

necessarily for a visible nature. This expression of the wondrous power of God can be found in all of nature, history, and human experience. The greatest revelation of God to man was through the appearance of Jesus Christ on earth. If God is personal, this means that man can have a personal fellowship with God; this brings the prayer, life, and service of each individual to God and others into a sublimely meaningful position. This relationship imparts a challenge to all to strive toward the goal of Christian perfection that was taught by Christ, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

The religious strivings of man indicate that God, although capable of complete support, does make demands upon the lives of men. God has given man all that he possesses, even life itself. Our God in His boundless mercy is not a vindictive God; He is a God of compassion and love. The character of God is both the warrant for and the standard of all Christian behavior. In the tenth verse of the Fifty-ninth Psalm, we find the words, "The God of my mercy shall prevent me." The word *prevent*, according to Webster, once meant to make impossible by prior action; by prior action means to go before. In the light of this definition, this passage could be interpreted, "My God in His loving kindness shall meet me at every corner." This is God's world, and He can be trusted to exercise His divine leadership. When things go wrong we can still look to God and know that we can trust in His love and mercy; as Paul said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." The man of faith knows that God is going to have the last word in our world, and he rests the future in God's hands.

His Father's World

Linda Seidle

THAT MORNING Billy awoke long before dawn. He lay motionless, his wide-open eyes staring into the familiar darkness of his room. Today he was to be initiated into that mysterious brotherhood to which his father belonged and of which he so longed to be a part. Today his father, the tallest, bravest, strongest man in Billy's world, was to take him hunting. In spite of the promise of a week ago and the numerous reassurances since, Billy tensely awaited the masculine sound of his father's voice summoning him. Maybe he'd forgotten or even changed his mind; maybe he'd decided that a boy of nine was too young to participate in such an adventure. But I'm ready, thought Billy fiercely, I'm ready to go with the men. I won't stay home again this time! I won't! Through the window Billy watched the East lighten into grayness and saw the pale sun begin to appear in the bleak November sky; and, as the sky grew brighter, his hopes grew dimmer. The sun had shown its full circumference above the horizon, and Billy had resigned himself to

disappointment, when the heavy sound of a man's footsteps caused his heart to leap. Somewhat ashamed of his previous doubt, Billy silently scolded himself. Why, he should have known that his father would never lie or break a promise or do anything wrong—never.

Being full of a nameless joy and pride, Billy strode manfully beside his father, taking two steps to his father's one in order to keep pace. Although he longed to take his father's hand, fear of being thought childish restrained him. Wasn't he a part of his father's world now—the world of men and of guns? The gun in his father's hand fascinated him; it seemed to symbolize all that he wanted to know and be. And Billy knew with exultant certainty that the essence of this world would be his with the first firing of the gun. Then he would share the secret with his father and all the other men.

With his eyes Billy followed the direction of his father's pointing finger. He could barely distinguish the small, brown, furry object that was perched upon a limb of the tree. The sharp crack of the gun sounded, and the squirrel fell. Without waiting for his father Billy ran to the place where he had seen the squirrel fall. He stopped short and knelt beside the bundle of fur that lay so still on the brittle, dead leaves. Was this the secret? Was this what made his father a man? Gently Billy lifted the squirrel from the cold ground and, holding it against himself, he wept.

SHE SLEEPS NOW

She sleeps now

Silent

With a soft smile on her mouth

Which never felt the touch of redness.

Her white skin and dark hair form

Beauty upon the sheets.

Nothing disturbs the gentle curves of her

Young body

Which knew only the innocent pleasures of

Life.

She stirs not though her

Silent soul shares this grave

With one who should have died.

A living grave is neither

Silent nor Beautiful.

Only emptiness would make it thus.

But with awareness the

Void becomes Wretchedness

Writhing within and without.

—BARB RUTHERFORD