

## CUPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

BY MALCOLM WAYBROOKE

**F**IRST there was chaos, out of brooding bred—  
 Silent, inseparate, dispirited—  
 And yet with shapeless semblances impressed—  
 Like one who drinks alone beside the dead,  
 Breast over breast!

Who dipping deeply in a vintage rare,  
 Sees it is his own body lying there,  
 And, in confusion, hurrying without,  
 Calls boon companions in his watch to share,  
 From ways about.

So chaos moved, distracted in the night,  
 Conceiving horror of its depth and height,  
 Saw self in self reflect with deadly fear;  
 Till that which cried above: Let there be Light!  
 Made light appear.

Then all great forces strove that light to reach—  
 As travellers at an inn the cups of each—  
 And Tohu held with Bohu orgie high,  
 From which creation, full of silver speech,  
 Sprang bye and bye.

Then did the morning stars together sing,  
 As feasting princes who their glasses ring,  
 And the great Bacchic chorus swelled above;  
 Joy's shout was lifted upon rapture's wing,  
 As wine lifts love.

And still creation holds that joy divine,  
 As the uplifted cup holds blood-red wine,  
 And still the Cosmos, like a Mœnad dance,  
 From age to age, with eyes that brighter shine,  
 Spins into trance.

We are but copies of the cosmic plan,  
 From earth's quintessence shaped to make us man,  
 And that which Nature sketches in first place  
 We strive to follow through our little span,  
 Trace and retrace.

Like chaos once, we dwelt, old friend, alone,  
 And drank with cold hearts foreign to our own,  
 Or, in our solitude, perchance with none;  
 But to true life were dead as any stone  
 Or corpse 'neath sun.

But now through purple hours of Bacchic night  
We pass our cups, and in the depth and height  
Do each in each reflect with love, not fear;  
And when the heart within us cries for light  
Great lights appear.

We, like the morning stars, together sing,  
What time in unison our glasses ring,  
With cosmic minds matured in vintage fine,  
Exalting ever upon rapture's wing  
Æonian wine.

And as creation, on some purpose bent,  
Moves grandly forward, filled with high content,  
We also, moving down the road of years,  
Note from each tavern where the night is spent  
How dawn appears.

O world, created in a vintage song,  
We know thy goal is good, though ways be long!  
Strange cups pass too among the stars at night—  
The ecstasy is great, the wine is strong,  
The dawn is bright!

