasts, and public recitals before *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* appeared from the Times-Mirror Press in 1924. The book's lyrics of childhood, bereavement, war, faith, California landscape, and civic memory preserve both the aspiration and strain of a self-educated working writer. This edition resets the complete poetic contents of *Pools of Glass*, restores its prefatory material, and adds "Beauty for Ashes," verified in the January 1924 issue of *Broadcast*. Earlier newspaper witnesses are recorded where the local dossier verifies them, but poems already collected in the book are not duplicated. A Washington State finding aid describes a manuscript titled "Wild Geese Flew to the South Last Night" as Johnson's; comparison with the published record shows that the text is Annie Crim Leavenworth's "Wild Geese," so it is documented as a catalog problem rather than included under Johnson's name.

Biography

Cyrus Caswell Johnson was born on February 27, 1886, in Clyde, Cloud County, Kansas. Census and family records preserved in the project dossier place him in Los Angeles by 1900 as the son of Pinkey Bell Johnson. He later described an education interrupted by necessity: at nine he left school and entered blacksmithing, a trade whose physical labor became part of his public image as a self-taught poet. Los Angeles directories trace him through working-class neighborhoods east and south of the early city center, including Stephenson Avenue and San Pedro Street.

From October 1906 through February 1908 Johnson served in the United States Army. Back in Los Angeles, he continued manual work and appeared briefly in local politics as a 1913 candidate for constable in Belvedere. Poetry began reaching newspaper readers soon afterward. “The Goal” and “Sometimes” appeared in 1914; “Our Holiday,” “Prayer,” “The House of Yesterday,” “Vacation Pictures,” and an “In Memoriam” followed in 1916. These were not juvenilia hidden from public view but civic and occasional poems circulated by metropolitan and inland California papers.

Johnson joined the Los Angeles Police Department in August 1917 as patrolman number 379. The combination of badge and verse made him a newsworthy figure. During and immediately after the First World War, newspapers printed “Farewell,” “Broken,” “Alpha,” “Sergeant Joyce Kilmer,” “The Healing Hills,” “The Prince of Peace,” “The Babe of Bethlehem,” “Life,” “Calling Back,” “Love and Sorrow,” “Good Gifts,” “Offertory,” “An Ode to the Ships,” “Dreams,” “Memories,” and other poems. He read for benefits and churches, and he was repeatedly profiled as a blacksmith, soldier, student, and policeman who had fought his way toward literature. In July 1919 an automobile ran over his foot while he was making an arrest; reports treated even the injury as another episode in the policeman-poet legend.

The publishing history of *Pools of Glass* extended across several years. A booklet bearing the title was on sale by December 1920, while a larger edition accumulated prepublication orders in 1923 and was issued by the Times-Mirror Press in 1924. John Steven McGroarty praised Johnson’s work, and Earl Wayland Bowman supplied the book’s brief introduction. Johnson’s recitations became part of Los Angeles club and church culture: he appeared before the Scribblers’ League, the Los Angeles Story Writers’ Club, the Longer Life League, women’s clubs, Kiwanis, Rotary, police and fire organizations, and congregations across the city. In late 1923 he read over KHJ; in January 1924 KFI broadcast selections from the new book to a wider audience.

His police career was less orderly than the legend suggested. In 1922 Mynie Bremner told the police commission that Johnson had courted her and promised marriage while still married. He was dismissed in March after public hearings, appealed, and was restored to duty in August on the memorable condition, as one report put it, that he refrain from reciting poetry to the force. Johnson later advanced to sergeant, commanded units in North Hollywood and Van Nuys, worked with motor patrols, and became associated with police

pistol teams. He retired as a lieutenant in November 1937 after roughly twenty years of service.

Johnson's identity as poet, speaker, outdoorsman, marksman, and amateur authority on California history continued beyond the book. Newspaper notices record performances, sermons, nature talks, hunting stories, radio appearances, and later poems including "Little Seas," "The Bluebell's Breath," and "Resurrection Garments." His poetry was featured in a 1937 radio program called "Garden of Verse." After retirement he lived in Ventura County and remained active as a lecturer and religious speaker; later notices also connect him with faith healing. The dossier records marriages to Madge L. Motley, Vera Elfada Schmidt, Beatrice Evangeline Davis, and, three days before his death, Elaine Luella Overlock; a 1926 marriage to Leona Massie Griggs also appears in a secondary genealogy record, but that record gives a conflicting birth date and requires documentary confirmation.

Johnson died in Ventura County on April 10, 1974, three days after his final marriage; Thousand Oaks is given as the place in the family record. He left a publication history far larger than the survival of one book initially suggests. The archive shows a writer whose poems circulated through newspapers, radio, churches, police culture, and public entertainment, and whose literary ambition persisted through manual labor, military service, departmental scandal, and a long retirement. *Pools of Glass* is therefore not an isolated curiosity but the center of a dispersed Southern California career.

EDITORIAL NOTE AND SOURCES

Corpus, source control, and reading-text policy

The 1924 Times-Mirror scan is the authority for lineation, stanza breaks, indentation, subtitles, and book order. The edition does not reproduce narrow source-page wraps or OCR spacing. Obvious recognition debris, split words, damaged quotation marks, and false spaces are corrected against the page image.

Every poem begins on a new page. Book and journal titles in editorial matter are italicized. Earlier newspaper printings of poems later collected in *Pools of Glass* are not repeated as separate poems; their publication history is recorded in the apparatus when verified.

The reset book includes the author's prefatory note and Earl Wayland Bowman's introduction. The uncollected "Beauty for Ashes" is read from the original *Broadcast* page. The disputed "Wild Geese" manuscript is excluded pending direct archival inspection.

POOLS OF GLASS AND OTHER POEMS: PRELIMINARIES

Earl Wayland Bowman's introduction and Johnson's prefatory note

Introduction

"Pools of Glass!" It is the low, sweet note of a thrush, calling in the night to its nestlings; it is the burning ecstasy of the lark, beating up and up into sunlit spheres to pluck eternal rhapsodies from the jeweled harps of Eros; it is the whispering voice of the river crooning lullabies to daffodil and goldenrod and the humble clover flowers rooted in mossy banks; it is the crashing thunder of a tumultuous sea, hurling waves of passionate faith against the granite cliffs which bar the paths to Nirvana—It is the cry of a human soul, pledging itself to God!"

—*Earl Wayland Bowman*

In suggesting to Mr. Bowman that he contribute the introduction for my book, it was with the hope he would add just a touch of eloquence—for which he is noted and which in my own simple lines is so lacking—and I was not disappointed.

—*The Author*

Preface

Necessity and environment have withheld from me the lines of intellectual endeavor compatible with my desires. Years in the crafts of steel and iron and as a police officer have stolen the time which I had hoped to devote to the acquisition of literary training. However, I make no apology for the contents of this book, but confess there is not a single number within its pages which satisfies me—all my struggling songs being far below the conception and the melody striven for—yet there is not one of them which did not need to be sung.

In the complex of life there is always need to strive for more potent language with which to express our love—to give our common joys more poignant expression; with which to portray our pain.

Gratitude impels me to acknowledge my indebtedness to those who have helped me out of my inarticulate days by their wisdom and their friendship, some of whom have been my best schoolmasters: to Rev. Earl G. Haydock, who led me from the anvil to the university classroom and who bridged for me what seemed an impassable gulf in the road of life; to Senator Earl Wayland Bowman, who has encouraged me to write in spite of all limitations and who has proven by his splendid example that even a one-time cowboy can give the world beautiful and joyous literature; to Irvin S. Cobb, who found time in his busy life to chat with me, to read my verse, and whose example of what can be done in overcoming early obstacles has been a source of constant inspiration; to John Steven McGroarty, who has talked with me by the way and who has given me of his personal interest and the light of his genius; to H. H. Van Loan and to Ben Field—these and many others whose advice and friendship I highly prize, I am greatly indebted—and shall always be, if ever I am equipped and inspired to write one ringing and lasting line.

—*The Author*

POOLS OF GLASS AND OTHER POEMS

The complete poetic contents of the 1924 Times-Mirror edition

Pools of Glass

Once there was a barefoot lad
With tangled yellow hair;
He was brown and thin and roughly clad,
But the light in his eye was fair.

He lived where the open skies enthrall,
And the hills go rolling up,
And the friend that knew him best of all
Was a lop-eared spotted pup.

They always knew where the rabbits played
In the fields of waving grass,
And of a spring in the sycamore shade
With water clear as glass.

There the meadow lark and the oriole
Showed bright in the glistening green,
The pool reflected a deep blue bowl,
Where drifting clouds were seen.

The lop-eared pup, with fearless eye,
Stood guard while the boy would dream,
For squirrels barked from trees close by
Which grew by the murmuring stream.

This was their heaven of bliss and joy
Where the hills went rolling up,
For no one understood the boy,
And no one liked the pup.

The boy was happy, his heart was pure
As the pool that was clear as glass.

His days were full and his friends were sure
In the fields of waving grass.
: “I, “Then, someone poisoned the pup one day,

And the boy, he watched him die—
And then alone—he went away
From where the stream sang by.

Sometimes when weary of the play—
For the years have left their stain—
Some guiding spirit leads the way
To the Blessed Hills again.

To a dreaming boy by crystal streams,
Near fields of waving grass,

The soft winds kiss him as he dreams,
And the pool is clear as glass.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 13–14.

Memories

I long to wander back again
To a little white house in the hedge,
With bare feet follow the pools of rain
In the creek by the sycamore ledge.

There was no fear in the pasture lane,
No tears in the blue, blue sky;
And oh! I would walk the meadows again
In the morn as the clouds drift by.

I would lie in the fragrant fillaree
And hear the school bell ring,
And as the years slipped away from me
I would sleep while the blue birds sing.

My lop-eared dog would come back from the shade,
Where the years have hid him with vines;
He would lead me away to the old spring glade
Where squirrels barked from the pines.

Then up the winding creek we'd stray
And leave the years far behind;
And the hills would hide our hearts away,
For the hills are always kind.

The shady pool as clear as glass
Would claim our unshed tears,
And golden poppies in the grass
Would heal the hurt of years.

With wond'rous rest the hills would bless
A heart as tired as mine
With peace and sweet forgetfulness
And air like rarest wine.

Though pools are dry, the birds have gone,
No time can dim or sever
The vision fair that called us on,
Shall call us on forever.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 15–15.

Love and Sorrow

A GARDEN blooming in the spring,

Flowers creeping everywhere,
Happy songs that children sing
Drifting on the rosy air,
Sunlight bright as burnished gold,
Laughter like a silver bell;
Such a garden grew to hold
Love, where only two might dwell.

Then upon a winter's night
Came a storm across the plain,
Thunder clouds and flashing light
And the weeping of the rain.
In the morning's misty dawn,
Stark and white the lilies lay,
And the lovely songs were gone
Like the roses blown away.

Now down where the flowers sleep
Summer comes and goes in vain,
Never more a rose shall leap
To the kisses of the rain;
Never more shall laughter ring,
Or the songs of pure delight;
Evermore the rain shall bring
Sounds of weeping in the night.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 16–16.

My Old Friend

Sometimes he sat in the sunshine,
And sometimes in the shade
Of sycamores and grapevine

In which the linnets played.

He dreamed away the summer days,
When clouds were white and high,
His home was far above the ways
Where hilltops met the sky.

And many a time my lop-eared pup
And I that pathway trod;

Where golden hills went rolling up
To where he lived with God.

The sun made silver of his hair,
And lit his kindly face;

And there was peace and quiet there
Which hovered o'er the place.

And many a time my dog and I
Sat spell-bound with his story,
As he would picture in the sky
A country he called Glory.

He told me other things to be
Far down the path of years;

I can't forget his telling me;
I can't forget his tears.

But how he knew I do not know;

His dim eyes seemed to see
The rugged path my feet would go,
And who would come to me.

O'er flowered fields I went my way,
And oh! the skies were blue,

But all has happened since that day;

And now I know he knew.

And when the last time I returned,
Sweet April flowers were creeping,
The setting sun in amber burned;
And then I found him sleeping.

A halo hovered o'er his hair,
The west gleam lit his face,
As he sat smiling in his chair
In his accustomed place.

He faced thg vista he loved best,
As though to tell a story;
And far out in the flaming west
A stairway ran to Glory.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 17–18.

In Memoriam—Warren G. Harding

He passed with the summer sunset on a sea where clear tides flow,
We cannot follow the golden ship which rode in the
afterglow.

Our eyes are dim.

The breath of immortality, supernal breezes blow
To waken him.

He listened with affection while his beloved read
And seemed to hear the Master's voice, "Read on, read on,"
he said.

,

He listened well;
'or the voice he heard was the voice of God, who calls the
righteous dead
With Him to dwell.

Nise counselor, brave leader, laid low in manhood's prime,
The King has called thee from our land to mansions more
sublime,
Where brightness gleams;
To his fair capitol of rest—to rarer summertime—
And sweeter dreams.

Nith hearts that will not let thee go, we mourn our crush-
ing loss,
ind yet where winds no longer blow, beneath a crimson
cross,
Where sorrows cease,
Thy ship is anchored safe, we know, where storm tides
cannot toss—
In endless peace.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 19–19.

Images and Idols

Broken, lie behind me on the great highway of truth;
My gods are dead and broken, lo, in the dust they lie,
But oh! the curse of a pagan heart is love that will not die.

Images and idols from the temple of my youth,
There is need of manly valor, of word and deed to cheer;
The God above is one of love, the ace of hell is fear;
There are world-old idols by the way to lure the passer-by,
But the heaviest rod in the hand of God is love that will
not die.

In darkness and in daylight, let us bravely face the path,
For feet that stray from the given way shall know a place
of wrath;
The soul may call to brazen sky, but none can know or feel
The sting of love that will not die and the hurt that will
not heal.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 20–20.

Consummation

We only think we do not love
Long after the storm has past,
When the chill rain falls and skies above
Are rent with the fearsome blast.

We only think we do not care
When the slow years roll apace,
But far o'er the path of our dreams so fair,
Hid deep in a thicket of thorns somewhere,
Stands Love at her trysting place.

The angel Love eternally waits,
While the dull hard clay must burn,
Knowing that some day through the gates,
Wearied and bruised of many fates,

A lover shall return—

Wearied, but knowing that God knew best
When love's young vows were made;
And rest shall come to the soul distressed,
When love re-enters the desolate breast,
Like a dove that flies to its own home nest

In the myrtle blossom's shade.

When the shapes and shadows of mortal sight
Return to the traveler never,

And tears are gone that blurred the light,

And eyes are healed that were hurt in the night,

And the words that fell like a crimson blight
Are locked in their clay forever.

When the Master who called the atoms to Him
From out the lightless past,

Shall gather the stars on the farthest rim

Of the outer universe high and dim,

At last my cup of joy shall brim,
My love shall hold me fast.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 21–21.

Calling Back

Had I the power to span the spheres
And gird Orion in his might,
Or call the pale, retreating years
Back to me from realms of light,
I'd seize the charts of yesterday,
Where mortal words and deeds are furled,
And on those pages dim and grey
Would read the records of the world.
And oh, I know some angel fair
Would turn the pages to the day
An awful thing was written there
And let me tear the page away.
Then I would be a child again,
In a glad world. The happy tears
Would wash away the crimson stain,
The dull heartache of the years
Would never, never come again,
But vanish like the mists away,
If I could call back yesterday.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 22–22.

An Olden Trail

In a canyon lined with flowers—

A mountain meadow vale

Roofed o'er with grapevine bowers—
I found an Olden Trail.

The sinking sun sent shafts of gold
O'er canyon wall and mountain crest,
While deep in the lilies a fountain told
Some strange sweet tale in notes of rest.

At last dense foliage hid the path,
Love vine and ivy trailed around

Like a warning or the sword of wrath
That guarded long forbidden ground.

Here the fountain sang in a sweeter strain
And was lost in the thrill of a thrush's song,
There faintly echoed a note of pain

As from one who had hoped, and waited long.

Some secret old is guarded well
And lost in rugged canyon walls,
For the silent hills will never tell
The grief that sings in the waterfalls.

Oh, Olden Trail to yesterday,

By the grieving stream in the water-cress,
“Ye tempt the hungry heart away

To the valley of forgetfulness.

Many a soul has traveled thee far,

To be lost in the maze where night shades stir,
Forsaking the land of things that are,

For the hopeless love of things that were.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 23–23.

This Want of You

I need the sight the years have made,

I see more clearly now
The softening hand of time has laid
Its silver on my brow.

I need life's sunshine and its rain,
Its dreams that come not true,
The storm, the blindness and the pain

That left this want of you.

I need to know that love gives all
The strength to meet the rod,

To drink the wormwood and the gall
They gave the Son of God.

But when my stumbling feet are set
Upon the streets of gold

In angel songs can I forget
The songs you sang of old?

No! Memory's living soul is flame,
Love knows not time nor space,
The ages vast shall hold your name,

Eternity—your face.

For some immortal fiery brand
Has seared my being through,

And only God can understand
This old, old want of you.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 24–24.

The Cry of Adam

Life the riddle, death the secret, long my spirit has beguiled.
I am weary of the darkened road I keep,
And my heart has failed me, crying like a tired, tired child,
That has strayed afar and grieving, falls asleep.

I have traveled far from glory, where the morning lay
amain.

There I sang the song Creation taught me well;

I went singing with the Sons of God; my spirit knew no pain,

For I sang the song of man before he fell.

Worlds had lavished earth with splendor that our Eden
might enthrall,

Heaven had flung her flowers on the sod;

Oh, I loved you then my lover, with a love before the fall,

That was part of Immortality and God.

Fair as the eternal jewels in the City of the Blest,

With the beauty that the art of God had made,

You, the dazzling thing of rapture that he moulded from
my breast,

Looked upon me and you loved me, unafraid.

Oh, the wisdom that He taught us, while the stars marched
in review,

Oh, the music and the symphony of spheres,

All is blotted out forever, and the happiness we knew

Is beneath a soundless sea of human tears.

Chaos fell, the winds of sorrow blew the earth dust in our
eyes,

Death and hell betrothed the hand of Birth,

Wisdom, spurned, gave back no answer, silence swallowed

up our cries,

God had left us with a curse upon the earth!

I am Adam of the Ages, blind with greed and sick with lust,

And I cry in pain beneath Thy awful rod.

Oh, Maker! Breathe upon this clay, this broken crumbling
dust,

This clay that dreams of Paradise—and God.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 25–26.

Good Gifts

Give us not gold in bursting chests,
Or snowy mansions on green hills,
That pomp and pride may fill our breasts
With selfishness and hate that kills.

This pageant passes on its quest,
Its steady march no hand can stay;
This mighty throng can never wrest

A moment's time from yesterday.

Today is master of our fate,
He slowly pays and takes a toll,

With flaming sword he guards the gate
That hides tomorrow's cherished goal.

O God of time, should we not know
We hold no farthing of our own?
From whence we come or where we go,

Each soul is naked and alone.

Since all must pass and none may stay
To own an acre of the land,

Grant this most precious gift, we pray,
That hearts may know and understand.

Of all the treasures from Thy hands,
None are so dear, so fair, so good,
As when a true heart understands,
As when a soul is understood.

O God, since Thou must call us on,
Beyond the pale of mortal ken,

One day, we pray, e'er we have gone,
May we be known and loved of men.

Mother

Thy name is like the echo of an evening vesper bell,
Like the music of some sweet supernal chord;

Delectable with fragrance as a mountain meadow dell
Or the lilies in the Garden of the Lord.

For us you trod the valley when death was on the hill,
Lingered at the gate, that we might be;

Found a thousand golden comforts our childish hearts to fill,
All the heaven we have known has come from thee.

There were hearts that hungered for thee in a million gal-
lant sons,
Bravely facing death in trenches and the plain,
While amid the noise of battle came the lullabies again,
Singing sweet above the thunder of the guns.

While the winds of death were blowing and the souls of men
were going
From the ranks of all thy noble, stalwart sons,
There were angel voices ringing and a dear familiar singing,
Sweet and clear above the thunder of the guns.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 28–28.

Sometimes

Sometimes through starlit heavens deep

A great white world goes dashing past,
With half the earth below asleep,
To sink away in regions vast,

And no man sees.

Sometimes in early morning sky,
With roseate glory softly shaded,
A bright new star shines forth on high
And lingers'til the night has faded,
And no man sees.

Sometimes in mountain meadows vale,
When summer comes with sunbeams laded,
The sweetest roses bloom and pale,
And scent the breeze when they have faded,
And no man sees.

Sometimes a soul so bright and strong,
Heart's loveliness so grand and tender,
In life's mad rush is forced along,
The music lost he was to render,
And no man sees.

Sometimes a heart of God's own mould
Receives a thrust that wounds forever,
Great bleeding drops make his soul grow old

And the sickle falls, life's thread to sever,
And no man sees.

Ofttimes we see not heaven's delight,
The perfumed rose may bloom obscure,
And hearts both beautiful and bright,
Their brokenness alone endure,
And no man sees.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 29–29.

Abraham Lincoln

He came from the forest's mighty heart
Where pure clear rivers ran.
God tore the fresh green earth apart
And, once more, made a man.

The oaks gave him their homely grace,
The flowers his tender breast,

Then sorrow kissed his furrowed face,
And grief his brow caressed.

He toiled for us the long hard day;
One night his eyes grew dim,
And glory bore his soul away
From a cross blood-stained and grim.

The ages claim him for their own.
No time this love can sever.

In true men's hearts he stands, alone
Among the great forever.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 30–30.

The Old Street

Yesterday I went down the old street
Past the little drab house.
The window panes seemed tired eyes;
- The doorway called to me;
The sun was shining brightly
On the pepper trees in their bright green lace.
A mocking bird dropped to the lawn
As I tarried.
And a fruit vendor was crying his wares.
I looked at the old door where you used to greet me
When I came home tired and cross
From the iron mills.

All was still but the mocking bird
And the fruit vendor.
The years have made little change
In the old street.
I sat on the steps blinking like an owl in the sun.

Presently I heard the happy laughter of little children,
And around the corner came an old hurdy-gurdy man,
Grinding out his racking tunes.
Suddenly I remembered how you used to laugh at the
antics of the monkey
And at the music of the hurdy-gurdy.

And when I looked again the street was blurred with silver
like a running river,
And the music of the hurdy-gurdy was sweet and far
away.
Then all was still once more
Down the old street,
And I sat blinking like an owl in the sun.

The music of the hurdy-gurdy will never cease,
And sometimes clear and god-like above that medley of
sounds
I hear the music of your silvery voice,
And I find peace,

And my spirit walks the fine old street at noon
Under the lacey pepper trees
By the little drab house,
And I am glad I heard the music and the medley
Of the hurdy-gurdy man.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 31–32.

Mothers of Men

There's a name that shall outshine the jewels of kings,
With a royal gleam finer than purple, and gold,
Suggesting the whispering rustle of wings;
Tis a name that is old as the ages are old.

It was lisped in the garden of infinite dreams,
In the Eden of time when the first babe was born;
It was writ on the lilies in silver moonbeams;
And blown on the wind from the lips of the morn.

It was heard in the temples of ancient Cathay.

It is blest on the lips of a vast human race,

It has followed men's souls who have wandered away;
With a love only found in omnipotent grace.

When shadows of death on fields that were red

Have silenced the trumpeting thunder of guns;

It has borne to the skies the last prayers that men said;
And claimed there, immortalized heroes for sons.

It is pure as the beauty of flowers unknown;
Beyond human eye, in some far mountain glen.

Supreme in its loveliness, standing alone—
This name, that we give to the mothers of men.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 33–33.

The Top of the Peaks

There's a drowsy hush on the summer air,
The dragon flies hover the lake,
And it's up in the mountain gardens fair
There is rest that my soul would take.
It is cool where the brook sings its song to my heart
'Neath the willow and wild berry vines,
And I gaze to the blue where the hills stand apart,
To the peaks with their girdle of pines.
There is peace in the sight of the meadows all green
And a hush that my weary soul seeks;
But, oh! where the radiant glories are seen
Is at morn on the top of the peaks.
I have heard some sweet music in churches of men,
Where a black-robed minister speaks;
But, oh! I would hark to the chorus again
That sings o'er the top of the peaks.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 34–34.

A Reverie

Today I rest on a lonesome strand
Where mountains bend to catch the spray,
To north and south are miles of sand,
The seagulls seldom pass this way.

The sunlight plays to the skyline rim
In dashing, flashing spots of gold,

And whirling whitecaps wave and skim
Then leap to the line where waves unfold.

I catch the gleam of a far-off sail
That moves serene in heaven's blue,

I hear the lone loon's troubled wail,
As crows fly landward two by two.

The green and blue of hill and sea,
As honey'd flowers nod close by,
Create a wine of wizardry,

And I forget that I am I.

And I forget for one brief hour
The long dark lanes wherein I toil,

Where wheels and hammers throb with power,
And vats of molten iron boil.

Where men bend low with shoulders bare
O'er curling twisting livid steel,

And face the blast of furnace flare
With nerves that almost cease to feel.

And I forget that men must war

And forge the guns with which to kill,
And that we toil to help them more

In digging nameless graves to fill.
Scenes that might blend in Dante's dream
Claim youth and strength in diligence,
And give where vulcan fires gleam,

But knotted hands and ignorance.

But now I rest my soul and see
The sunlight flash on yonder spray.
Today I am rich, and glad, and free,
And as I muse I humbly pray,

That some day by the Sea of Gold,
When I shall watch the silver sprays
On the shores where Pearly Gates unfold,
Let me forget these darker days
Where greener hills shall mount on high.

There at the parting of the ways,
May I be glad that I am I.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 35–36.

That Old Houn' Dog of Mine

(With the Usual Apologies to James Whitcomb Riley)

When memory takes me roving to the land of long ago,
To the dear old scenes of boyhood and the friends

I used to know,

Oh, I love the most to wander down a little country lane,

Where the ones who loved me dearly are all with me once
again.

There in the fields of fancy I can see our old roan mare,

And robin redbreasts from the trees are callin' everywhere.

I hear the guinea-hens and geese, the lowing of the kine,

But most of all I long to hear "that old houn' dog of mine."

Oh, how I loved to hear him in the foothills far away,

And I could tell by every note just what he'd brought to bay.

Oh, what a doleful note he'd strike when out beneath the
moon,

Down in the meadow sycamores, he'd tree a scamp raccoon.

Then I would up and dress me, and I'd grab the old shotgun;

Listening to get direction, I would light out on the run,

And there would be "old faithful" with a fat coon up a tree,

And he would give an extra howl by way of greeting me.

Then bang! would go my musket, in the stillness of the night,

With only fine shot in the gun, and then there'd be a fight.

Like raving, snapping furies they would have it "cheek by
jowl,"

Till the dog would get the 'strangle hold" and then he'd
chew and growl.

Next morning when I'd find old dog deep in his morning
doze,

I'd count the scars of battle and the scratches on his nose,

And when his sleep was over he would drag around the
place—

I knew he longed for night, and coons, by the look upon his
face,

Which always bore a wrinkled-up, apologetic look,
Until the quail began to call, at sundown by the brook.
One day while shooting rabbits, out in the pasture lot,
I missed a jumping bunny and my poor old dog got shot.
Oh, how I grieved to hear him voice his sad and plaintive

wail,

Until I found he'd only lost two inches off his tail.

*

Some day when I grow weary of the struggle here below,
I hope that God will give me back some friends I used to
know.

I want to hear the lullabies my mother used to croon;

And out across the glistening fields, beneath a silvery moon,
While all the world is beautiful and still as it can be,

I want to hear my old houn' dog, a-callin' just for me.

Then I shall hurry through the night, and through the
jeweled-grass;

My "old roan mare" shall whinny, callin' to me as I pass;
But I shall never stop until, out in the peaceful night,
I join that boy and dog again, in valleys of delight.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 37–38.

White-Winged Thoughts

I send these loving thoughts that try
Like white-winged doves to mount the skies,
Breasting a storm of doubt, they fly,

Their dewy wings shall touch your eyes.

The storm is long, my bark is frail,
The water rises like a sea;

But love is true, and will not fail
To bring my white-wings back to me.

Each night I scan the endless flood,
My eyes are dim with youth-time love;
But once in colors bright as blood,
The sunset, bore a homing dove.

Some evening with my bark at rest,

In skies where dying daylight clings,
I know I'll glimpse each snowy breast,
And hear the rustle of their wings.

Beyond this tide of stricken ships,
White plumed, to sail another sea,
Their silken wings shall kiss your lips
Ere these my doves come back to me.

Some rainbow morn, through drifting rain,
Bright pinions like a shining fleece

Shall bear these white thoughts home again;
And bring my ship-eternal peace.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 39–39.

Sergeant Joyce Kilmer

High were his songs to those who fell
Before the battle's withering breath,

For the graves of those he loved so well
He plucked a plume from the wings of death.

No darkened night his soul could dim,
No storm could veer his spirit's flight;
The singing winds harped unto him
Above the rumblings of the fight.

Now near his wood the Rouge Bouquet,
Where morning-glories love to bloom,

The four winds croon their hymns today
In whispers o'er the poet's tomb.

His singing soul now chants anew
High songs in love's celestial bars;

In happy vales beyond the blue,
Beyond the tracery of the stars.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 40–40.

Conciliation

When I think I have forgotten, your face of long ago;
When I think I have forgotten, the smile I used to know;
And that I nevermore shall hear the sweet lute of your voice,
And my heart, grown sick with dreams, would seek another choice;
Or when, to some fair mountain height, my stumbling feet have trod,
That I may find the joy which comes to men alone with God.
As loving clouds of spotless white, like chariots of snow,
Ope' chambers filled with diadems and call my soul to go;
When I hear the soft winds singing, as they only sing on high,
For those who seek the voice of God, when none of earth are nigh.

'Tis then my burning brow grows cool with unseen hands caressed,
For immortality draws near, with love, and peace, and rest;
Then as the glowing sunset skies are touched with rosy blue,
Reflected from the Gates of Pearl, I see the soul of you;
And I know that I am infinite, and that my love was furled
Upon the mighty charts of God before He made the world;
Forever—and immutable—is writ my feeble prayer,
And they who guide the myriad worlds shall keep it burning there.

And now I know why once I lost the road I strayed upon;
Why in the dark I lost your hand—I called and found you gone!
'Twas that I find a rarer gleam of rapture, heaven sent,
To lead me through this troubled dream—to love, Omnipotent.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 41–41.

Thanksgiving Offertory

Today let all be thankful for the blessing of the earth
And the gracious Hand that gives us life today;
For the memory of our fathers and the land that gave
us birth,
For the sons of might who guard the U. S. A.

For her teeming, throbbing cities with their buildings to
the sky,
For the endless wealth they send by road and rail;
For the safety of our harbors as the mighty ships go by,
For her stalwart crews in blue that never fail.

Let us climb her lofty mountains in gratitude to scan
Blessed valleys stretching far from sea to sea.

They were molded by God's fingers for the Paradise of man
For a race of men conceived in liberty.

Let us thank the God of Battle for the victory we have won,

For our flag of blue and white and unstained red;
Let us thank the God of Peace for a long peace just begun
And the faith we kept unbroken with the dead.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 42–42.

An Ode to the Ships

From out Immensity they come,
And the anteroom of Life,

Weak, inarticulately dumb,
To join the world of strife.

Misunderstood, perhaps, to be,
To fret awhile and grow,

And then, like ships on a chartless sea
Into the world to go.

And no one here may read the log
Or the hidden charts they keep,

Or know what port beyond the fog
Awaits them o'er the deep.

Or know what ship shall boldly ride
Safe where the high seas foam,

And bear triumphant o'er the tide
Some precious cargo home.

For some will find rich wealth afar,
And sail safe home again,

And some will sink where the dead ships are
To the port of missing men.

But you, who build the craft they sail
In the yards of Home and State,
May build them safe against the gale,
And safe from the derelict's sad fate.

For they are the ships that span the world,
On the future's boundless sea,
And lead, the banner of Peace unfurled,

All the great ships—yet to be.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 43–43.

Alpha

Today, the blasted fields where sleep the dead,
Will bloom again with verdure Green and Gold;
And on the plain where once our Brothers bled,
Sweet spring has called red poppies from the mould.
Be glad, O Earth, rejoice anew
And sing where once the Battle rang!
The Sons of God will shout with you
As when the stars of morning sang.
And every aching heart will know surcease,
For God will wipe away all tears and pain,
While on the hills afar the Prince of Peace
Will heal the ragged wounds of all our slain.
A million, million children yet to be,
Will see the hallowed lanes where crosses stand
Above the fearless ones that made them free;
And bless the dreamless dust of No-man's land.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 44–44.

The Healing Hills

High up in the hills, on a summer day,
In the shady oaks, where squirrels play,

At hand a stream goes singing by
To the hum of the sparkling dragon fly.
In the golden grass the lupines blow,
Where mumbling honey bees come and go.
The sunshine on the love vine vies
With the gleam on the wings of the butterflies,
While from the depths of the trees above
Comes the mellow note of the turtle dove.
A mother quail, from the chaparral,
Calls out as clear as a silver bell.
There one forgets the things that were,
The scars of life that mar and blur.

Resting alone on the moss-grown sod

A silence falls like the voice of God.

Oh, everlasting, peaceful hills!

My troubled heart has known thy thrills!
What wondrous things I've seen and heard—
The morning song of the mocking bird

I'll not forget! Oh, hills of mine!

The oil of Peace, the ruby wine

That into my failing heart ye poured

Like a drink from the goblet of the Lord!
When the rising sun, with lambent fires,

Lit up your peaks, like cathedral spires,

I bathed my soul in the roseate glow,

And found the peace that the high hills know.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 45–45.

Lines on the War

In Liberty's arms, oh, some must fall
In the smoke of the battle's storm,
And the High Command will sound a call
Where the streams run red and warm.

We do not know why these should fall
In the flush of a summer day,

Or why the lips of Death should call
Their brave young hearts away.

But the Harvest Angel stoops to kiss
Each one as she passes by,

And whispers low of rest and bliss
Where the clouds are white and high.

For He who notes the sparrow's fall
With loving watchful eyes,

On radiant wings, has borne them all
Beyond the grieving skies.

The lightnings flashed their brightest bars
And the thunders called each name,
While the angels sang from the steadfast stars

To greet them as they came.

Eternal spring their eyes behold
As they hear the glad refrain,

While their names shine out from walls of gold
In the lists of the bravest slain.

And we know they are only lost from sight,
Not dead, when their strength is gone,
They proudly stand in ranks of light
With Him who called them on.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 46–46.

The Triumph of Easter

The world was wrapped in silence dark and deep,
The sighing winds were hushed of every breath,

The very earth seemed lost in night and sleep,
For lo! the king had bowed his head in death.

His holy lips had drained the bitter grail,
His kingly garments men had torn apart;
Despair and shame had rent the temple vail,
When man had plunged the spear into his heart.

The olive groves are still, no palm fronds wave,
While flowers wilt on the mountain bleak and bare.
No glittering star shines forth upon his grave,
For lo! the king of life is sleeping there.

Death claimed the sphere, and every living thing—
When suddenly strange splendors filled the night,
The waking mountain bird began to sing;
And stars gleamed out—the moon gave forth her light.

While lightnings filled the sky with waves of fire,
Great roseate gates of pearl were opened wide,
And music from a vast supernal choir
Called forth the king whom men had crucified.

Life fills once more the dead and drooping trees,
O'er hill and dale bright flowers begin to bloom;
The fragrance of fair lilies filled the breeze,
With Christ forever victor—o'er the tomb.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 47–47.

Farewell

We played together in the hills,
Green sunlit fields where poppies nod,
And drank the sweet of nature's thrills
Fresh and pure from the springs of God.

And I think of the friend my boyhood knew,
How straight and tall he marched away,

How he gazed ahead where the Old Flag flew
With the happy look of a child at play.

Somewhere in France he was doomed to fall
In the noise of battle's din and strife.

He heard the golden Bugle's Call,
Sounding high from the Gates of Life.

And I know the Highlands have claimed their own.

He lives, where lilies wave and nod,
Where the smoke of battle is never known,
On the Everlasting Hills of God.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 48–48.

Vision

In life's great laws I put my trust,
Where worlds can never know distress;
For e'en the text of "dust to dust"
Condemns me not to nothingness.

I have no time to grieve, today,
Or make me songs of selfish sorrows.
My pathway leads to far away,
To better deeds and great tomorrows.

My haggard soul, once left for dead,
Groped in the dark alone with fate;

But some one knew the path ahead,
And taught of love—I cannot hate.

Life let me stumble o'er the way,
Then slowly taught me not to fear.

I praise life for her thorns today
And every scar and bruise is dear.

The mists are lifting from the way,

I tread new worlds, with music sweet,
I see the flush of breaking day,

My soul rides on, beyond defeat.

The shades of hate and fear are dead,
Deep in the grave of bygone things,
While up the road of life ahead
The very morning sunlight sings.

I view with wonder earth and skies,
The common dust seems near divine.

Up radiant hills my pathway lies,
Where eons yet to be are mine.

Broken

And now—most holy ties are snapped,
And we can never wander through
The poppy fields that bloomed for you.
By higher mountains snow becaped,
Seems like an evil dream, today,
That is not true of you and I.
That you have gone so far away.
Good-bye, my lovely one, good-bye,
I cannot pen a line or sing
A single note that shows my pain,
Or meaning in this awful thing,
And I shall never try again.
I only hope that in the years
A loving God will heal and dry
A broken heart, a poet's tears,
Good-bye, my lovely one, good-bye.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 50–50.

The Call of the Open Road

It is rest time for the tired and the fretting,
The silver clouds are sailing in the blue,
And the open places call to come, forgetting
The irksome cares and burdens which we knew.

O'er mountain tops the fragrant winds are massing
And the yellow leopard lily is full grown,

The breezes stir dead altars now, in passing,
Where candles of the Lord have bloomed alone.

There the faithful little mountain thrush is singing
O'er and o'er its plaintive song of old,

The brilliant crested oriole is winging,
Flashing colors brighter far than molten gold.

There's a magic spell out where the brook is falling,
There is peace where all the mighty hills are posed;
There is music as the mother quail are calling,
And a silence when the canyon gates are closed.

The evening finds the turtle dove caressing;
Moonlight wakes the rapturous mocking-bird,

And the shadows cover all the vales with blessings
Like the fading of a page of life once blurred.

There is healing in the heart of open places;
There is rest in all the silence and the song;
There are visions in the flowers like dear faces

That return without the memory of a wrong.

There is comfort in the message of the highland
Where the happy wild has never known regret,

And the nectared air that blows from out the skyland
Brings a wine that makes the heart forget.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 51–51.

Emptiness

At last my old, old love is dead,

It seared me many years.

I do not pray the prayers I said

Nor feel the need of tears.

I used to pray for it to die,

This love that once I cherished.

I have no light to guide me by,

Now that my love has perished.

Once it would wake me every morn,

With pain it near bereft me.

But now there's neither love nor scorn,

Just emptiness is left me.

My heart is like a midnight hall,

Where never starlight flashes.

No whisper, song, nor sound, nor call,

Just beauty turned to ashes.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 52–52.

Old Lovers

This sight has given joy to me
And stayed my faith and hope in men.
Of all the sights on earth to see,
No brush can paint, no hand can pen
A nobler strain, a sweeter theme,
Than when the years have blest and given
Two souls the steady, deathless gleam,
Like springtime green on hills of heaven,
That holds two hearts through many years,
And brings again a boy and maid,
Through sun and rain, through shade and tears,
Happy at last, and unafraid,
To where once raven locks are white
And threescore years are full and fled—
And yet no sign of coming night,
Or nerveless fingers of the dead
Can trace a line across the brow,
Or memory sting their souls apart;
Where never a wrong or broken vow
Has left its scar across the heart.
Oh, blessed age, when two souls blend
And find no blast of any storm
Can break the love chains at the end,
Where hearts are true and young and warm.
What summer days on green-clad land,
Or spired city gleaming high,
Or vision of a golden strand
Bright shining in a cloudless sky
Can bring more vision to our gaze,
Or sign of immortality?
These children playing out their days
Have sent a thrill of joy to me.

Children going home they seem
Along a path of autumn leaves,
Lured past me by some golden dream
Of palaces the sunset weaves.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 53–53.

In Memoriam to Slain Officer

(In behalf of the Los Angeles police department, the following poem was written in memoriam to Donald C. Hathaway, who was slain by a bandit while acting in discharge of his duty on the night of May 24, 1921.)

He saw his duty just ahead;
He faltered not to count the cost,

In some fair field the living dead
Shall know the kind of men we lost.

Now as his imagery we scan
And see him as he often smiled,
In strength a kind of super-man,

His heart the glad heart of a child.

We pay sad tribute to our dead,
But surely he must live again
Beyond the mists that lie ahead
Among the men that died for men.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 54–54.

Columbia

Columbia, chained at Liberty's portal,
Resolved to be free, and she forged out a blade;
Her arm was of flesh, but her spirit immortal
Looked on the foe with a heart unafraid.
Haughty the minions that came on to slay her—
Host of the king and the Hessian horde;
Savage and brother both sought to betray her—
Strong was her arm and her trust in the Lord!
Loud were her guns, and freedom's bells ringing,
Calling her sons with tocsins—too would warn;
Music that woke mute starland to singing
Songs they once sang with the sons of the morn.
High o'er the land soared the young eagle, screaming;
Thrilling the battle cry far in the sky;
Echoes that stirred the white clouds in their dreaming
Rode on the soft summer winds passing by.
Broken at last all the chains that had bound her,
Columbia proudly, in robes bright with red,
Gathered the flag of her glory around her—
Garlanded sadly the graves of her dead.
Heaven's recorder of infinite measure
Carved a new name for the ages to see;
Wrote in the halls of God's infinite treasure
In flaming symbols, "The Land of the Free!"
Now Great Columbia guards every ocean,
Shielding in valor the people of earth;
Gladly we offer our deepest devotion
And honor the brave who have given her birth!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 55–55.

Prayer

I made a prayer while mellow lights were straying
O'er distant hills to greet the new-born day.
Enrapt I watched while childhood's dreams were playing
And wept when daylight drove my dreams away.

At noon I paused to kneel where weary brothers
Are lying prone beside the forged steel,
In strength of manhood, and in toil for others
Prayed you might know, might understand and feel.

The day is nearly done, its toil suspended,
Spent like a careless gambler spends his gold,
And though the day was brief, I'm glad'tis ended,

My spirit's bent, and gray, and worn and old.

And now I pray as evening bells are calling,
And far-flung gentle winds are kissing me,
To face the west while shadows are a-falling,
And drink—and drink—the dreamer's wine with thee.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 56–56.

My Wish

God be with you in the springtime
When His hills are fresh green,
When the poppies and the pansies
Spread abroad a golden sheen;
When among the orange blossoms
Everywhere the bluebirds sing,
May your heart be tuned to singing;
God be with you in the spring.

God be with you in the summer
When its harvest fields are white,
And the sky is red at sunset
And the stars are large and bright;
When sweet scented breezes kiss you
Coming from the western sea,
May they sometimes carry with them
Some dear memory of me.

God be with you in the autumn,
When your raven hair shall grow
Silvery as the silver moonbeams,
White and fair as driven snow.
Then may heaven bend down near you,
That the hidden choirs may bring
Notes of rare immortal music,
To your song when you may sing.

God be with you in the winter,
When the hills are capped with snow,
May you come to know Him better
As you slowly older grow.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 57–57.

In Memoriam—to Ella Wheeler Wilcox

The journey here is ended and the singing done,
Of one who pierced the veil with shafts of song;
We may not hear the music—just begun,
A chorus thrilling past the blazing sun,
Or know the bliss that bears her soul along.

Long at the gates, in age-old silence, waited
Her soul to hear the bells of Glory ringing—
On snowy wings by love and faith created.
Singing, she went—a bride again—elated,
While Israfel a noble song was singing.

But we are richer for her pilgrim years,
And so, with hearts that ever loved her well,
We gather up the jewels of her tears—
Her songs are tender surcease to our fears;
We give her to her love—and Israfel!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 58–58.

Old Camp Meetin' Time

(With Hymn Verses to be Sung by the Choir)

Old sandy road is closed today
Down by the river side,

And the folks down there are borne away
On the laws of time and tide;
But if my spirit could go free
And seek a sunnier clime,

I'd find a road that "used-to-be"
At "Old Camp Meetin' Time."

The willows and the poplar trees
Abound on every hand,

And there's a scent on the evening breeze
Of pine sawdust that's grand!

I'm on the road—the spell is on—

The moonlit tents are white,

And I shall sing with folks long gone
Old gospel songs tonight.

I hear the preacher take his text—
Announcing other things—

"The evening offering will come next
While Asa Adams sings";

"Now will the congregation rise?"
And, like a mighty sea,

There sounds out on the starry skies:

(Softly by the Choir)

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,

Let me hide myself in Thee;

Let the waters and the blood

From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,

Save me from its guilt and power!”

Preacher’s voice is sounding now,
Drawing pictures on the sky—
There’s Golgotha’s awful brow,
Roman soldiers standing by;

Once again the Christ they bring,
Calm before the mob He stands,

I can hear the hammers ring

As the nails go through His hands;
Weeping women linger near,
From His brow great blood drops start,
I can see the trenchant spear
Plunge into His breaking heart!

(Softly by the Choir)

““Now I’m coming to the cross,
I am poor and weak and blind,
I am counting all but dross,

I shall full salvation find.”

Oh, for roads that used to be!

Love and joy with faith sublime,
And the folks we used to see—

Back in “Old Camp Meetin’ Time”;
When at last all daylight dims,

And I seek a sunnier clime,

Soothe my weary soul with hymns,
Sung—at “Old Camp Meetin’ Time.”

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 59–60.

Quotations

Killing time will rob eternity.
Every man is potter of his clay.
The room for self improvement is the largest
in the world.
The good old maxims say.

Difficulties only show what people are;
The biggest fault to feel that we have none.
Tis good to hitch your wagon to a star,
But don't look only at the sun.

Clever men are good but not the best,
This world will not believe a man repents.
To go to church but poorly dressed
May give the loudest saint a deep offense.

Good thoughts are stronger than the strength of hand,
And force is oft no remedy at all.

A man must find some place on which to stand,
A soul to lose before he e'er can fall.

Now doubt is brother devil to despair,
To bear a burden well will conquer fate,

The man who counts on getting anywhere
Will never burn his vigor dry with hate.

There is always something more to know—
Each lesson on another leans.

Be patient! Our playwright may show
Some day what this wild drama means.

For all that we here see, or seem
To be, is but the working of a plan,

And life is more than dreams within a dream—
Life is the Teacher but the fool is Man!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 61–61.

“If”

If we can find where flowers grow
 Of richer hue and finer mold,
If we can catch the roseate glow
 That turns the morning hills to gold;

If we can see the light that beams
 Above the gleam of morning sun,
And read the tracery of dreams
 That linger when the day is done;

If we can sing the stars to rest
 That beckon o’er the midnight plain,
And know somehow that it was best
 That once we drank the cup of pain;

When like some high ascending band
 Orion to oblivion slips,
If we can kneeling kiss the hand
 That pressed the goblet to our lips;

If rain and sunlight from above
 Can win new flowers where we trod;
Then we have found the soul of love,
 Then we have touched the robe of God.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 62–62.

Vacation Pictures

I know where steel blue mountains rise
To trackless heights where condors fly,
Supernal lights in azure skies
Play softest beams as clouds drift by.
My mountain's heart is a meadow fair,
Where clover blooms in living green,
And breezes carry perfume rare
When the sun rolls low and shadows lean.
Then, quail come deftly through the brush,
And drop to the brook on whirring wings,
There the turtle dove, the lark, and thrush,
Have their evening bath while the bluebird sings.
The squirrels leave as the shadows fall,
For the tallest trees where ring doves croon,
And the owls fly from the canyon wall,
As the coyote wails to the rising moon.
Then the deer come down through the mellow light,
To feed where clover blossoms blow,
The fox's bark in the silent night
Is the good night call my wild hills know.
No silken couch in a mansion fair,
Could give such peace and rest to me,
As does a bed of pineboughs there
Where the wild rose climbs the honey tree.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 63–63.

America Harkens

O hills of France, where fruited vineyards grew,
And apple blossoms smiled in Springtime suns,
From out your breaking heart a wine of redder hue
They pressed today, the gory-handed Huns.

No braver heart was ever pierced than thine,

No greener hills are rocked by thundering guns,
But, oh! the flood of precious ruby wine

They clamored for, those greedy, frenzied Huns.

And when the stars looked down upon the dead,
Thy children dear, these brave, immortal ones,

The soft night winds that once caressed thy head
Were poisoned, too, by hated, fiendish Huns.

No greater sacrifice was ever made

Than thou hast made to halt the vandal Hun;
No greater price in blood was ever paid

Since Calvary groaned beneath the darkened sun.

Across the sea a nation heard thy guns;
Old debts of gratitude have since been paid,
And, in thy homes, once more thy little ones
May sleep secure and unafraid.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 64–64.

Lonely

The western sky is a dream of gold,
In the east, o'er the pines the sky is blue.
A few dim stars shine pale and cold,
It's lonely here, and I want you, too!

I've wandered o'er many a flowered hill,
And around the lakes where we used to go,
The mother quail are calling still;
My heart is, too, for I want you so!

The snow has banked at the cabin door,
Little honeymoon we used to know—
Our broad blue lake is frozen o'er—
The wind blows cold, and I want you so!

Went out and called your name just now,
But all was still, and white with snow.
This seems like a frightful dream, somehow—
The wind blows cold—and I want you so!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 65–65.

Easter Morning

Somewhere when the sun broke in blinding splendor
Over the dying world,
With love eternal, holy, and tender
Where radiant gates are pearled.
God spoke to His Son from the farthest star,
In music the earth cannot know,
And carried Him over the midnight bar
Because He loved Him so.

Somewhere the myriad angels caused
The flashing spheres to wait,
And great Canopus paused
To hear the music from the gate.

Somewhere when sorrow is put afar
From out this universe,
And day shall light this darkened star
And the earth forget her curse,
Spirit shall leap to the golden sun
On the track where the lightnings go,
Some Easter morn when night is done,
Because He loved Him so.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 66–66.

Infallible Love

Some day we, too, shall know these mysteries, and then
Shall fall away this awful dark that blurs the eyes of
men;

These fitful childish tears shall go, this weakness and this
pride,
And there shall answer to my shout, a heart-cry, satisfied.

And I shall whisper words to you these dull lips could not
tell,

And there in yonder fairy fields of shining Asphodel,

Your soul shall stand arrayed at last, in spotless, spotless
white,

And I shall be your perfect lover Glorified and bright.

Oh! Soul, I pray, stray not too far from love's fair dreams
away,

For though The Builder Smite at last, this poor misshapen
clay,

His Hand which wrought upon each heart, some infinite
design,

Shall show this erring soul at last, all beautiful and fine.

Clay and dust, and ashes, these mortal prison bars,

Can never hold enthralled for aye this comrade of the stars

As one who dreaming mutters songs; Love's Flaming Dawn
I wait,

Till God shall turn His splendors on within His Blazing
Gate.

Love is Immortal, smiling, smiling at the years—

Grows still more radiant thru pain, and Death, and Tears;

But God who made the myriad Worlds, each star by name
doth tell,

Shall show us how He marked us, too, and doeth all things
well.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 67–67.

Dreams

Oh give me a house by a running stream
At the end of a winding way.

Give me the hills, let me keep my dream
And weave it a-new in the morning gleam
In the flush of each summer day.

Give me a home like the wild things know,
Where the honey bees hum at noon;
Let me sing with the pines when the west winds blow,
A song to the blue where the white clouds go

As mating ring doves croon.

And the hills will keep my dreams of old
Forever inviolate;

And I will weave new dreams of gold

And the past will fade as a tale untold
Outside the canyon gate.

My altar fires will never die,
My harp be never dumb;
In my house in the hills neath a friendly sky
I will watch and wait, as the years pass by,
For one who will never come.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 68–68.

Assembly

Warrior legions marshaled again
Bare their banners to the stars,

Proud and stalwart sons of men
Cleansed of blood and battle scars.

These are the men who make us, today,
Free of the lash and yokel's chain;
Bared their breasts to the battle's fray,
Closed their eyes in the reddened rain.

Shiloh's sons in the morning light,
Antietam's shot-torn standards sway,

Lookout Mountain's trumpets bright,
Shine in light from the gates of day.

Rank on rank and file on file,

Flags unfurled to the flashing spheres,
League on league and mile on mile,

Marching down through the long, long years.

Half a century has passed

Since the call o'er the cornfields flew,
And a mother kissed them last,

Lads in Gray and lads in Blue.

Left their homes in the meadow-wood,
Hushed the parting words they said,
Close where the plow in the furrow stood,

Waving corn was stained with red.

Far above the battle plain
They have found a brighter gleam;
On their breasts no crimson stain—
They have found a sweeter dream.
Safe beside this noble band,

Where the sons of light have stood,
Are the men of No-Man's Land
And the lads of Argonne Wood.

They who left us yesterday
For the fields of tangled wire
Fell out in the open fray,

On the plain of blood and fire.
All of these the world shall love,
Tho' a million years pass by,

While the steadfast stars above
Light their pathway in the sky.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 69–70.

The Hills of California

There are elfin bugles blowing high above the fields of wheat;
There are blue-bells and wild pansies, where the sage
and poppies meet;
There are crystal drops of nectar in the jewels at my feet—
On the hills of California in the morning.

I can hear the padres singing in the wistful winds that blow;
They are haloed by the sunshine, and the gleam of long ago.
Azure spirit vales are folding antelope and buffalo—

On the hills of California in the morning.

Now white caravans assemble, watched by furtive prairie
folk,
And the tired oxen tremble, patient-eyed beneath the yoke;
In the blue horizon circle bluer whiffs of rifle-smoke—
On the hills of California in the morning.

Shapes and phantom shadows fleeing where the wind-blown
yucca waves;

Distant cries now thrill my being like the war-cry of old
braves;

Only ghosts mine eyes are seeing, ghosts o'er long forgotten
graves—

On the hills of California in the morning.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 71–71.

A Memory

There's a day like a picture passing fair
In memory's treasure hold,
Spent in the lap of nature where
A myriad joys unfold.
Where a fragrance rare
Filled the crystal air,
And the hills are green and gold,
There wild things played in peaceful shade
Of trees where grapevines hung,
And winds on high seemed to sob and sigh,
For a time when the world was young.

Oh, could we walk that path again,
Where wild things called and led,
In those golden hills to bury pain
That came since love is dead,
Where friendly quail called from the trail,

And doves watched overhead.
My heart's out there in those hills somewhere,
Where we dreamed the whole day long,
And the years can leave but a vision fair,
My sorrow and my song.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 72–72.

The Goal

From ages dim man troops a fitful way
Along the musty corridors of time,
Gleaning only glories small that in his path may lay,
But passing sensing not creations more sublime.
And yet the universe is filled with wonders of his skill,
The mighty oceans meet at his command,
His genius rare surmounts the air, the wasted places fill,
While lightnings flash his word across the land.
A problem still remains,
A question great that through the halls of time echoes on:
Where is our heaven blest, and what our fate,
When we have joined the generations gone?
For if we there forget what there we gain,
And to the elements mind and body go,
Surely life is purposeless and vain
If we our mental treasures into void must throw.
But light is coming as the world grows old,
And wisdom comes with ancient secrets guessed.
Across the world the truth like precious gold
Is coming on to set the soul at rest.
O power sublime, and wisdom infinite and wise,
Hast guided life through eons dark and grim,
Hast given all to man, and now the prize,
For thou hast brought eternal life to Him.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 73–73.

In Memoriam—to Jack London

Of ships that find uncharted seas past the blue horizon line,
We see as they sail from the shores of time no
grander ship than thine;
Thy priceless cargo is on the shore, sought out from many
a land,
And works of master workmanship, wrought out by the
sailor hand.

But our hearts will follow the snowy sails that bore thee
away, so soon,

Beyond the north, where the wolf-dog wails, and the “Val-
ley of the Moon.”

For we know thy compass will guide aright past the land
where the North Star gleams,

Yet we seem to feel thee lingering in the country of thy
dreams;

A Pantheon is built out there, where all may meet and
gain

Sweet comfort and companionship with children of thy
brain.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 74–74.

Remember

Remember the men who went marching by,

Remember the music, the flowers and cheers
With bands all playing and flags on high,
Remember the Nation's pride and tears.

Remember their deeds and their promise kept
When they fought thru hell and the tangled wire.
O'er throbbing plain machine-gun swept.

Thru poison-gas and shrapnel fire.

Lo! Yonder battlefields are green.

The flowers have draped the torn hill's brow.
Where once the shattered stumps were seen
The golden wheat is waving now.

The dead are near in long, long rows,
While peace and June are hand-in-hand,
Hid deep in dreams that no man knows,
And only God can understand.

White is each cross that marks them there,
While summer wind and winter rain

Chants o'er each grave the fervent prayer
"That this shall never be again."

We honor all our hero dead,

And hallow fields wherein they lie.
But yesterday this ground was red,
And so with streaming tears we cry:

Oh, thou red horseman, stay thy sword,
Come thou no more to kill and maim.
Our brothers' blood cries to the Lord
That this shall never be again.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 75–75.

The New Year's Promise

Another year has marked our mortal span,
Has shone upon the mumbling sons of dust,
And time has slowly measured out to man
The gossamer thread in which he puts his trust.
For some the slender thread is shining gold
Which strings bright jewels of their well-spent days.
The thread for other men may hold
Cheap beads upon a thread of tangled ways.
Some try to hide a glimmering thread of tears,
A quivering heart impaled upon the string
Which time will dim a little with the years
And memory slowly hide the ugly thing.
All rich in promise now the New Year stands
To give its gems to both the fool and wise.
Though some will fall in careless blundering hands,
Some one will cut an everlasting prize.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 76–76.

Rain and Shadow

The storm was fierce which fell upon my heart,
Life turned to winter night, with moaning wind,
It was some holocaust of God that tore our souls
apart—

And now the way is hid too deep for me to find.

So here I dwell in the same dear house of old,
Playing the same old tunes upon my lute;

But yonder, in the dust, your harp of gold
Awaits your magic touch, its strings are mute.

It seems you must come back some night, when rain
Is beating softly on our roof and vines

The faint tattoo upon the window pane;

Outside the rustling of the restless pines

Is like your sandaled feet about the room;

I hear the whisper of your silken gown,

The hearth-fire throws a star into the gloom—
It floats upon a shadow, settling down.

These winter dreams have madness in their spell
Which bind my beating heart with hidden veils,
You wove the endless dream I love so well

And left a shadow cross, with piercing nails.

Sometimes a healing hand caresses me

And lifts this shadow cross which presses so;
*Tis like the man who walked in Galilee

And bore another cross—long, long ago.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 77–77.

Above the Storm

I sing not for the plaudits of the throng.
The morning winds have cheered my humble lute,
The trees have blessed me as I passed along,

And while I sang the mighty hills were mute.

For I have paid the price the gods would take,
-And lost my soul to love at one fell toss.

She burned my heart to ashes at the stake

And nailed my writhing body to the cross.

My song shall ever echo, sounding on

Above the crowd who barter, buy, and sell;
But some dear soul in need when I am gone
Shall understand my song and love it well.

I sing, a Galley Slave—bowed to the Gale,
Whose back is scarred and bloody from the rod,
But, oh, at last, tho thunder storms assail,

I know I'll reach—the listening ear of God.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 78–78.

Offertory

Let bugle notes and volleys ring,

Today we honor all our brave,
For them the little children sing,
And garlands float the briny wave.
We see them tho our tears may blur,
Beyond the brightest worlds that gleam,

Tho o'er their graves the poppies stir
Death cannot hold them in its dream.

We watched them proudly march away,
So straight, so tall, with measured tread;
We wondered at their deeds the day

They saw the river Marne run red.
The world will ever mark their way

And bless the ground where heroes stood,

And go, in reverence, to pray
Within the shades of Belleau Wood.

Where Chateau Thierry's thousands fell

And heroes' blood once drenched the sod,
There lies the shattered vesper bell

Beneath the broken house of God.
The Argonne holds the dreamless dust

Of men who broke the battle lines,
The fallen sword is hid with rust

And trailing morning-glory vines.

Beyond the steadfast stars we gaze
To glimpse them, tho the veil may hide;
Oh, could we shout our grateful praise
To them, o'er the Great Divide.
So sound the victor guns again,
And let the bugle notes ring on,
For tears and blood can never stain

The radiant world where they have gone.

Our songs must cease and flowers fade,

While garlands sink beneath the wave,

But, oh, the nameless price they paid,

And, oh, the precious gift they gave,

In lasting fame shall ever stand

Within a world where free men dwell

Forever—in their native land,

And in the hearts that love them well.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 79–80.

Easter Dawn

Three crosses stood spectral-like on the hilltop.
Gloom and death stalked forth in the darkness
Wrapped in the garments of despair.
Fear rode the night winds with staring eyes,
For three days the heart of earth had ceased to beat
For the King of Life lay sleeping in the arms of Death.
Waiting for the call that should come with the first light
Of Easter Dawn.

Poets have said that music sweeter than ever blessed the
happiest dreams of a Mendelssohn or Liszt floated over
the valley of shadows with the first heralds of the day.

And that the Roman Guard heard the songs of strange
birds, the melody of which lulled them to slumber.

While lustrous lilies filled the air with delectable fragrance,
reflecting on their snowy petals a light which the
dawn had never known before.

The earth trembled with the greatness of that hour, and
while the hidden sun threw shafts of gold o'er the battlements
of Heaven, angels descended the rays of splendor on
the wings of the morning.

For the King was awakening in his tomb in the mountains
and all Heaven waited in rapture.

Only man went on his blind and unseeing way.

This generation has witnessed the fiendish work of the
King of Hate and Kultur as his vast gray armies moved in
millions over the earth, turning continents into human
slaughter houses. But the King of Hate is dethroned and
his name will live only as a synonym of evil.

And as men learn wisdom they will learn love.

They will let rust eat at the throats of their cannons
and dull the edge of the sword.

For Love is Omnipotent and Eternal.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 81–81.

Thy Song

May I never lose the music sweet
Of the song you gave to me,
In silver throated lyric tones
Surcharged with ecstasy.

You sang a song of a perfect day,
And a time that is to be,

And on a sorrow darkened day,
In a song of Heaven's blend.

You held the sting of death at bay
O'er the casket of a friend,

And told sad hearts of a Summer Land
Where friendships never end.

I would not quit the struggle sore
That builds a manhood strong,

Pass o'er the thorns in a rugged path,
As I grope my way along.

Or fail to drink the bitter drops,
That to my cup belong,

But, oh, I must not lose thy smile,
And song—Thy song—Thy song.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 82–82.

The Hour Glass of God

Oh, God of time, now turn the glass

That counts one more of mortal years.

We pray the glittering sands that pass

May hold the last of blood and tears.

We would forget the fearful years,

The awful deeds of maddened brain.

Lo! we are sick of blood and tears,

Give us a clean, white page again.

This fitful strife, this troubled dream,

Grew dark, the vision blurred and red.

Now may the golden morning gleam

Beyond the silent fields of dead.

The foolish deed in anger wrought

The bitter word of yesterday.

The crippled child of darkened thought,

We pray Thee take them all away.

The musing of a hardened heart,

The nursing of relentlessness.

The storms that tear our souls apart,

And plunge us deeper in distress.

The fell mistakes of ignorance,

That held our feet and barred our way.

Oh, Lord, we pray a further chance;

Blot out the sins of yesterday.

Now, fill the glass with snowy sand

From the far shores of evermore,

That all may see the Promised Land,

The years they watched and waited for.

Give us glad smiles for every tear,

And when the sands the days have told,
Lo! at the end of this New Year
May they be seen as sands of gold.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 83–83.

Declaration of Independence

Faded now, and gray with age you rest,
Oh, parchment of momentous worth and fame,
While on the roster of the great and blest
Eternally there lives each weighty name.
Their sacred honor and their lives at stake,
With freedom's mandates on that scroll unfurled
Was built an altar that no foe could take
And glory's flag was born to lead the world.
Defiance and the scorn of petty kings,
Marked for Columbia every gallant son.
The fearless fledging eagle stretched her wings
And flew to meet the foe at Lexington.
A grateful nation turns the leaves of time
And places laurels o'er the ashes still
Of all who wrote upon that page sublime
Or signed their names in blood at Bunker Hill.
Far down the march of passing years we come
And pledge anew in faith that sacred trust,
While somewhere, from the skies, the muffled drum
Sounds gentle requiem o'er their hallowed dust.
And now we pray that in the future years
The sun may shine on nothing but the good,
That this glad world among the shining spheres
Shall sing for joy, in one great brotherhood.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 84–84.

Blind Bill, the Newsboy

You'll wonder how he smiles all day
As in the dark he gropes around,
With many a jest and greeting gay,
With sense acute to touch and sound.

Along the streets the people pass
From dawn till dark.

And near him, sporting on the grass
In Pershing Park,

Are birds, and children at their play.
The blessed sunlight flashes bright
And golden vistas stretch away
Where worlds are circling in the light.
The sunlight flashes on the Park
And lights a million distant spheres.
Yet he who stumbles in the dark
Must wait in darkness all his years.

Go buy a paper from Blind Bill,
Study his smile and shake his hand.
Then go and ponder, if you will,
With closed eyes try to understand
The secrets of a hero's soul.

The super-courage of a man
Who smiles while years of darkness roll.
Go understand this if you can.

Take courage and a lesson mark.

Go revel in the sun so bright.

Remember those who walk the dark,

And oh! Thank God, for light, for light!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 85–85.

In Memoriam

(To Patrolmen Harry Clester and William L. Brett, killed by bandits while bravely acting in the discharge of their duty on the night of Dec. 6, 1921.)

Glory has claimed her sons when bugles blared
And Liberty's fair form the deathless prize.
But these of ours, whose breasts were bared
Under the quiet midnight skies—

They, too, have passed the shining ways,
Love's fadeless laurel crowns their brow.
No failing words of human praise
Can speak their deathless glory now.

We pay sad tribute with our song.
They kept the faith in vigilance
Through the night watches dark and long,
Beyond all human recompense.

Faithful they were to every trust,
And now they sleep life's golden hours.

We kneel beside their noble dust,
And cover them with tears and flowers.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 86–86.

The Babe of Bethlehem

A wondr'us star found its way from the far outer
chambers of the universe, through the infinitude
of space

To pay celestial homage to the Babe of Bethlehem and light
a darkened world.

t must have been that the wolves and jackals which men-
aced the sheep on the hillsides of Judea

'rept away to the vales of darkness

Nhile the green hilltops reflected, in scintillating radiance
the jewels of midnight.

The night winds were hushed and the mountains listened

To enchanting melodies floating in muted strains over the
world

From the Harps of Paradise.

mmortal voices enraptured the shepherds of the hills
And the earth forgot her sorrow.

Teaven had bequeathed to man its rarest treasure
And Mary held Omnipotence in her arms.

Vas her hair a halo of transparent gold?

)r did it fall o'er her shoulders like a dark mantle of infi-
nite love and infinite sorrow?

Ter beauty may have been to match that of the radiant
angels who hovered near,

Unmeant for mortal eyes.

Ve only know that Motherhood was made sublime from
that hour

ind that the child she bore has walked ahead of all men
through the ages.

'he only being in mortal form whose brow was ever
crowned by the laurels of Perfection,

Whose attributes are as lovely as the delicate beauty of the

morning

ind whose manhood has stood unimpeachable through the
centuries.

Je taught that love and altruism alone are all powerful and
enduring.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 87–87.

Retrospect

Some morn when lilies, wet with dew,
Shall bow before a loving breeze,
And I am dreaming still of you,

My soul in peace, my heart in ease,
When sunrise bathes green hills in gold;
And love is young, tho life is old,

I'll scan the azure skies afar,

Where life shall beckon from her throne;

I'll weep and wonder where you are,
Then hasten on my way alone.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 88–88.

The Blessed Babe

“Peace on earth, good will to men.”

Oh, find in this the golden key
That makes the old earth young again,

And strikes the chords of melody.
To know the joy of everything
That makes men rich and life full sweet,
Go down the highways scattering
Thy gifts and smiles at others’ feet.

“Peace on earth, good will to men.”

This message rang from out the skies,
From realms where never wrong has been,
Beyond the walls of Paradise.

This world forgets the angel song
Or struggles blind with staggering pace.
The earth road, men have crept along,
Has known a stubborn blundering race.

A wondrous star shone forth on high
That night, all other stars were dim,
While radiant angels hovered by

And sang their songs of praise to Him
Whose name within the halls of time
Grows fairer as men find the light,
Who came to make the world sublime,
Long ages since, on Christmas night.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 89–89.

The Mother's Sacrifice

Who gives the most when the red-eyed god
Shall stagger to our shore?

Whose back shall bleed beneath the rod
And know the pain of war?

Whose heart will follow the racing ships
That plow the hungry deep?

Whose soul will search the darkest depths,
Where shattered sailors sleep?

Some one will breath along the line,
When charge! the bugles call;
When unsheathed sabers flash and shine,

And the colors pitch and fall.

Some one inspire a courage rare,
When the squadrons race with death,

Through the murky air, toward the cannon flare,
Where hell is out of breath.

There's one that gives of life and all,
In gifts beyond all other,

When her sons march on at country's call,
Who gives the most is—mother.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 90–90.

Some Day

Some day I'll call you back to me
And you will come, and fold me to your breast,
Then you will know this house of clay
Was your house of love—but I shall rest.

And I shall hear your lyric voice
Singing, singing all the way,
In sunlit poppy fields I shall rejoice,
As I shall listen going home, some happy day.

Some day I'll call you back,
And you will know my love for you was greater far
than e'er these mumbling lips could say,
God! I shall sleep the long night through,
And shall not even dream of you.

But I shall waken with the day,
And listen for you singing, singing by the way,
Perhaps may hear your mellow, silvery bars,
As they come drifting past the steadfast stars.

I know you'll kiss this sinful, sinful clay
When you shall hear my silent call
Some happy, happy day.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 91–91.

In Memoriam—to Alexander Graham Bell

Long distance, from the Great Unknown,
Has called, and now a silence falls

O'er mountain peak, where rests alone

The man whom dreamless sleep enthalls.

A fitting mausoleum for one
Who climbed to high achievement here;
A workman whose full day is done,
Whose handiwork enwraps this sphere.

The age-old mystery enshrouds,
And death has set its soundless wall;
Yet these are only drifting clouds—
This curtain, too, at last must fall.

Stand fast, oh, soul! Be not afraid;

No enemy shall quench thy breath;

This dreadful fear, this cloud, must fade—
“The last to be destroyed is death.”

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 92–92.

George Washington

He came to breast the storm, and meet the tide,
The tide of tyrant kings with flashing blade.

He flung the gates of freedom open wide;
The jaws of death he entered, unafraid.

A mighty son of Providence, he came

To toil the stormy days of freedom's birth.
The everlasting hills shall bear his name

As long as mortal feet shall press the earth.

Both eulogy and elegy must fail
His noble love and sacrifice to tell,
Until these mortal lips, beyond the veil,
Shall learn the sweeter songs of Israfel.

His glory shall not dim, nor fade away.
The story of his life, his faith and trust,

Doth make men wonder of this earthen clay
That God could put so much in crumbling dust.

Let bells their vespers toll from shore to shore,
And sound once more for him the sunset gun;

In freemen's hearts their lives for evermore
The glory and the name of Washington.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 93–93.

The House of Yesterday

Today I trod the paths where days a-gone
These feet pressed hard and fast upon the way,
Where youth's misguided madness spurred me on
To do the woeful deeds of yesterday.

What strange, unholy fever lashed me on
To barter life and drink the frothing cup?
The glistening sands this work is built upon
Can hardly hold the twisted structure up.

The wasted work of years will crumble low,
And hell-hued fire must burn the dross away;
The blinded, weary builder, too, must know
The woeful, woeful work of yesterday.

And none but he can ever know the tale—
Or hear the happy laughter die away;
And none but he can ever find the trail
To yon deserted house of yesterday.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 94–94.

To a Resplendent Soul

When the rod is heavy upon my back;
When the road is rough, and the night is
black,
And I cry like a child for the faith I lack;

Tis then I long for you.

When fate has stolen my last resort,
And my bark is adrift to a darkened port;
And men seem toys for the devil's sport,
*Tis then I long for you.

For out of the noise, and out of the din,
And out of the things that might have been,
And out of my shame, and out of my sin,
I called to your heart, and you took me in,
*Twas the angel of light in you.

For others had scoffed at my foolish fall,
Their gifts were vinegar, wormwood and gall;

But God gave me you to make up for it all,
And I know the worth of you.

There's a goal to win, and a fight to make,

You gave me a talisman none can take;

I shall laugh at defeat—and win the stake;
Because your heart is true.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 95–95.

With the Rain

Tonight I listen to the patter of the rain,
And dream of other times that cannot come again.
A thousand nights I wept in vain and prayed
To still my heart's alarm—
But now I listen to the rain without,
You resting on my arm.

My Sweetheart now in pain;
She keeps me constant company,

As I listen to the rain.

And when the rain shall beat a last tattoo
Above a hollow mound,

I know I'll dream, Sweetheart, of you,

While in the darkness all around
The raindrops beat their soft tattoo.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 96–96.

Morning

There's a place on the road where wild flowers
smile,

Where vast shadow vistas stand forth,
And there, in the west gleam, I'll tarry a while
And wait for the stars of the north.

No dull recollection shall come to my mind

Of the vale that my bruised feet have trod,

Or the years that my soul has gone staggering blind
In the quest of the lost gift of God.

For Life is a loan from the Master of Light,
And a loan to be paid with a life,

Then may I walk bravely into the night
Though the chilling winds cut like a knife.

For life is a dream, and a half waking sleep,
And its hours are fitful and strange;

Of all that life gives not a thing may we keep,
For the only thing changeless is change.

I shall not look back to the valley below,

On my dreams that once were so dear,

When the north star shines out I will hasten and go
With never a word or a tear.

Then the wind shall grow warm, and the north lights shall
glow,

All my dreams will be gone, but instead—

Instead of my dreams, oh, at last I shall know—

And some dreamer will say, 'He is dead!'

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 97–97.

Some Day We'll Know

Some day we'll know
 The shadows and the shade;
The way we dreaded so
 That made us so afraid—
Some day we'll know.

Some day we'll know
 No star was sent to mark
The way we had to go
 And why out in the dark
The flood o'er us came so—
Some day we'll know.

Some day we'll know
 Why waking dreams marched on
With faces blanched and white,
 And left when they had gone
Eyes staring in the night—
Some day we'll know.

Some day we'll know
 When morning music breaks
Upon bright lilies leaping from the sod,
 The night shall go
When every heart awakes
To say the soul was meant for God.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 98–98.

A Song Unsung

Speech failed and left me dumb and mute,
And then love smiled and bade me sing,
And though my heart-strings were a lute
My blundering fingers broke the string.

I dipped my pen in blood and tears,
And wrote that I might pain assuage—
Deep in the archives of the years

Is hid a blurred and blotted page.

For lo! my hands were gnarled and sere,
From fires of fate mine eyes were blurred;
And though my listening heart could hear,

I could not sing the song I heard.

But oh! my song will yet be told,

And so with peace my heart is strong.
I know in God's love book of gold
Is writ my story and my song.

My silent song is held in trust,
Lest of these dreams I grow too fond;
The song that failed this tongue of dust
Will sound some morning on beyond.

And there sometime in language fine
Immortal lips shall speak for me,

And Israfel, this song of mine
Shall sing in rapturous melody.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 99–99.

Life

O Life that called me from the dark
And put the daylight in my eyes,
Give me some sign my course to mark
In noon's bright light, in midnight skies.

But yesterday I lost the way,
Last night I slew the soul of love;
Give me some book of life, I pray,
Some copy from Thy charts above.

The wise man pointed up, the steep,

The shining paths I could not find;

Light up the way my feet to keep,
For I am blind, for I am blind!

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), pp. 100–100.

POSTSCRIPT

For those who care

Picture, if you will, a boyhood as solitary as the pale blue hills that stood in the distance to the northward; a boyhood as wild as the waterfowl that flung their way across a wintry sky; timid and fearful of others as the grey coyote that passed swiftly, at sun-up, through the grasses to his hidden den.

A few years passed in this fairy wilderness of the great out-doors—peopled with its wild things, and the brighter beings of the boy's imagery—and then, the city and toil—toil such as was meant for strong, mature men.

And, for the man the boy grew to be, there need be no comment of praise or pity—his lessons were better learned for having paid a price for them; but, for the strange, sensitive, untutored boy, whose imagination was left to stray in vast uncharted places, and whose brain and soul were ever hungry for the manna of knowledge—which never fell—there must come a deep sense of regret and pity.

For him there were long days of cruel toil at the anvil—days which lengthened into years—working with a strength which was ever at the ebb, mingling with rough, illiterate men, and then, after the day's work, came night school and the long ride home, the boy often falling asleep in the saddle from sheer exhaustion.

There was surcease of fatigue only when Sunday came and the boy would go to church miles away and listen spellbound to the sermon, with its Bible text, which stirred the latent love of beautiful literature in his heart. Then to the fields and hills—to lie among the wild flowers, listening to the yellow-breasted meadow lark weaving its silvery luted song among the tree-tops—longing to be free; to roam once more with his wild friends among the golden California poppies and those other beautiful things of his richly ornate dreams.

Impulsive—emotional—intense; seeking to understand the great mystery of the universe, he hewed deep at the heart of things and struck for the meaning of life—as he smote the anvil—with all his might.

Publication. *Pools of Glass and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Press, 1924), p. 101.

PERIODICAL VERSE NOT COLLECTED IN THE BOOK

1924

Beauty for Ashes

The storm was fierce which fell upon my heart,
The wintry night was dark with moaning wind;
It was some holocaust of God which tore two souls apart;
And now the way is hid too deep for me to find.

So here I dwell in the same dear house of old,
Playing the same old tunes upon my lute;
But yonder in the dust your harp of gold
Awaits your magic touch, its bright strings mute.

It seems you must come back some night when rain
Is beating softly on our roof and vines;
The faint tattoo upon the window pane,
Outside the rustling of the restless pines,
Is like your sandaled feet about the room.
I hear the whisper of your silken gown;
The hearth-fire throws a star into the gloom,
It floats upon a shadow, settling down.

These winter nights have madness in their spell
Which binds my beating heart with hidden veils;
You wove the endless dream I love so well
And left a shadow cross with piercing nails.
Sometimes a hand unseen caresses me
And lifts this shadow cross which presses so;
'Tis like the man who walked in Galilee
And bore another cross for me—long, long ago.

Publication. *Broadcast*, vol. 2, no. 2 (January 1924), p. 35.

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