

AS I SOJOURN

Nathan Harter

The swelling wake which spreads its foamy wings
 Unto the pale blue cosmos of the sea
 Bears home the many prayers I've prayed for thee.
Late hours, on calm, pacific evenings
 When clouds encompass all mine eyes survey,
 I stand along the railing in the spray
And drop my drowsy head in offerings
To whatever gods will get me home.

I could fling my wealth into the abyss
 Which everywhere resolves to swallow me;
 I could abandon my integrity,
Whate'er the cost to once more know thy kiss.
 Should kissing ever bear the price of blood,
 I know my blood would perish for the good.
And if 'tis death wherein we find our bliss,
Then gladly shall I throw me to the foam.

How cold the wind! How quickly tempests flare!
 Long dashes of lightning spark and die
 Against the dismal canvas of the sky,
And more and more I merely stand and stare
 Through storm or quiet washing of the wave
 In cherished mem'ries I shall always save,
In stupid wonder and in earnest prayer
And fervent hopes that I return to thee.

The tears we shed upon that distant shore
 Now mingle in the movement of the tide;
 And, oh, the spirit of peace has died
To want a resurrection evermore.
 Thus, on the briny wings which sweep away,
 I send my love and all this heart can pray,
And in each swell are tears my eyelids wore
Before they tumbled downward to the sea.