

NIGHT ERRANT

By ARTHUR S. BOURINOT

He who wanders in the night,
Place nowhere to lay his head
But the haystack in the field,
Neighbour to the citted dead,
Knows the tragedy of flight,
Hiding with the heart congealed.

He who travels in the dark
No companion but the moon
And the distant stars for light
Hates the motors' rumbling rune,
Blinding headlights, glaring, stark,
Shattering the walls of night.

He who wanders wide and far
Takes a roadside ditch for bed
Pillowed on his bended arm
Knows the silence of the dead,
All the terror in a star,
All the joy of dawn's alarm.

He who sleeps beneath a tree
While the trucks go thundering by,
Gearing up the neighbouring hill,
Sees but wilderness of sky,
Feels what loneliness can be
Wakened by the morning's chill.

He who tramps while others sleep
Fearful of a farm house light,
Heckled by a watch dog's bark,
Hears the pulsing purr of night,
Tramping freights that clatter, creep,
Tunnel through the mountained dark.

He who trudges city streets
Money nowhere for a meal
Sleeping on a bench for bed
Knows why hungry men will steal,
Agony of aching feet,
Envy of the passive dead.

He who tramps the roads alone,
Shelters by a fence for rest
When the winds awake the wood
Dreams the earth a woman's breast
Savours sweetness in the stone.
Death and life has understood.
