

An Ode to Sky-Climbers

Kemp, Harry, 1883-1960

Climb, sky-men, climb above the lessening world
With all the city's million roofs below,
And catch the red-hot rivets, deftly hurled,
And drive them home with hammers, blow on blow;

And to the under-whistle's tiny scream,
Ride, as upon some huge ungainly steed,
Into the sky the cable-lifted beam
Which quivers in the wind as doth a reed.

Heroes you are who need no drums to urge,
Heroes who ask no laurel, should you die
Balanced aloft where tempests beat and surge,
Half-vanished in the great blue-doming sky!

For (more heroic than the battle-rage
Which animates the olden poet's lay)
There in a task Homeric you engage
Without the strut and tinsel of a play!