

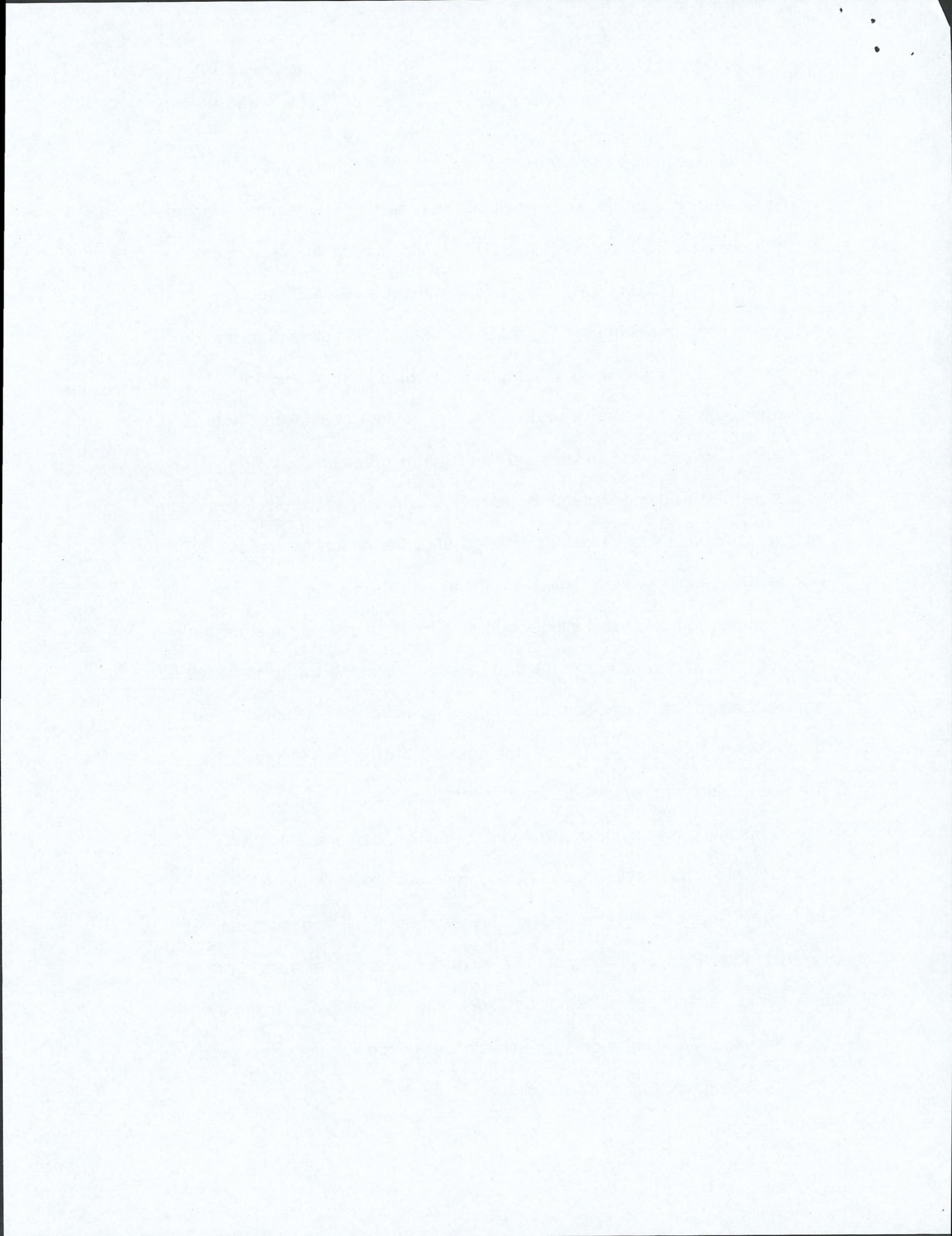
Richmond Prescott
Essay March 10, 2008
Chit Chat Club

Why Poetry?

Or, as we say where I come from, "poyetry." Is there room in our savage, frantic world for poetry? I asked myself this as I watched TV the other evening. On offer were the invasion of Peliliu by U.S. Marines in World War II (a battle expected to last four days which raged for two months with 1200 young Americans dead or wounded, and 10,000 Japanese); the failure of trust in our too creative credit markets; and the rhetoric of would-be nominees for President, striving to control their dislike for one another. Who would write, or read, poetry in a world so taken up with survival, greed and ambition? Well, lots of people, including Madame Sarkozy. They do not find it a ridiculous waste of time. Let's have a look together, asking "What are the functions of poetry?" and recalling some famous, familiar examples.

You can let your analytical minds go slack. This is an exercise in emotional reaction, no matter what part of the brain lights up on an MRI when its owner is appreciating poetry. This essay is also pure plagiarism, for the simple reason that one cannot paraphrase poetry; one has to recite the poet's words. The few words which are my own are mostly "and" and "but."

It is hubris to base an appraisal of poetry on a tiny, personal anthology of verses which have stuck in my memory, mostly from old-fashioned schooldays, reading, and memorizing, Shakespeare, the Romantic poets, the Victorians and a smattering of more modern writers who eschewed meter and rhyme. I am curious to learn your tastes in poetry and expect that they will be unlike mine. As we go along, we will wonder why men became versifiers, when prose expression is so much clearer.



Anthologists and critics of poetry are full of unhelpful theories and classifications. They feel called upon to obfuscate. They do agree that Shakespeare was a good poet. As Ben Jonson said, "Others abide our question, thou art free." And they report that the Victorian poets had an unspoken agreement with their readers that poetry should be intelligible, that it should contain no language which would make a daughter blush, and that excellent diction required iambic pentameter. They stress the obvious, that poetry, like other arts, proceeds from the classical and traditional through various kinds of rebellion and experimentation to a return to the basics - nature, love, death and the "real" world. But what they admire is poets who write for other poets - the common reader be damned. They enjoy making new categories: How many of you have heard of the Imagists, the New Barbarism, the Surrealists, the Esthetic Philosophers, or the Literature of Nerves, to name a few? I will return to my question, Why Poetry?, at the end of this essay. Meanwhile, I will show that I view poetry from the chair of the reader - me.

The major themes of poetry are eight:

- (1) Telling a tale.
- (2) Admiring nature
- (3) Celebrating love
- (4) Expressing religious faith
- (5) Exhorting ideal behaviour
- (6) Denouncing an outrage
- (7) Exploring language
- (8) Lamenting man's folly and his fate

In stating categories, I am a lumpner. If you are splitters, my list of eight can be more than doubled. And, of course, a single poem may contain several overlapping themes.

1. That poetry is well known for telling tales needs no re-emphasis. Homer, who lived before 700 B.C., made famous the Trojan War, long before words were written and readers literate. His Iliad and Odyssey were memorized and recited. Perhaps this is an answer to Why Poetry. Words arranged in meter and using rhyme are easier to remember. A minor character mentioned in The Iliad was Aeneas, who survived Troy, dallied with Queen Dido at Carthage, crossed the Mediterranean to Sicily, and sired the tribe which founded Rome. Vergil left the Aeneid incomplete, but so revered was he that the Emperor Augustus forbade anyone to perfect the text. Surely you thrilled as schoolboys to "Arma virumque cano." Other epics will spring to mind, such as The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, but I will recommend to you a more modern classic, John Brown's Body. Steven Vincent Benet went to the Paris public library in the 1920s and recreated the Civil War in verse. And what verse! Homer espoused dactylic hexameter. Benet used everything his imagination discovered to describe battlefield gore, President Lincoln and his cabinet, vain generals who wasted their troops without victories, alcoholic General Grant, naive, bloodied soldiers, and anguished civilians. This is thrilling stuff!

2. Nature poetry is voluminous, and pleasant enough, for city dwellers. The purest example is perhaps Wordsworth's daffodils. [Insert A]. Another, a bit more complex, is Houseman's cherry tree. [Insert B] But Houseman is using a description of nature to say something else - that life is short and must be lived

intensely. Tom Benet gave you an insight into this technique in the words of Robert Frost: Poetry is "saying one thing and meaning another, saying one thing in terms of another, the pleasure of ulteriority."

3. The celebration of love is one of the two great uses of poetry. The other is addressing death. Here's love:

[Insert C - Benton]

[Insert D - Hillyer]

[Insert E - Burns]

[Insert F - E. B. Browning]

[Insert G - Shakespeare sonnet]

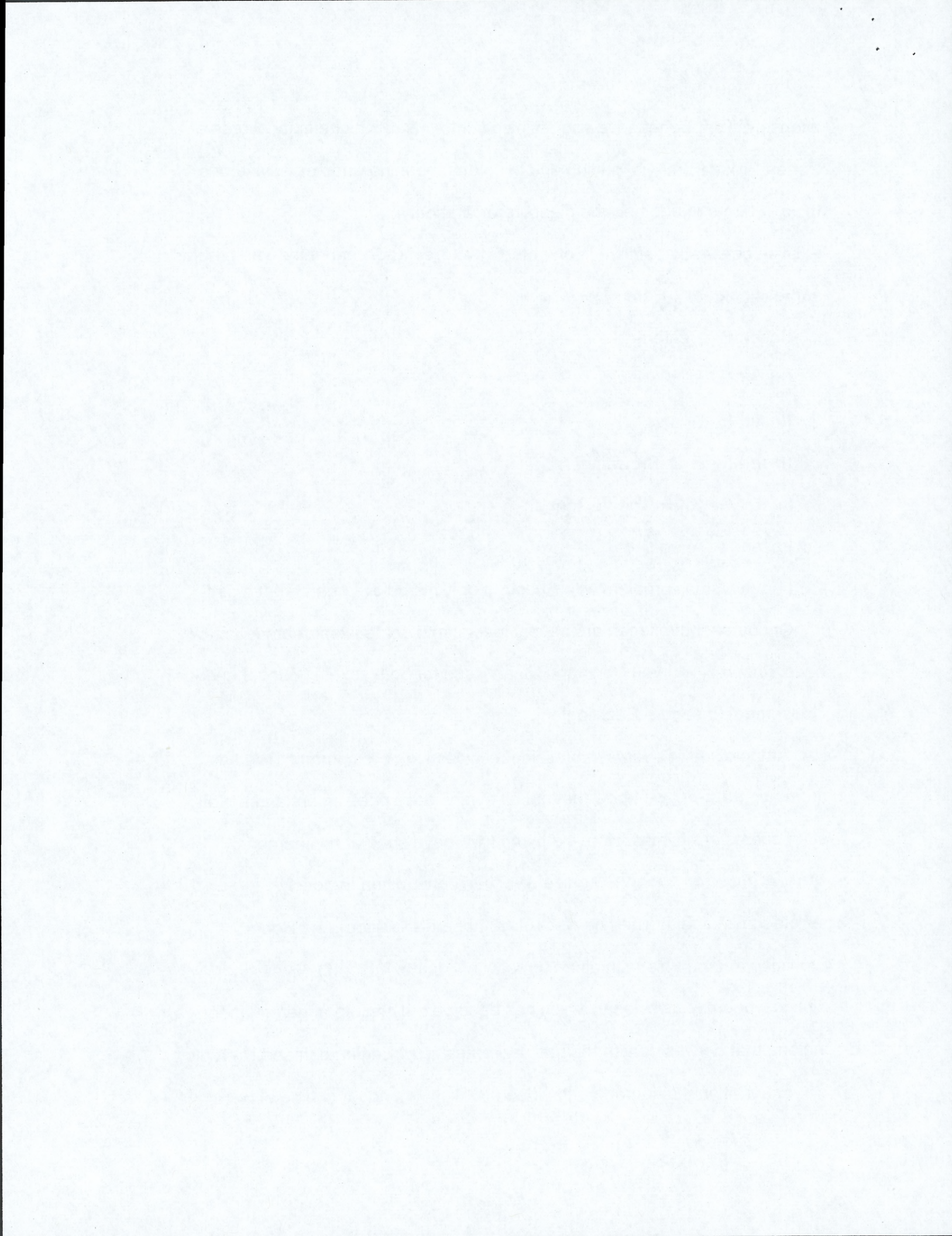
[Insert H - Auden]

I have a small problem with Auden. If only his beloved had been a girl!

Of course, not all men are patient lovers, and some women are reluctant ones. [Insert I - Marvel] Constancy is an issue for both sexes. [Insert J and K - Houseman] [Insert L - Suckling]

4. Anthologies of poems expressing religious faith are common. We call them hymnals, but we know that not all hymns have poetic merit and not all such poems are hymns. Here's a hymn I will have sung at my memorial service. [Insert M - John Greenleaf Whittier] John Milton famously resisted loss of faith when he went blind. [Insert N - Milton] And Robert Browning affirmed his faith as he foresaw his death. [Insert O - Browning] Kipling's poem *Recessional*, which has become a hymn, so angered Queen Victoria that he was denied the poet laureateship of England! [Insert P - Kipling]

5. Exhortations to courage and virtue are likely to appear in time of war.



One thinks of the Marseillaise and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Julia Ward Howe's stirring verse was sung by Union troops slogging through the mud on the way to Gettysburg. [Insert Q - Howe] Shakespeare put heroic words into the mouth of Henry V before Agincourt. [Insert R - WS]. But Tennyson's Ulysses, old and bored with kingship, summoned his peers (and us) to a last, peaceful voyage of discovery. [Insert S - Tennyson]

6. Poets have often denounced disasters with eloquent outrage, although the sheer volume of awful events in our world, and modern media, have ended this tradition. A clever example is Mark Antony's funeral oration for Julius Caesar. Tennyson's lyrical tribute to the insane courage of the Light Brigade, riding into a valley with enemy cannons mounted on all sides, states flatly, "Someone had blundered." But two of the most moving examples of outrage are from e.e.cummings concerning Olaf, a conscientious objector, and Wilfrid Owen, killed in World War I. [Insert T - cummings] [Insert U - Owen]

7. Poetry presents unlimited opportunities for changes in technique, for exploring language, meter, rhyme and even punctuation. It does not have to say something sensible. It has one sine qua non - metaphor. You remember: with metaphor one thing is another; with simile one thing is like another. [Insert V- Pound] That's the entire poem! Centuries ago Homer's favorite metaphors, "rosy-fingered dawn" and the "wine-dark sea" were original. Shakespeare was a master of metaphor. Listen to this definition: [Insert W - WS on sleep] Of course, Shakespeare was also such a master of iambic pentameter that the Victorians preferred it to voice their comfortable pieties. In his sonnets the bard joined meter and rhyme. [Insert X - WS aged lover] Others experimented.



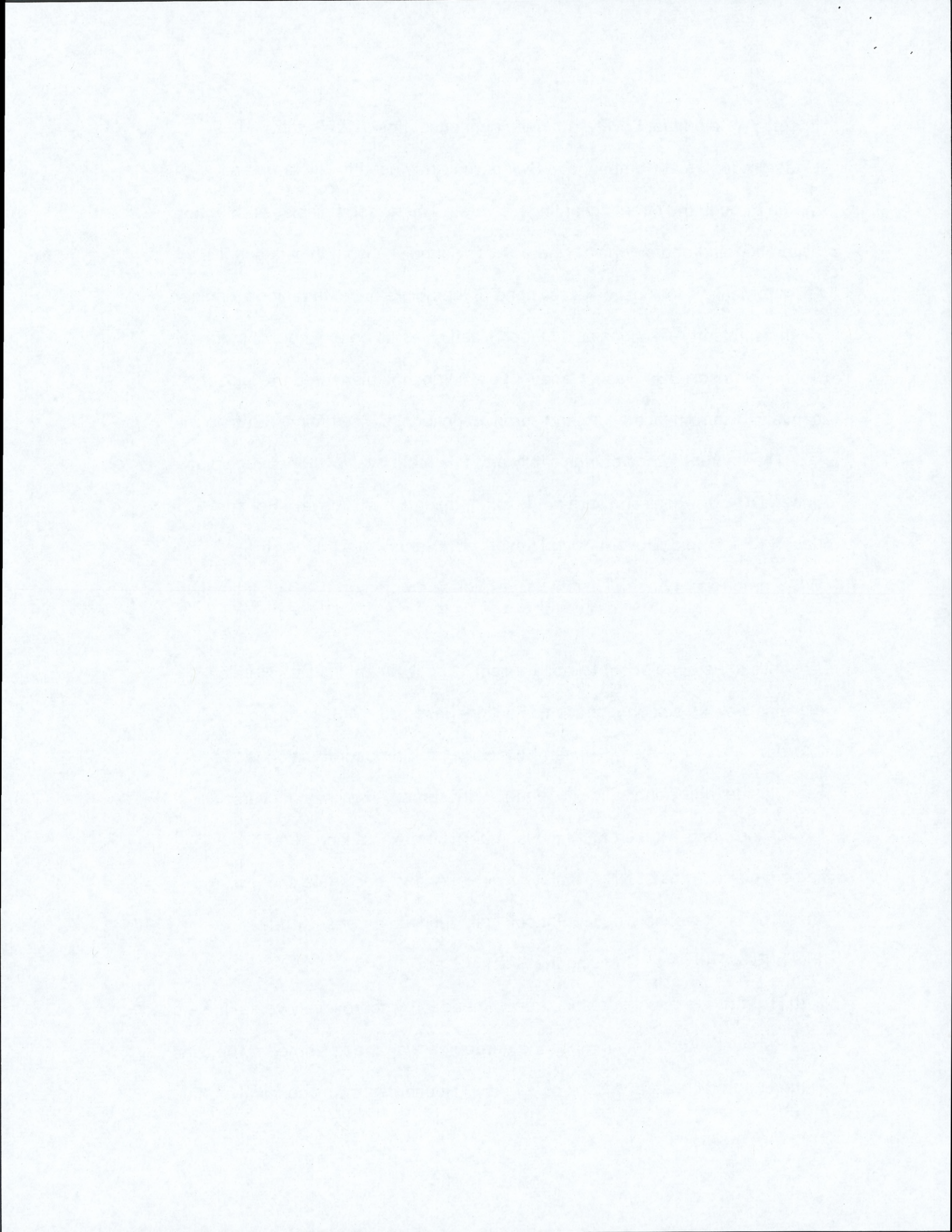
[Insert Y - Coleridge] Lovely, not quite nonsense. [Insert Z - Swinburne]
 Undergraduates at Cambridge in Swinburne's day used to link arms and
 march through the streets chanting his verse. This excerpt displays metaphor,
 alliteration and onomatopoeia (where words sound like what they describe).

Gerard Manley Hopkins looked to none of the above but to ingenious, original
 rhythms. [Insert AA - Hopkins]. Ogden Nash gives us an example of internal
 rhyming. [Insert BB - Nash, Candy ...] e.e.cummings pioneered the lack of
 capitals, bizarre punctuation, and surprise. [Insert CC - cummings, Buffalo Bill]

8. The darker themes of man's folly and fate must rival love poetry in volume.
 [Insert DD - Dowson. They are not long. .] [Insert EE - Rubayat - For some ...]
 [Insert FF - Arnold. Dover Beach.] [Insert GG - Santayana] [Insert HH -
 WS, Tomorrow ..] And my favorite T.S. Eliot. poem. [Insert II - Eliot, Intimations
 of Mortality]

What's to be done about this pessimism? End it, by ending life? Hamlet
 explains why we seldom choose this action. [Insert JJ - WS, To sleep perchance
 to dream ...] Carpe diem? [Insert KK - Rubayat, Some for the glories ..]
 Stand aside, philosophically? [Insert LL - Houseman. They say my verse ..]
 Expect the worse? [Insert MM - Houseman, There was a king ..] Adopt a
 fierce stoicism? [Insert NN - Henley, Invictus] Accept one's fate cheerfully?
 [Insert OO - Stevenson, epitaph] Look confidently to a better world?
 [Insert PP - Tennyson. Crossing the Bar]

Ah, but there is a tested respite, recommended by some lovely verse. [Insert
 QQ- Rubayat - And lately through the garden gate agape ..; Come, my beloved,
 fill the cup that clears ..; A book of verses ..] Houseman said it concisely: "Malt



does more than Milton can/ To justify God's ways to man."

To end with the question, Why poetry? the anthologist Louis Untermeyer says it sharpens our perceptions, increases our appreciation and heightens our awareness "of life in all its simple commonplaces and endlessly changing complexities." It also expresses changing social conditions surrounding it. But as Archibald Macleish said in his poem *Ars Poetica*, "A poem should not mean, but be." I will cite John Masefield for a final insight, which tells us that the chaotic human condition is itself a fine subject for verse. [Insert QQ - Masefield]

I have tried to show you that poetry can be fun. I welcome your comments on this ageless art.

Richmond Prescott

March 10, 2008



1

Insert A. William Wordsworth.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company;
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;



And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Insert B. A.E. Houseman

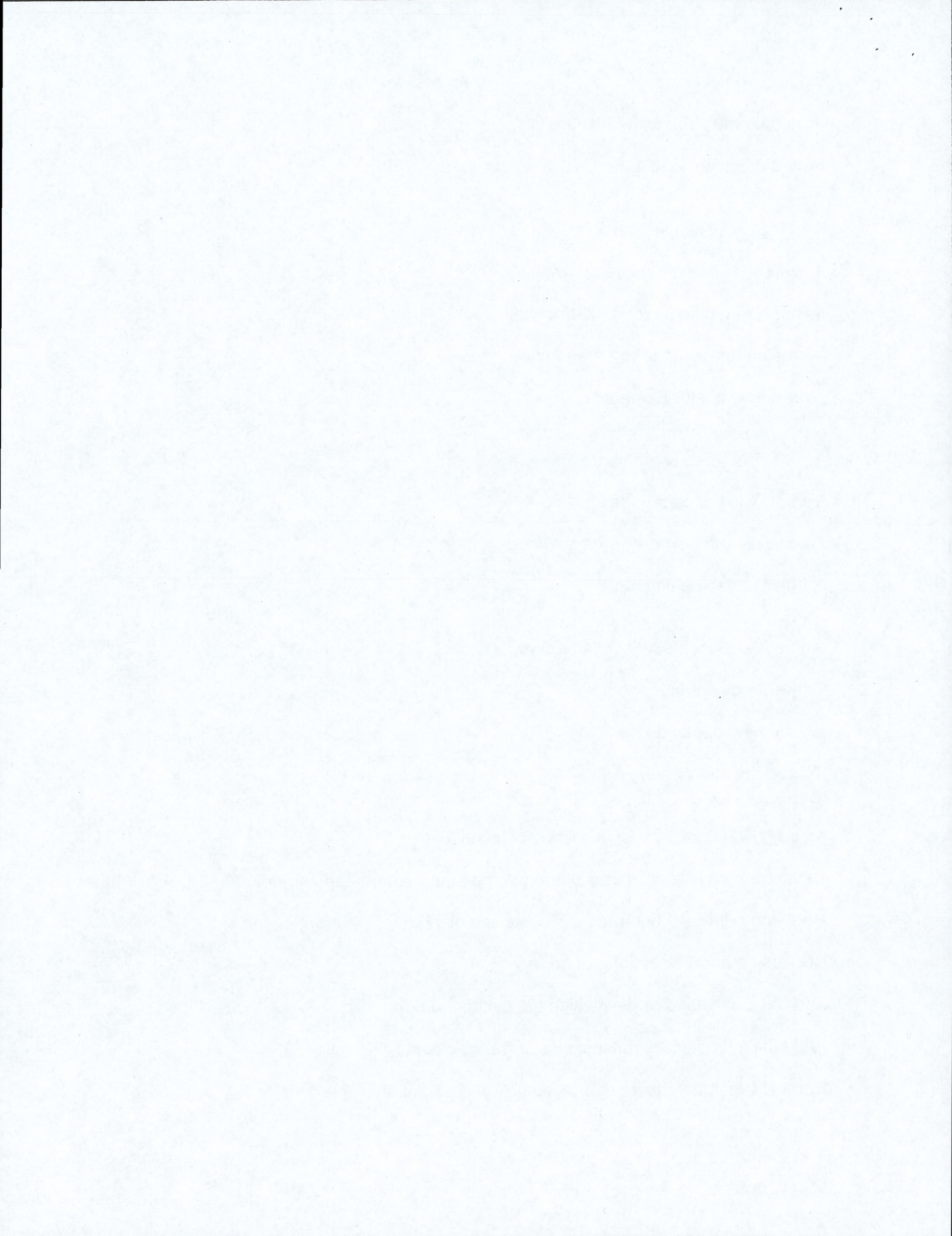
Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now of my three score years and ten
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

Insert C. Walter Benton: This is my beloved.

Because hate is legislated, written into the primer and the testament,
Shot into our blood and brains like vaccine or vitamins,
Because our day is of time, of hours,
And the clock hand turns, closing the circle upon us,
And black, timeless night sucks us in like quicksand,
Receives us totally, without a raincheck or a parachute,



A key to heaven or the last, long look,
 I need love more than ever now, I need your love.
 I need love more than hope or money, wisdom or a drink.

Insert D. Robert Hillyer. En repos, 1917

Early in the morning of a lovely summer day
 As they lowered the bright awning at the outdoor cafe,
 I was sitting eating croissants, with cafe au lait,
 Under greenery like scenery, Rue Francois Premier.
 They were hosing down the pavement with a dash of flashing spray
 And a smell like summer showers when the dust is drenched away,
 I was twenty, and a lover, and in paradise to stay
 Very early in the morning of a lovely summer's day.

Insert E. Robert Burns. A red, red rose.

O My luv'e's like a red, red rose
 That's newly sprung in June:
 O my Luv'e's like the melodie
 That's sweetly play'd in tune!
 As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
 So deep in love am I:
 And I shall luv'e thee still, my dear,
 Till a' the seas gang dry.

Insert F. Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Sonnet.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's

Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints, - I love with the breath,

Smiles, tears of all my life! - and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

Insert G. Shakespeare. Sonnet.

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,

I all alone beweepe my outcast state,

And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,

And look upon myself, and curse my fate,

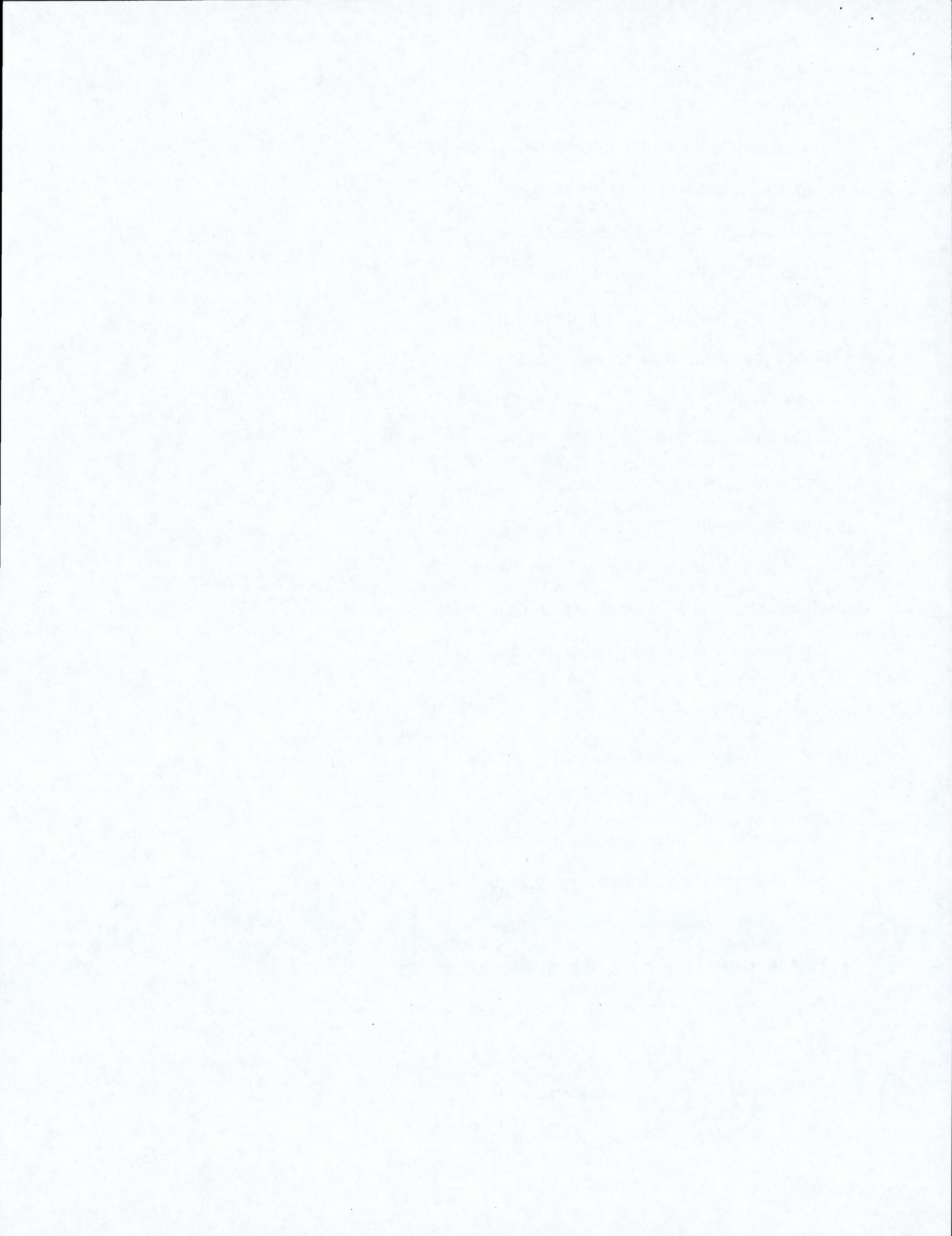
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,

Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,

Desiring this man's art or that man's scope,

With what I most enjoy contented least;

Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,



Haply I think on thee - and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate.
 For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Insert H. W.H. Auden

Lay your sleeping head, my love,
 Human on my faithless arm;
 Time and fevers burn away
 Individual beauty from
 Thoughtful children, and the grave
 Proves the child ephemeral.
 But in my arms till break of day
 Let the living creature lie,
 Mortal, guilty, but to me
 The entirely beautiful.

Insert I. Andrew Marvel. To his coy mistress.

Had we but world enough, and time,
 This coyness, lady, were no crime.

My vegetable love should grow
 Vaster than empires and more slow;
 An hundred years should go to praise

Thine eyes, and on they forehead gaze;
 Two hundred to adore each breast,
 But thirty thousand to the rest.

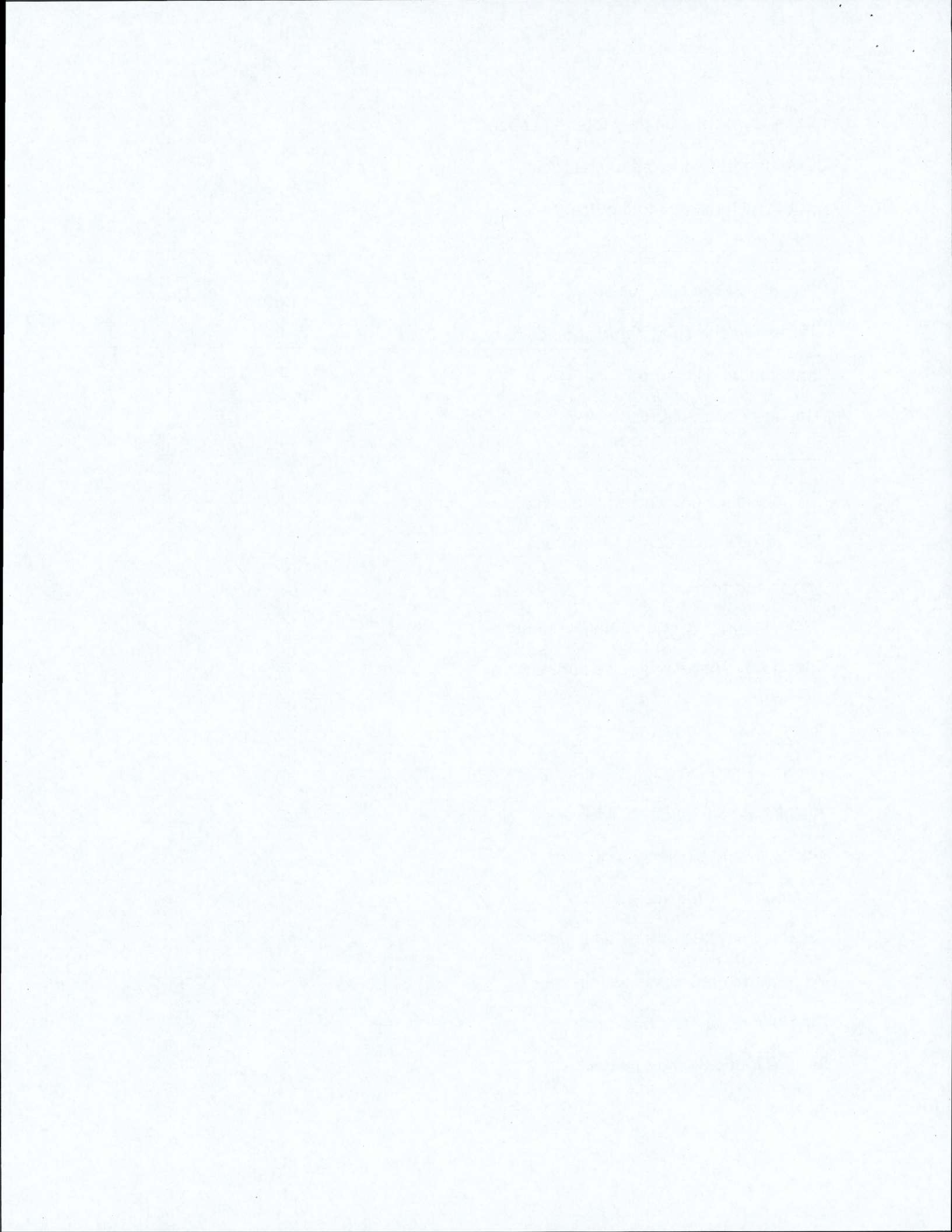
But at my back I always hear
 Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
 And yonder all before us lie
 Deserts of vast eternity.

The grave's a fine and private place,
 But none, I think, do there embrace.

Thus, though we cannot make our sun
 Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Insert J. A.E. Houseman

I promise nothing, friends will part;
 All things must end, for all began;
 And truth and singleness of heart
 Are mortal even as is man.
 But this unlucky love should last
 When answered passions thin to air;
 Eternal fate so deep has cast
 Its sure foundation of despair.

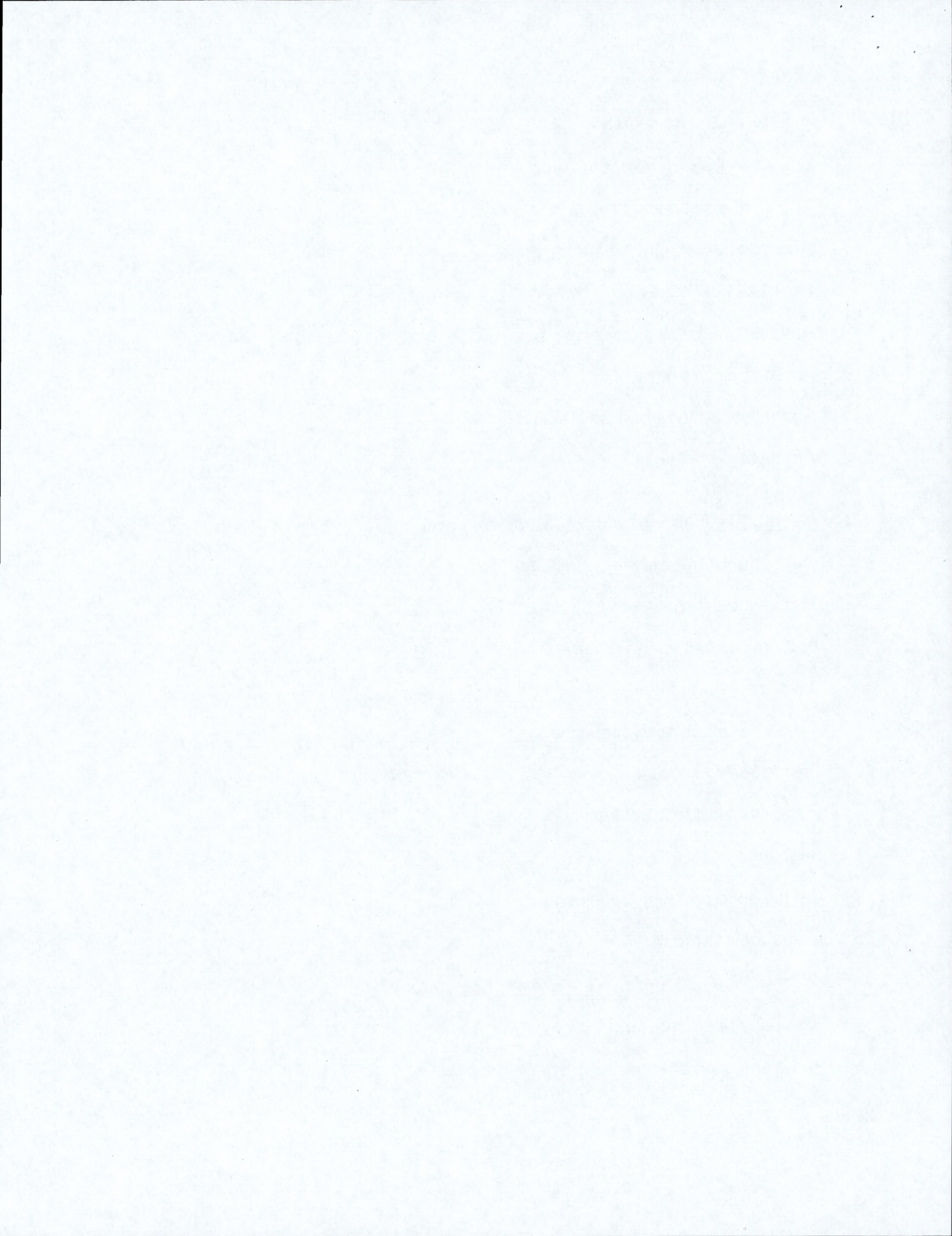


Insert K. A.E. Houseman

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well I did behave.
And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

Insert L. Sir John Suckling. The Constant Lover.

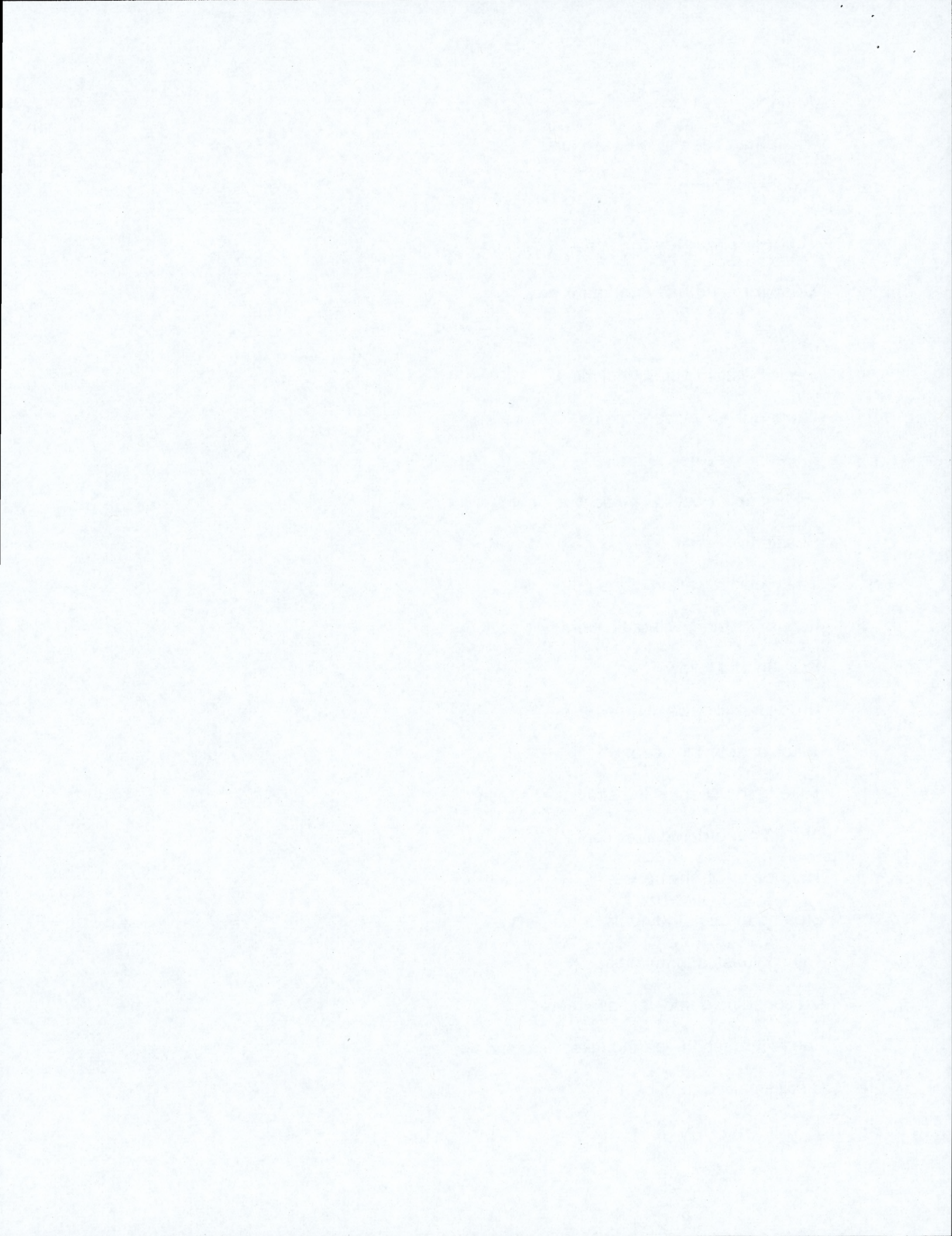
Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more
If it prove fair weather.
Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.
But the spite on 't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.
Had it any been but she,



And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen in her place.

Insert M. Hymnal, p. 652. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Forgive our foolish ways.
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise.
With simple trust like those who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord
Let us like them without a word
Rise up and follow Thee.
Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease.
Take from our souls the strain and stress
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.
Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm.
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire
O still small voice of calm.



Insert N. John Milton. On his blindness.

When I consider how my light is spent,
E're half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,
Doth God exact day-labor, light deny'd,
I fondly ask; But patience to prevent
That murmur soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts, who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best, his state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o're land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

Insert O. Robert Browning. Epilogue to Asolando.

I will be
One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.
No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time,
Greet the unseen with a cheer!



Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
 'Strive and thrive' cry, 'Speed, fight on, fare ever, there as here!

Insert P. Rudyard Kipling. Recessional.

God of our fathers, known of old -
 Lord of our farflung battle line -
 Beneath whose awful hand we hold
 Dominion over palm and pine -
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget, lest we forget.

The tumult and the shouting dies,
 The captains and the kings depart -
 Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
 An humble and a contrite heart.
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget, lest we forget.

Far-called our navies melt away -
 On dune and headland sinks the fire -
 Lo, all our pomp or yesterday
 Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
 Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
 Lest we forget, lest we forget.

Insert Q. Julia Ward Howe. The Battle Hymn of the Republic.



In the beauty of the lillies Christ was born across the sea
 With a glory in his bosom which transfigures you and me.
 As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
 Our God is marching on!

Insert R. Shakespeare. Henry V, Act III, Scene I

Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more
 Or close the wall up with our English dead.
 In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
 As modest stillness and humility,
 But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
 Then imitate the action of the tiger.
 Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
 Disguise fair nature with hard-favored anger.

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
 Straining upon the start. The game's afoot!
 Follow your spirit, and upon this charge
 Cry God for Harry, England and St. George!

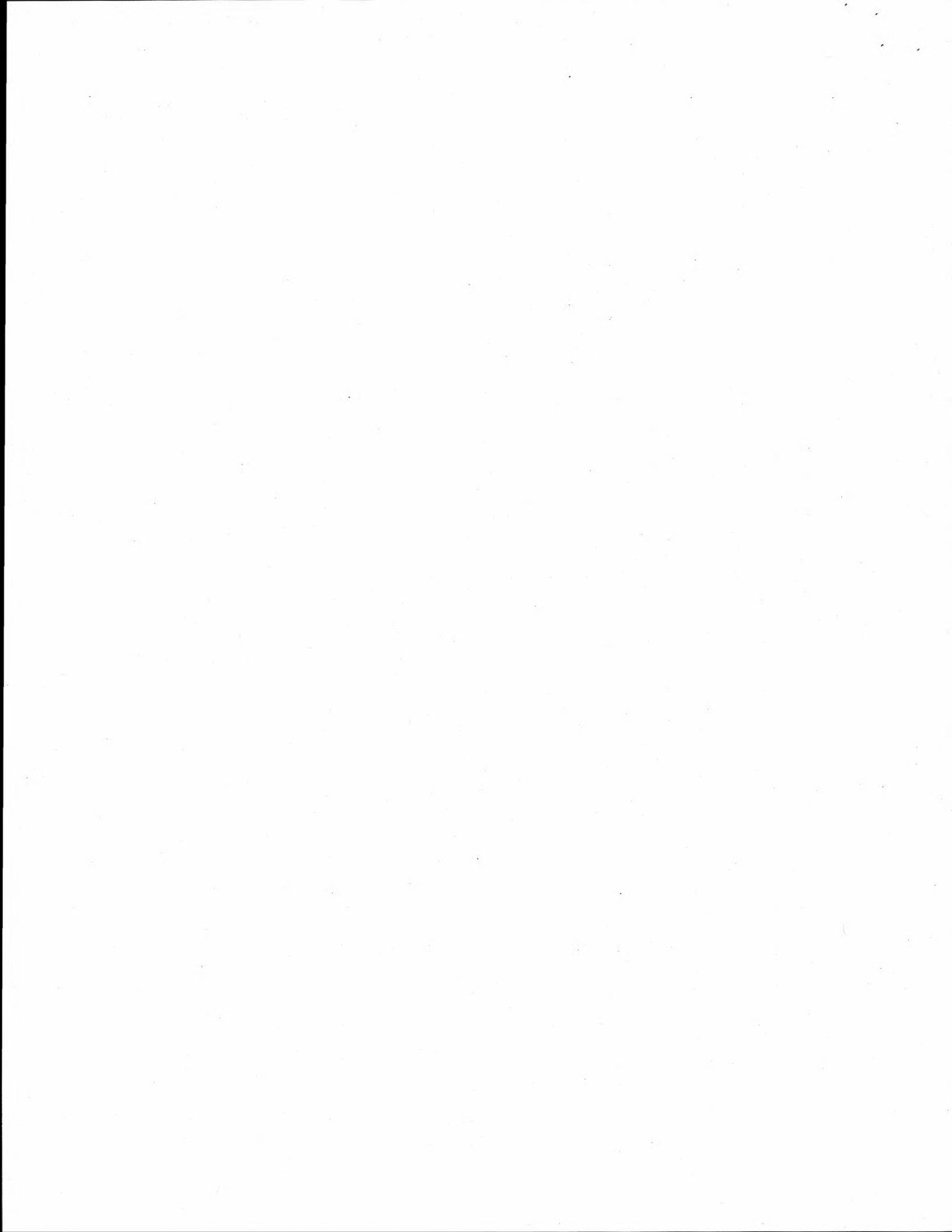
Insert S. Alfred Lord Tennyson. Ulysses.

Come my friends
 'Tis not to late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds

To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
 Though much is taken, much abides; and though
 We are not now that strength which in old days
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are,
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
 To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield.

Insert T. e.e.cummings, #204

I sing of Olaf, glad and big
 whose warmest heart recoiled at war:
 a conscientious objector.
 his wellbeloved colonel (trig
 westpointer most succinctly bred)
 took erring Olaf soon in hand:
 but - though an host of overjoyed
 noncoms [hammered his] head,
^{at}
 Olaf, being to all intents a corpse . . .
 responds, without getting annoyed,
 'I will not kiss your f.ing flag.'



straightway the silver bird looked grave

... and egged the firstclassprivates on

his rectum wickedly to tease

by means of skillfully applied

bayonets roasted hot with heat -

[but] Olaf (upon what were once knees)

does almost ceaselessly repeat

'there is som s. I will not eat.'

our president, being of which

assertions duly notified

threw the yellowsonofabitch

into a dungeon where he died.

Christ (of his mercy infinite)

I pray to see;and Olaf too . . . he was

more brave than me, more blond that you.

Insert U. Wilfred Owen. Dulce et Decorum Est.

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,

... Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,

But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;

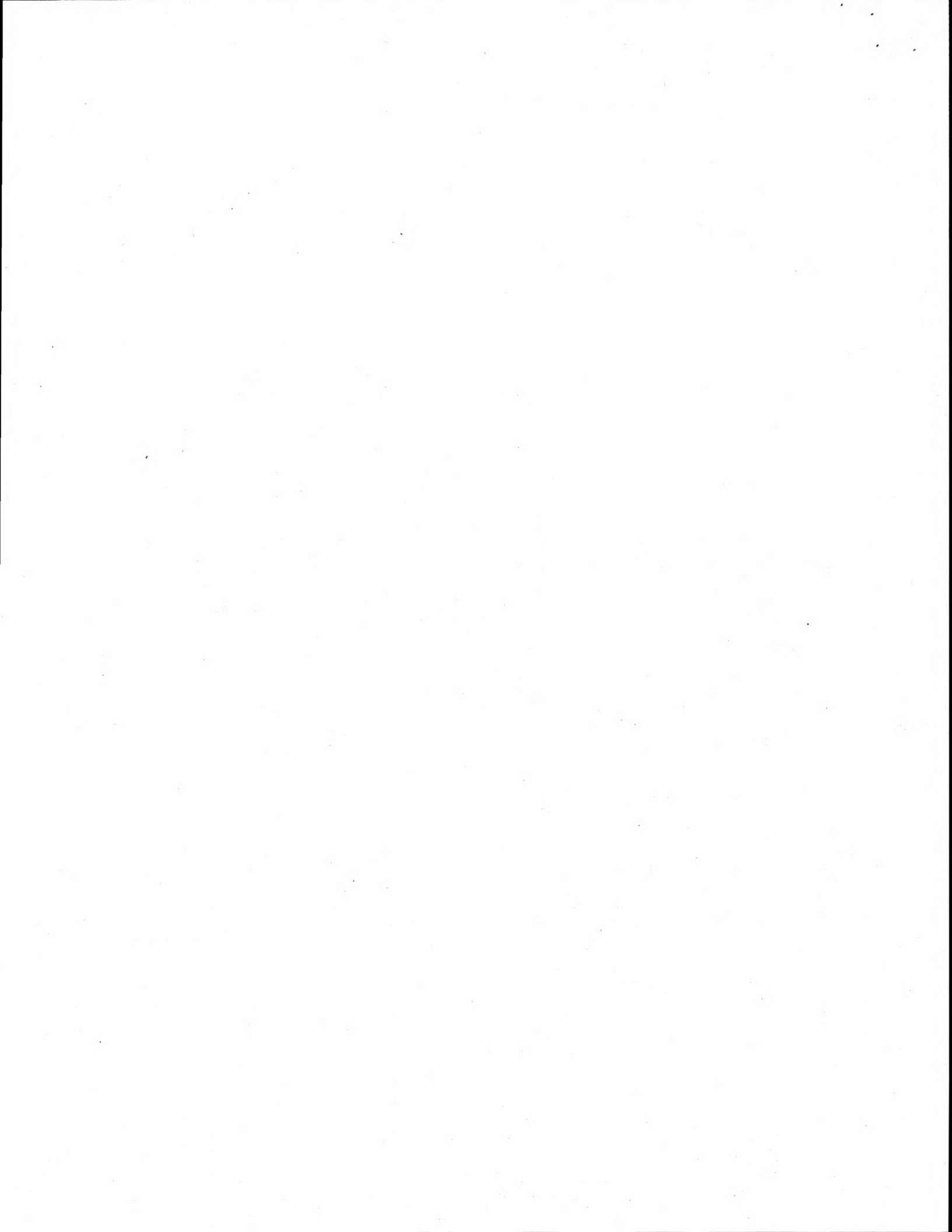
Drunk with fatigue; dead even to the hoots

Of gas shells dropping softly behind.

Gas!Gas! Quick, boys! - An ecstasy of fumbling

Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time.

But someone still was yelling out and stumbling



And floundering like a man in fire or lime.

... In all my dreams before my helpless sight

He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

... If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood

Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs

... My friend you would not tell with such high zest

To children ardent for some desperate glory,

The old lie: Dulce et decorum est

Pro patria mori.

Insert V. Ezra Pound. In a station of the metro.

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:

Petals on a wet, black bough.

Insert W. Shakespeare. Macbeth. Sleep.

Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast.

Insert X. Shakespeare. Sonnet

That time of year thou mayst in me behold

When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang

Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

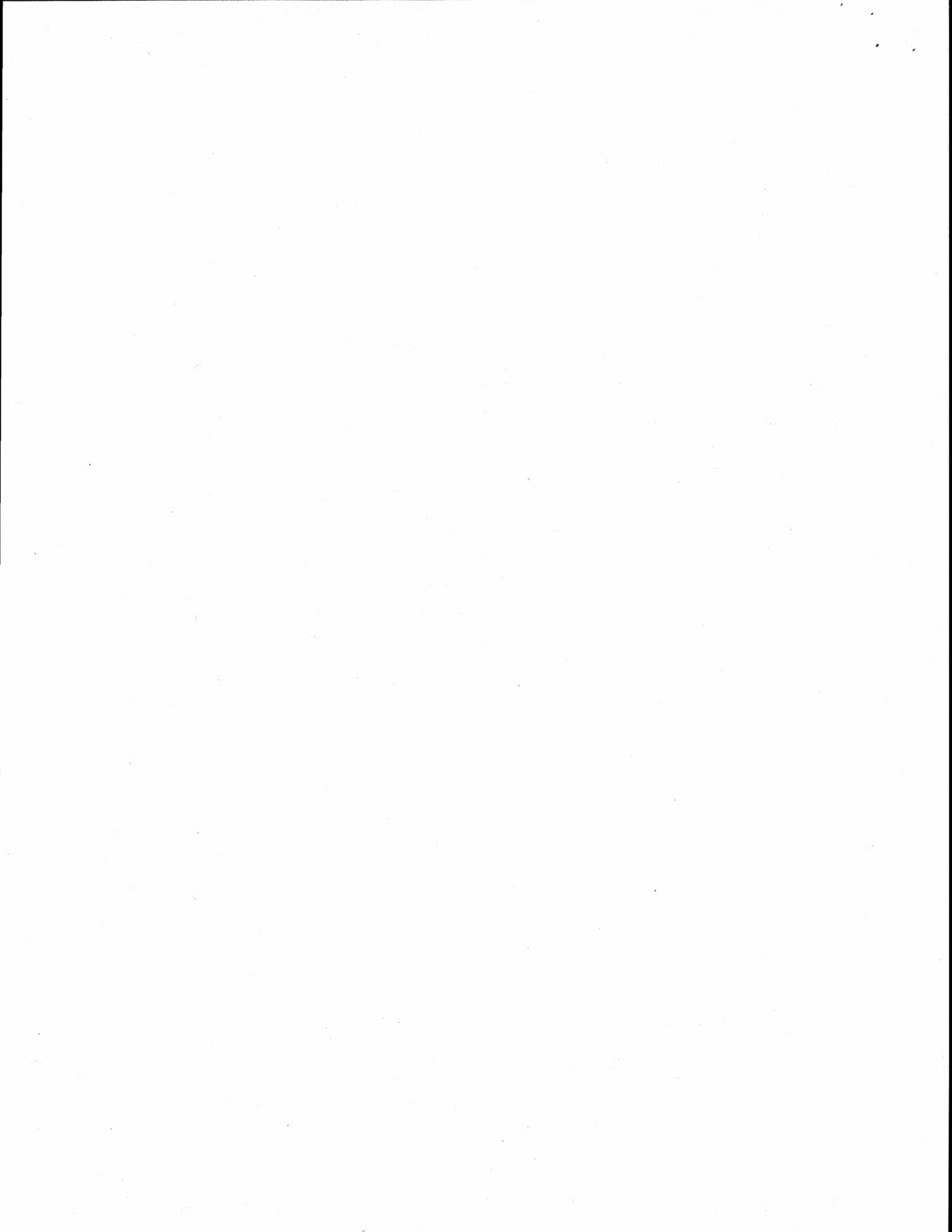
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
 As after sunset fadeth in the west,
 Which by and by black night doth take away,
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
 In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie
 As the deathbed whereon it must expire,
 Consumed by that which it was nourished by.
 This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

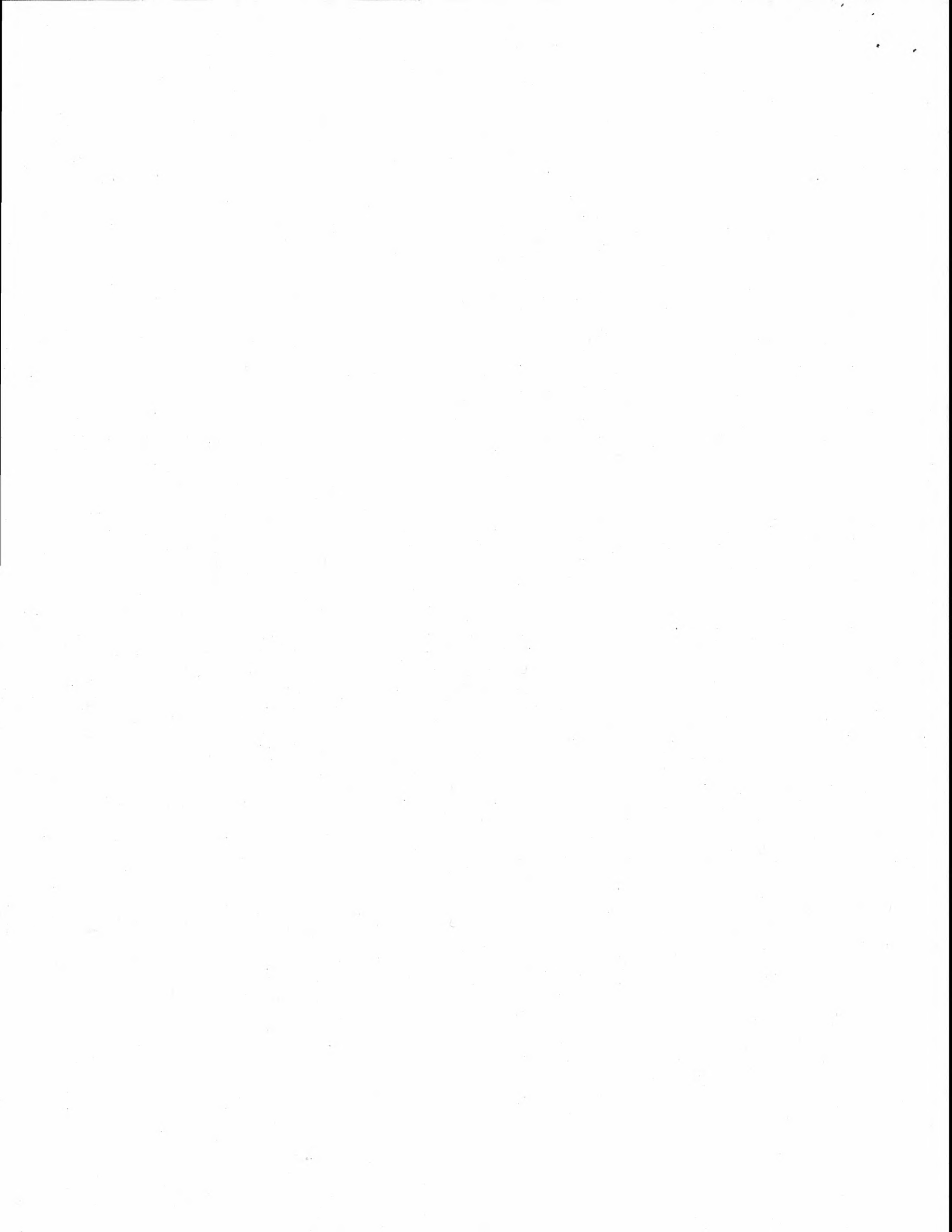
Insert Y. Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Kubla Khan.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
 A stately pleasure dome decree;
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
 Through caverns measureless to man
 Down to a sunless sea.

Insert Z. Swinburne. Atalanta in Calydon.

When the hounds of spring are on the winter's traces,
 The mother of months in meadow or plain,
 Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
 And the brown bright nightingale amorous
 Is half assuaged for Itylus,





Out of a misty dream,
Our path emerges for a while then closes,
Within a dream.

Insert EE. Rubayat.

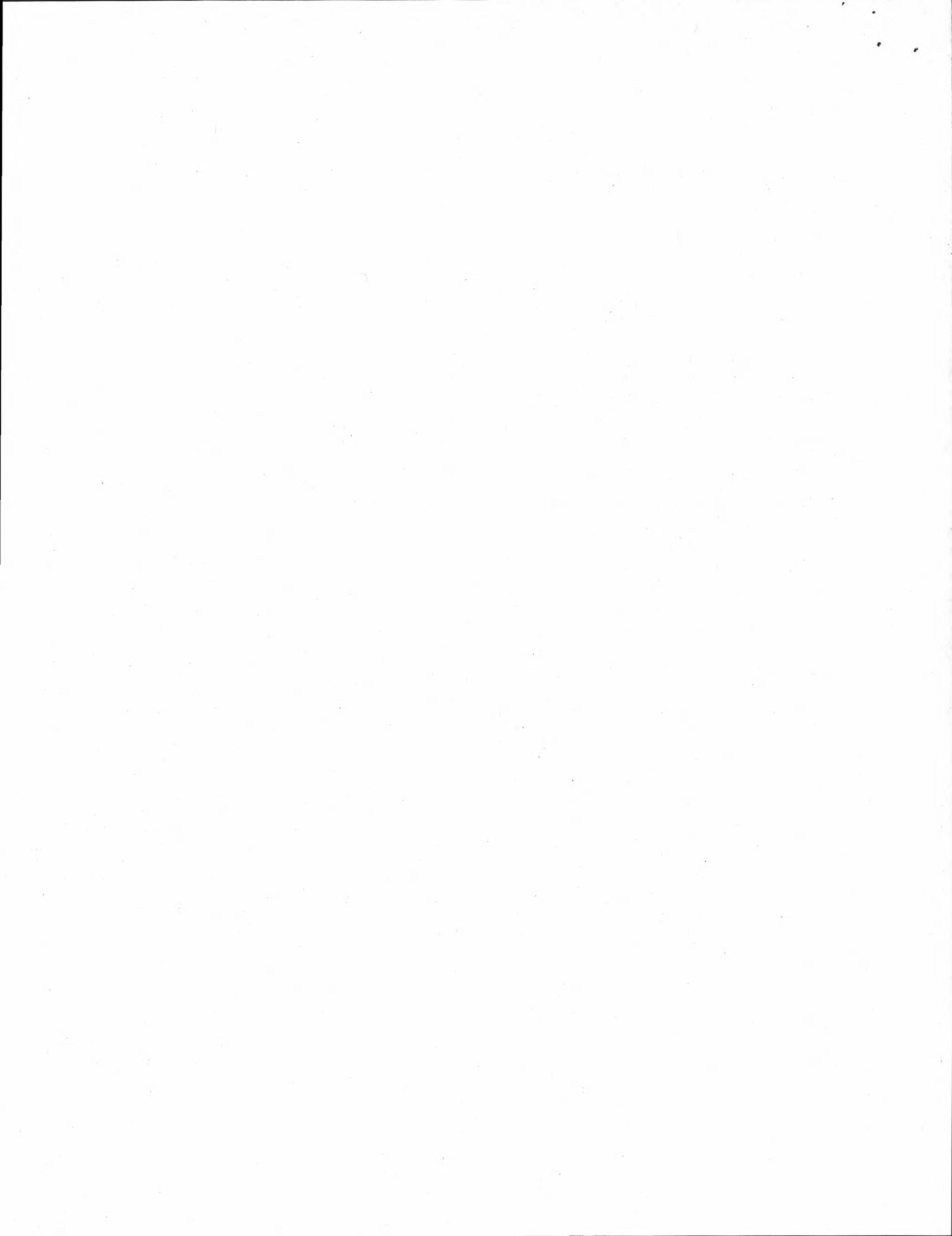
For some we loved, the loveliest and best
That from his vintage rolling time hath pressed,
Have drunk their cup a round or two before
And one by one crept silently to rest.

Insert FF. Matthew Arnold. Dover Beach.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another for the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy nor love nor light,
Nor certitude nor peace nor help for pain,
And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Insert GG. Santayan. Sonnet.

As in the midst of battle there is room
For thoughts of love, and in foul sin for mirth,
As gossips whisper of a trinket's worth



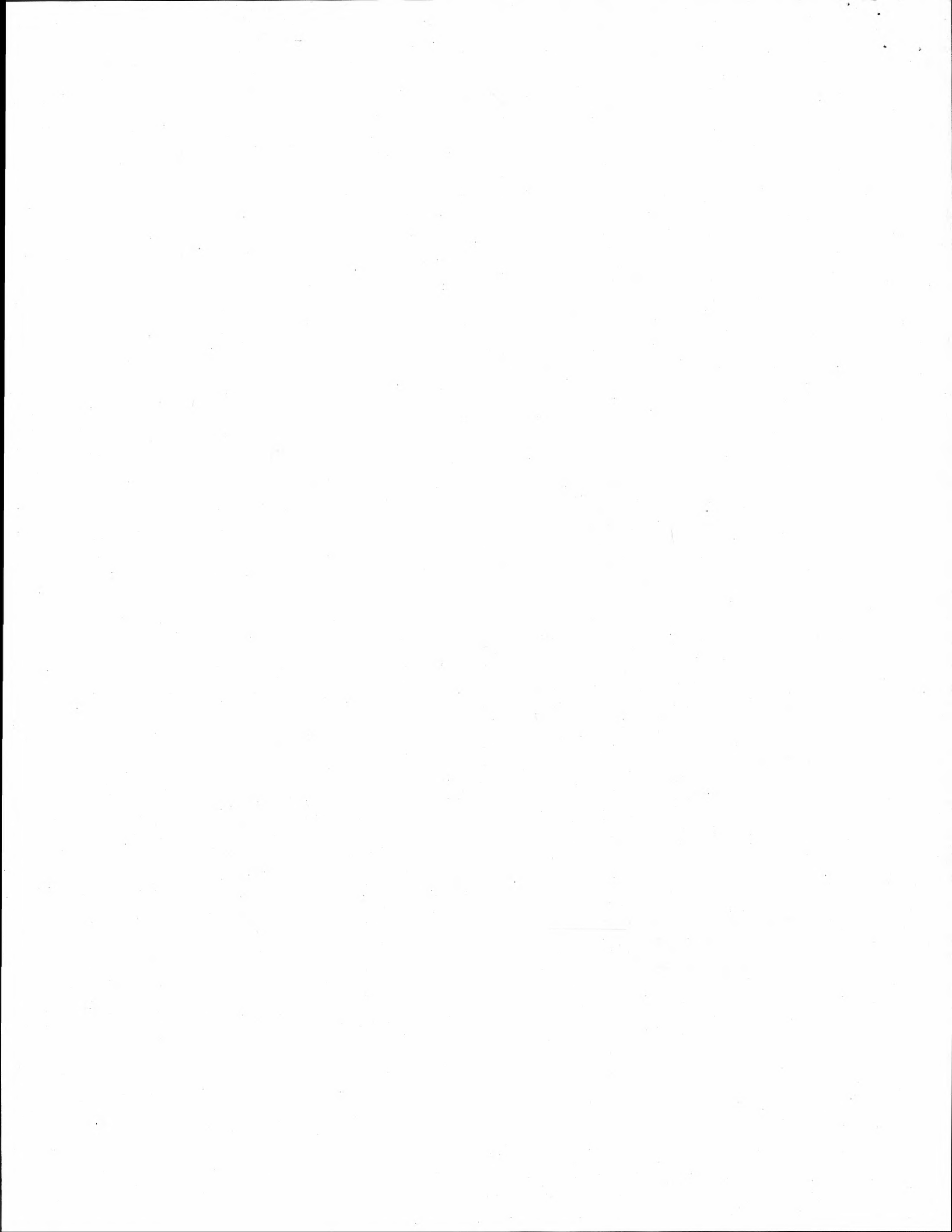
Spied in the deathbed's flickering candle gloom,
As in the crevices of Caesar's tomb.
The sweet herbs flourish, on a little earth,
So in this great disaster of our birth,
We can be happy, and forget our doom.
For morning with a ray of tenderest joy,
Gilding the iron heavens hides the truth,
And evening gently woos us to employ,
Our grief in idle catches; such is youth
Till from that summer trance we wake to find
Despair before us, vanity behind.

Insert HH. Shakespeare. Macbeth.

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more; it is a tale,
Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

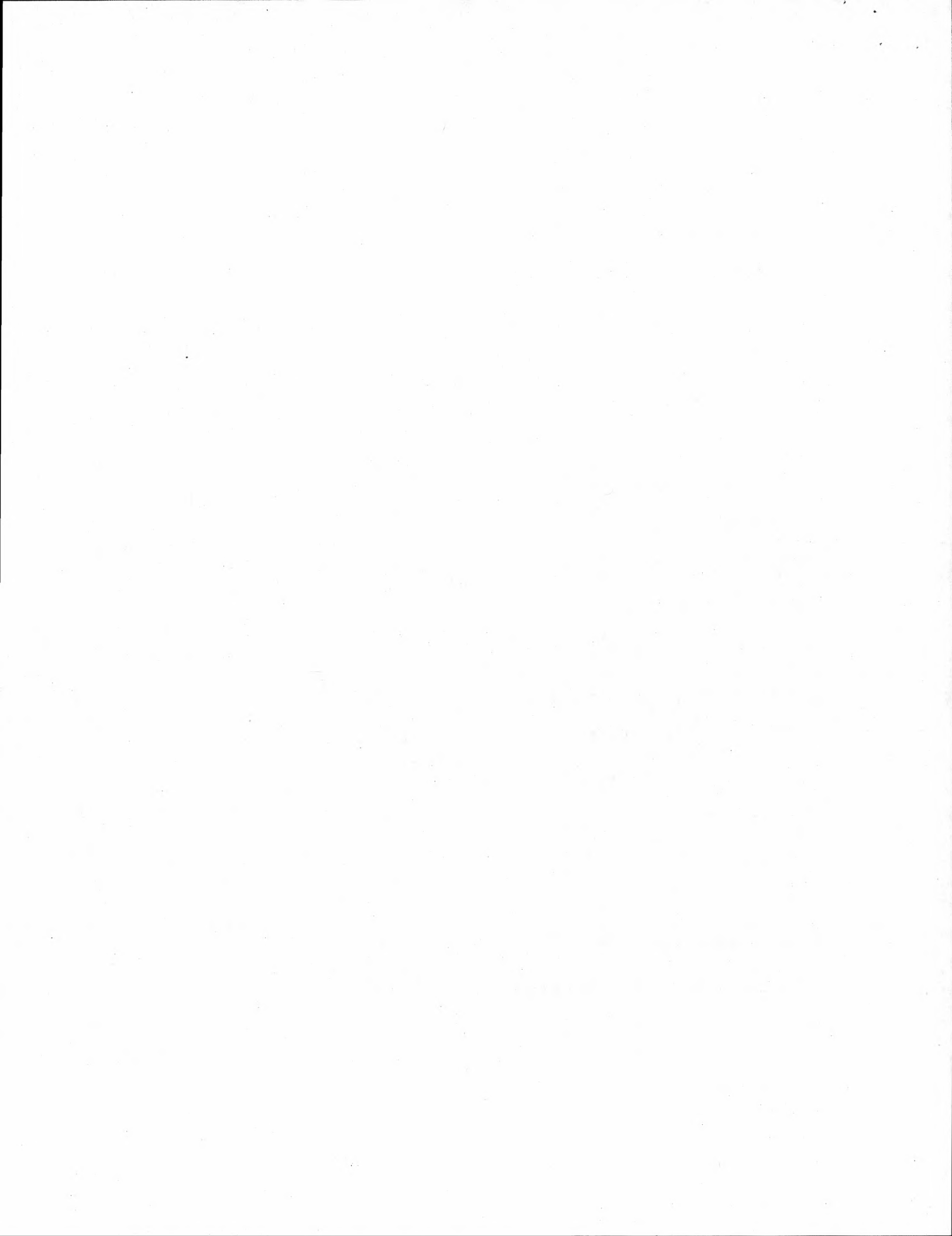
Insert II. T.S. Eliot. Intimations of Mortality.

Webster was much possessed with death,



And saw the skull beneath the skin,
And breastless creatures underground
Lean backward with a lipless grin.
Daffodil bulbs instead of orbs
Stared from the sockets of their eyes;
He knew that thought clings 'round dead limbs,
Tightening its lusts and luxuries.
Donne, I suppose, was such another
Who found no substitute for sense,
To seize and clutch and penetrate,
Expert beyond experience.
He knew the anguish of the marrow,
The ague of the skeleton,
No contact possible to flesh,
Allayed the fever of the bone.
Grishkin is nice, her Russian eye
Is underlined for emphasis,
Uncorseted, her friendly bust
Give promise of pneumatic bliss.
And even the abstract entities
Circumambulate her charm,
While our lot crawls between dry ribs,
To keep our metaphysics warm.

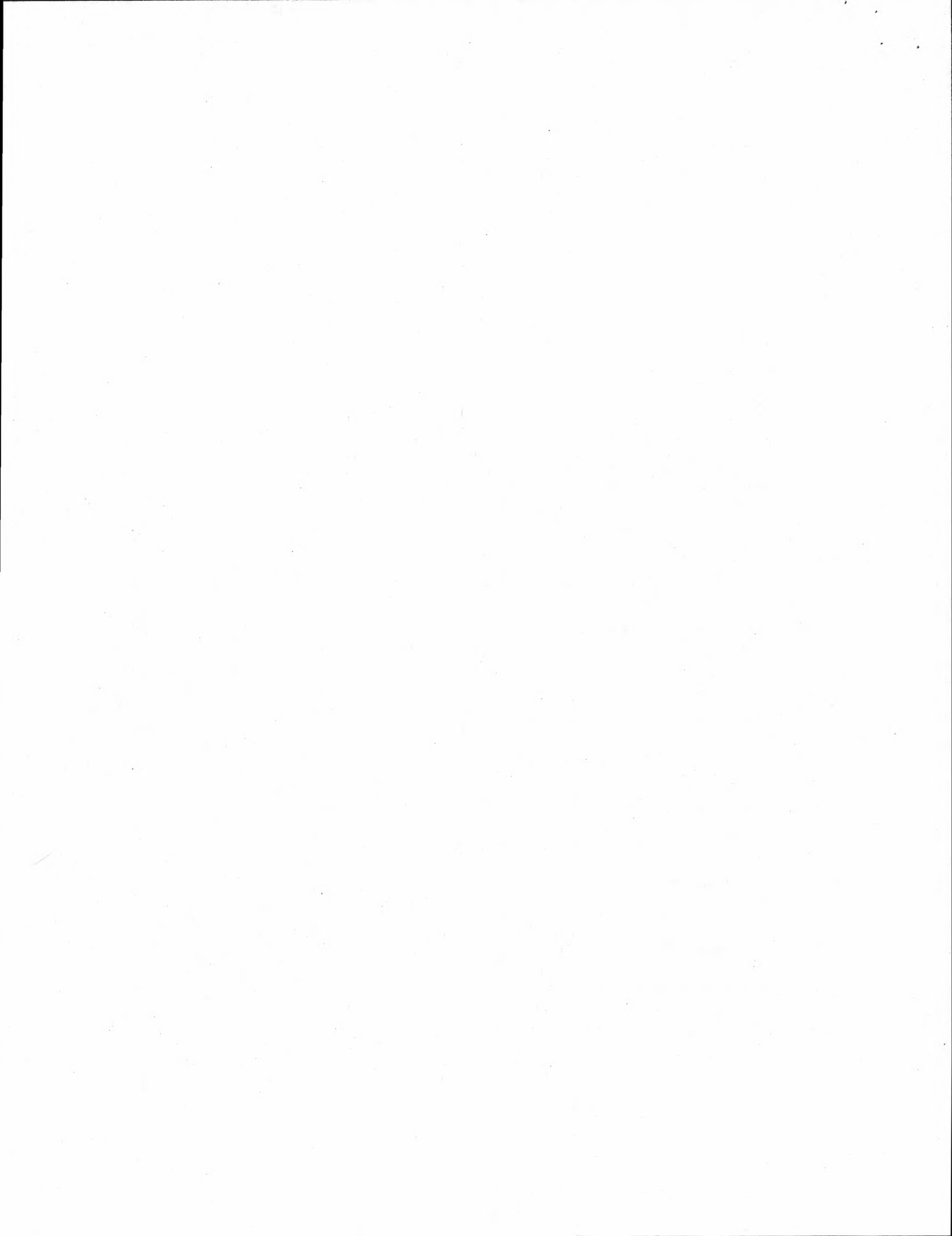
Insert JJ. Shakespeare. Hamlet.



To die, to sleep,
 To sleep perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub!
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause. There's the respect,
 That make calamity of so long life;
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The undiscovered country from whose bourne
 No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?

Insert KK. Rubayat.

Some for the glories of this world, and some
 Sigh for the prophet's paradise to come.
 Ah, take the cash and let the credit go,



Nor heed the rumble of the distant drum.

Insert LL. Houseman. Two selections.

When I watch the living meet, and the moving pageant file

Warm and breathing through the street, where I lodge a little while,

If the heats of hate and lust, in the house of flesh are strong,

Let me mind the house of dust, where my sojourn shall be long

In the nation that is not, nothing stands that stood before,

There revenges are forgot, and the hater hates no more,

Lovers lying two by two, ask not whom they lie beside,

And the bridegroom all night through, never turns him to his bride.

They say my verse is sad, no wonder,

It's narrow measure spans,

Tears of eternity and sorrow,

Not mine, but man's.

This is for all ill-fated fellows,

Unborn and unbegot.

For them to read when they're in trouble,

And I am not.

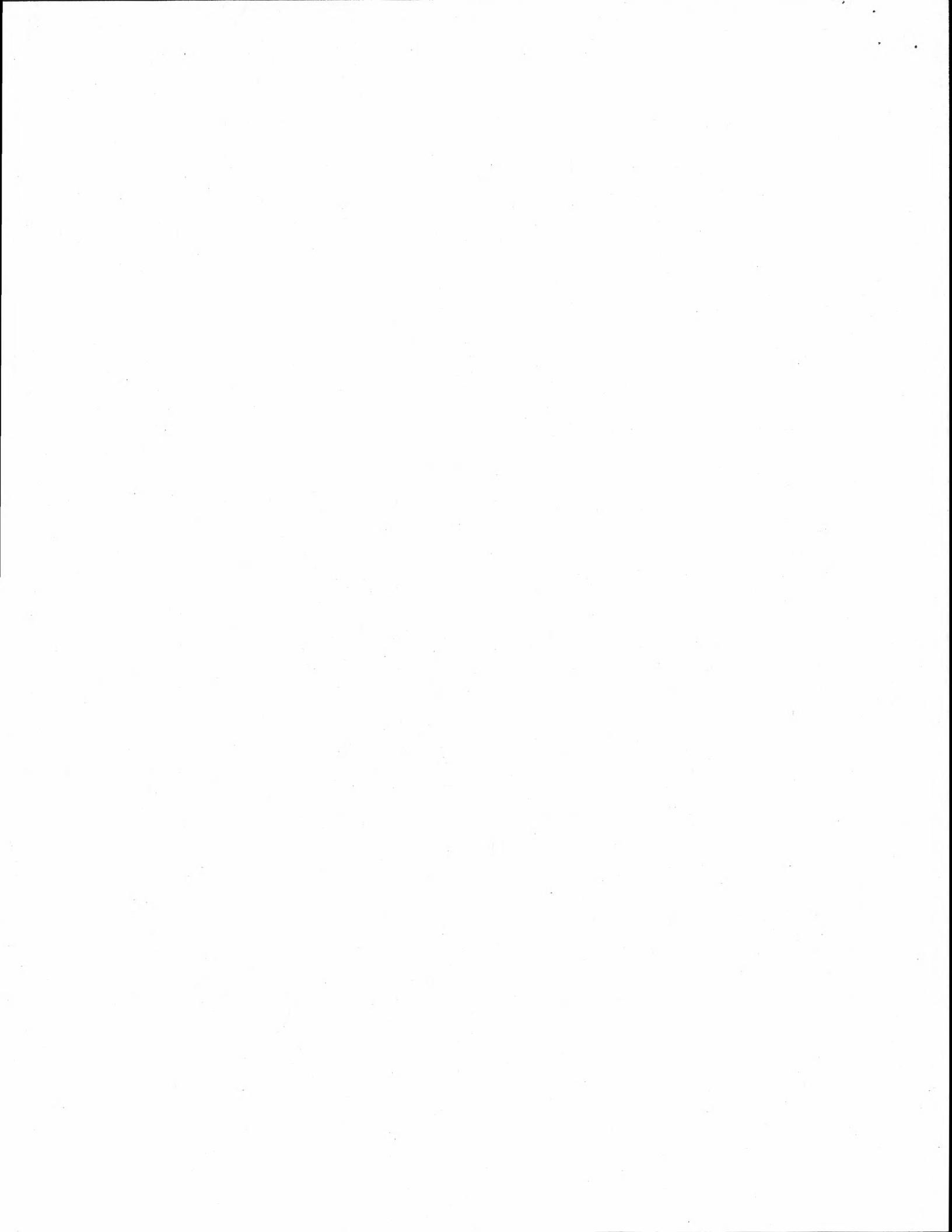
Insert MM. Houseman. Terence.

Therefore, since the world has still

Much good, but much less good than ill,

And while the sun and moon endure,

Luck's chance but trouble's sure,

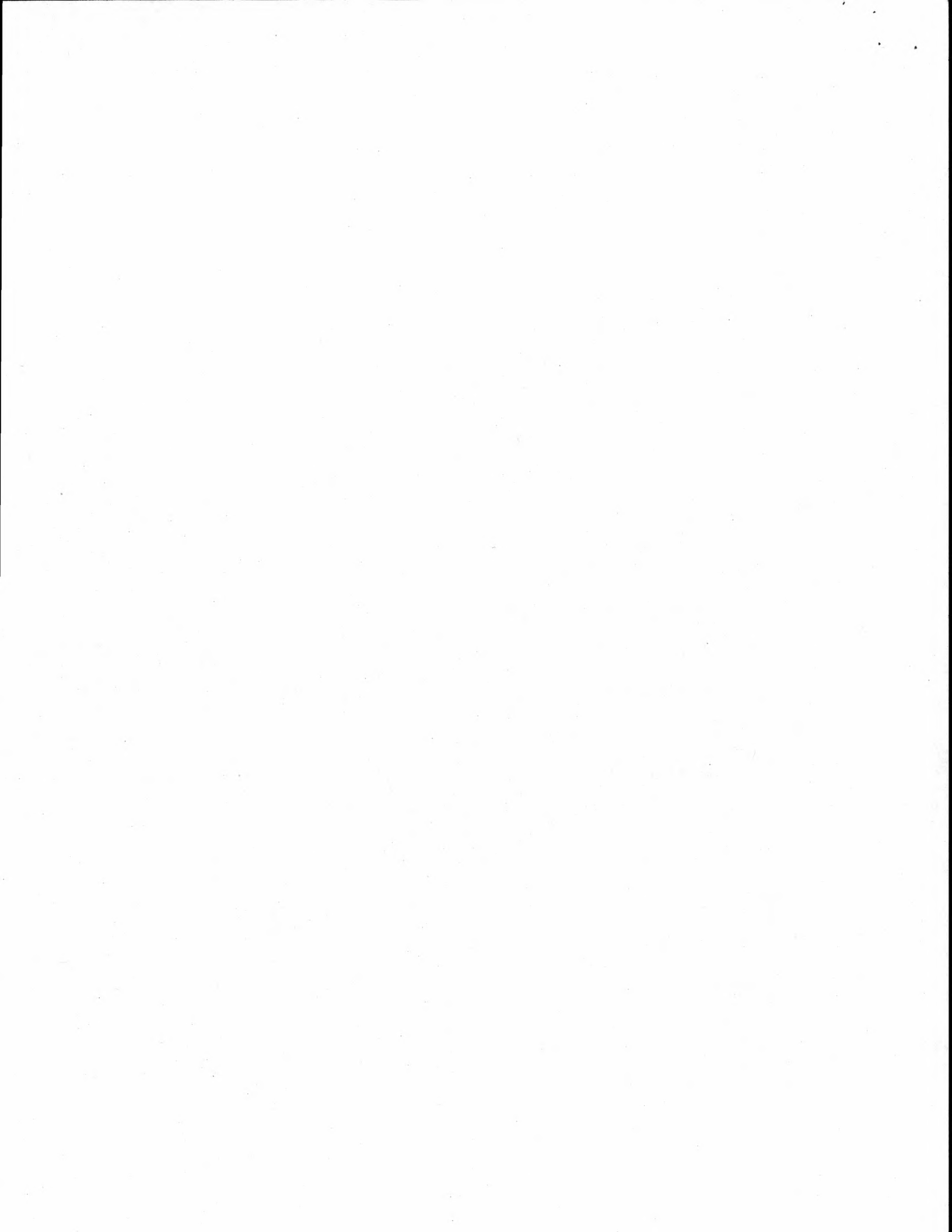


I'd treat it as a wise man would,
 And train for ill and not for good.

There was king reigned in the East,
 There when kings will sit to feast,
 They get their fill before they think
 With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
 He gathered all that springs to birth
 From the many-venomed earth,
 And first a little, thence to more,
 He sampled all her killing score.
 And easy, smiling, seasoned, sound
 Sate the king while healths went 'round.
 They put arsenic in his meat,
 And stared aghast to see him eat.
 They poured strychnine in his cup,
 And shook to see him drink it up
 They shook, they stared, as white's their shirt,
 Then it was their poison hurt.
 - I tell the tale that I heard told:
 Mithradates, he died old.

Insert NN. William Ernest Henley. Invictus.

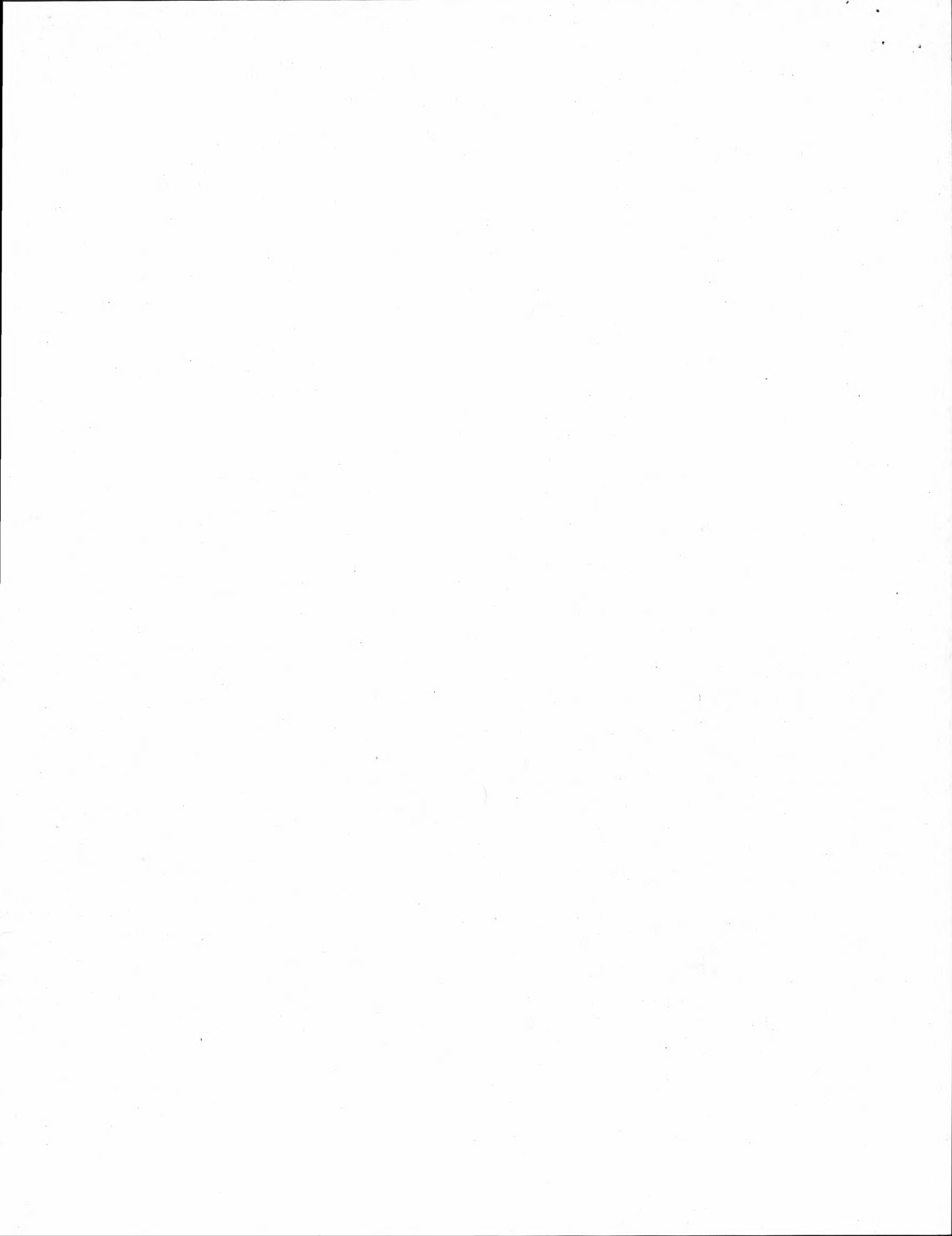
Out of the night that covers me,



Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.
In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbow'd.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.
It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

Insert OO. Robert Louis Stevenson. Epitaph.

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live, and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.
This be the verse you 'grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be,
Home is the sailor from the sea,
And the hunter from the hill.



Insert PP. Alfred Lord Tennyson. Crossing the bar.

Sunset and evening star, and one clear call for me,

And may there be no moaning of the bar

When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,

Too full for sound and foam,

When that which drew from out the boundless deep,

Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell, and after that the dark,

And may there be no sadness of farewell,

When I embark.

For though from out this bound of time and space,

The tide may bear me far.

I hope to see my Maker face to face,

When I have crossed the bar.

Insert QQ. Rubayat.

And lately through the garden gate agape,

Came shining through the dusk an angel shape,

He bore a vessel on his shoulder, and

He bade me taste of it, and 'twas, the grape!

Come, my beloved, fill the cup that clears,

Today of past regrets and future fears.

Tomorrow, why tomorrow I may be
Myself with yesterday's seven thousand years.

A book of verses underneath the bough,
A loaf of bread, a jug of wine and thou,
Beside me singing in the wilderness,
Ah, wilderness were paradise enow!

Insert RR. John Masefield. The Passing Strange.

Out of the earth to rest or range
Perpetual in perpetual change,
The unknown passing through the strange.
Water and saltness held together
To tread the dust and stand the weather,
And plough the field and stretch the tether,
To pass the wine-cup and be witty,
Water the sands and build the city,
Slaughter like devils and have pity,
Be red with rage and pale with lust,
Make beauty come, make peace, make trust,
Water and saltness mixed with dust.

Fashion an altar for a rood,
Defile a continent with blood,
And watch a brother starve for food.

Fasten to lover or to friend,
Until the heartbreak at the end:
The break of death that cannot mend.

[But] all things change, the darkness changes,
The wandering spirits change their ranges,
The corn is gathered to the granges,
The corn is sown again, it grows;
The stars burn out, the darkness goes;
The rhythms change, they do not close.
They change, and we, who pass like foam,
Like dust blown through the streets of Rome,
Change ever too; we have no home,
Only a beauty, only a pwer,
Sad in the fruit, bright in the flower,
Endlessly erring for its hour,
But gathering, as we stray, a sense
Of Life, so lovely and intense,
It lingers when we wander hence,
That those who follow feel behind
Their backs, when all before is blind,
Our joy, a rampart to the mind.

