I Weep

George W. Coffin

WHY do I weep? Why do my tears well over the brim and splash in dark patches on my shirt? Let me tell you why I weep. Let me tell you why tears flood my eyes and shower on my breast.

I have seen the distant town, clothed in radiant morning sunlight as I stood upon the throne of a hill. And I could not fly.

I have heard a voice in the calm starry night whisper, "You are my love forever." And I could not love with all the power I desired.

For one brief moment I felt the hand of God in mine. And I could not hold it there.

The waves thundered upon the reef in a rhythm that I could not play.

The majesty of a mighty forest was near to me and I could not sing.

The delicate features of a fragile face appeared before my eyes. And I could not paint.

All the joy and sadness which are life, youth and age, love and hate, the scorching brass sun and cool of the night, the mighty waters and the motherly earth, all these passed before me and I did not have the words with which to write.

And when I was alone, wordless, speechless, without a song, and unloved, I wanted death. And I could not die.

And so I weep. I weep for the beauty which has passed me by and which I could not capture by some ingenious skill or craft for other men to know—for other men who have no wish to know, for they have sold their hearts for con-
crete and stone, they have bartered their
eyes for wheat and oil, their ears were
the price of mighty metal monsters that
scream and shriek at their deaf masters.
They have given love over into bondage
for long columns of tabulated figures in
black and red on large white ledger
sheets.

I cannot speak or sing or play or
paint or write or die. They cannot hear
or see or love or live.

I am a fool who can only weep. They
cannot.

Crescendo

Mary Alice Kessler

I heard a horn crunch on the air
And a piece of laughter whistled behind a building,
An old newspaper scratched the curb stone
And a faint horse hoof ticked up 72nd Street.
I listened hard for the moaning child cry of police whistles,
The click of the traffic light, the scraping crippled foot,
I listened, and soon each disjointed sound
Each murmur of horn melted into the great stir,
And its infant pulse began to pound with the great one
To such a climax of roar, twang, beep, swish
That my ears throbbed and my heart beat with the throb,
Throb, throb, throb of this city.