

THE MOUNTAIN ENCIRCLED

Edmond S. Meany.

I.

The gulls from port and steamer track have fled
 To build scant nests on wilder shore;
 Young quail, mere flecks of striped down,
 Are quick to every fancied danger's thrill,
 And ptarmigans have donned their dusky brown
 For work; no feathered kith or kin are still
 When summer swings the golden-hinged door
 And each by sheerest love of life is led
 Out to the sun; so I feel drawn by beck'ning breeze
 And go this joyous hour to neighbor with the trees.

II.

There lies a friendly forest path I know
 Where lofty needled boughs salute the sun
 And mossy mounds lift jewelled flowers
 To point anew the old and gladsome way,
 The upward way, to heights where all the hours
 Are morning and a world's new day
 Reveals the Alpine heather lately won
 From out the depths of slow receding snow.
 I rise and all the aging years are backward flung
 For soil up here and flower and even time are young.

III.

Some trees are bent and winter-tempest scars
 Proclaim the cruel stress of yesterday;
 Yet lily-gardens, aster-strewn, and lupine pearls,
 Between the snow and wind-scarped granite prongs,
 Awake, as round the peak a signal whirls.
 And Dawn, victorious, throws her lavish songs
 On winds that set the meadowed flowers at play
 Beneath the rosy blush of hiding stars.
 And now, O Mountain Dawn, I own thy magic art
 That stirs anew the youth, the youth still in my heart!

IV.

Above the flowers a thousand voices call,
 The upward lure of wide eternal snows,
 Where jagged cliffs look down on rivers swift
 In brawling race, tumultuous to'rd the sea.
 We climb o'er ice from rift to gleaming rift,
 To crest where star and earth in kinship free
 May touch the blue; transcendent glory glows
 And clasps the soul of man, ecstatic thrall!
 O, spare some strength of flesh and nerve, ye gnawing years,
 To meet the surging call my willing spirit hears!

V.

From park to park, the mountain spendor-chain,
 These precious links, embossed above the clouds
 With em'rald spire or cave of crystal ice
 Or silver sheen of amethystine lake,
 Give hints as of the gates of Paradise!
 Ah, nevermore can earthly visions take
 From me this wealth, though loud the jarring crowds
 May claim lean hours among their strivings vain.
 My inmost soul these mountain gems secure will hold
 And eyes half closed will see the summer-frames of gold.