

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST

GOD met man in a narrow place,
And they scanned each other face to face.

God spoke first: "What ails you, man,
That you should look so pale and wan?"

Quoth man: "You bade me conquer harm
With no strength but this weak right arm.

"I would ride to war with a glad consent
Were I, as You, omnipotent."

God said: "You show but little sense;
What triumph is there for omnipotence?"

Said man: "If You think it well to be
Such a thing as I, make trial and see."

God answered him: "And if I do,
I'll prove Me a better Man than you."

God conquered man with His naked hands,
And bound him fast in iron bands.

CHRIST THE COMPANION

WHEN I've thrown my books aside, being petulant and weary,
And have turned down the gas, and the fire-light has sufficed,
When my brain's too stiff for prayer, and too indolent for theory,
Will You come and play with me, big Brother Christ?

Will You slip behind the book-case? Will you stir the window-curtain,
Peeping from the shadow with Your eyes like flame?
Set me staring at the alcove where the flicker's so uncertain,
Then, suddenly, at my elbow, leap up, catch me, call my name?

Or take the great arm-chair, help me set the chestnuts roasting,
And tell me quiet stories, while the brown skins pop,
Of wayfarers and merchantmen and tramp of Roman hosting,
And how Joseph dwelt with Mary in the carpenter's shop?

When I drift away in dozing, will You softly light the candles
And touch the piano with Your kind, strong fingers,
Set stern fugues of Bach and stately themes of Handel's
Stalking through the corners where the last disquiet lingers?

And when we say good-night, and You kiss me on the landing,
Will You promise faithfully and make a solemn tryst:
You'll be just at hand if wanted, close by here where we are standing,
And be down in time for breakfast, big Brother Christ?

