

## WORDS AND MOODS

BY FREDERICK HERBERT ADLER

Man's words are various as are his moods—  
The tones of some rouse melancholy thought,  
With memory of friends now long since gone.  
The drowsy scent of poppies whiffed from these  
Recalls the ether ante-room of Death.  
All gray words bear the lapsing wail of waves,  
Or travail-cry that means beginning life.  
Great by-words of the centuries seem veiled,  
Like sighs escaped from heart that's soon to break.

Still others make me sad, with pensive moan  
Of withered grasses on neglected graves,  
A threnody oft sung by autumn winds;  
The broken words, as mumbled by the soul,  
When quivered stroke is piercing its own core.  
Then those that wreak of dank and mouldered vaults,  
Of lichened tombs in groves of spirit shades.  
And these whose gently uttered sound soothes grief,  
As voice of one most dear through silence heard.

Unspoken words can cause a wonder grow,  
With lyric flow of molten tropic seas.  
While some convey spring's bloom-entangled notes,  
Or slender tunes from horns of Elfland blown;  
The pulsing quiet of the heath, which broods  
With floating whispers of a lost banshee.  
The awe of Sabbath forest others yield,  
And secret code of silvered hill at night,  
Like message sent by God to earth in sleep.

With Beauty's gift those words seem all aglow.  
Whose tones resolve in music, soft and sweet.  
With magic cadence, rhythmic, throbbing full.  
These echo splendor of another realm :  
Retell the murmurs delved by ear of night,  
More ancient than the rivers, rocks and rills.  
Still others quicken strains of dead refrains ;  
Stir thoughts of sun-steeped spaces, lying hence.  
While time-worn words can sing like thin-spun gold.

But some I know will make my heart rejoice—  
The living words that my whole being cleave.  
As hidden, mystic phrase, enraptured mood,  
All filled with cosmic notes of God's Own Love.  
They, too, purl forth a vision, heaven-breathed,  
The sun-borne promise of an ampler day.  
Such words will set the chords of Life in tune,  
To join with Nature in her voiceless prayer  
Of worship in Eternity's grand hymn!