

# DEFENCE OF YOUTH

ANN BARNES

Young hearts are but as seedlings in the earth,  
Moved by a timeless force to them unknown,  
Thrusting out roots in darkness from their birth,  
Against the time when they shall be full grown.  
Even as shoots when they stand bare and green  
Will tremble at the wind's uncasual tread,  
So youth at the frustration of a dream  
Shrinks, unaware of fiercer storms ahead.  
And as plants feed on earth, of flowers pressed,  
And reck not of the end their beauty bears,  
Youth feeds on dreams of men long since at rest,  
Unheeding the oblivion that is theirs.

And those who chide youth for its casual hours  
But chide the wise simplicity of flowers.