

Chapter 1 : Drinkwater, John | Open Library

*Selected Poems of John Drinkwater (Classic Reprint) [John Drinkwater] on calendrierdelascience.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Excerpt from Selected Poems of John Drinkwater Ord, not for light in darkness do we pray, Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes.*

Blackbird 53 Mystery 54 Mrs. Not for a clearer vision of the things Whereof the fashioning shall make us great, Not for remission of the peril and stings Of time and fate. Not for a fuller knowledge of the end Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid, Nor that the little healing that we lend Shall be repaid. Not these, O Lord. We would not break the bars Thy wisdom sets about us ; we shall climb Unfettered to the secrets of the stars In Thy good time. We do not crave the high perception swift When to refrain were well, and when fulfil. Nor yet the understanding strong to sift The good from ill. For these Thou hast revealed, We know the golden season when to reap The heavy-fruited treasure of the field, The hour to sleep. We know the hemlock from the rose, The pure from stained, the noble from the base. We know the paths wherein our feet should press, Across our hearts are written Thy decrees. Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless With more than these. Grant us the will to fashion as we feel, Grant us the strength to labour as we know, Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel. To strike the blow. Knowledge we ask not " knowledge Thou hast lent, But, Lord, the will " there lies our bitter need, Give us to build above the deep intent The deed, the deed. Let fancy men go laughing, Let light men ride away. Four hundred men went riding, And he the best of all, A jolly man for labour, A sinewy man and tall ; I watched him go beyond the hill, And shaped my anger with my will. At night my love came riding Across the dusky moor, And other two rode with him Who knocked my bolted door, 9 And called me out and bade me see How quiet a man a man could be. II A nd then a story to forget. The petals fall upon the grass, And I am crying in the dark, The clouds above the white moon pass- My tears are falling on the grass ; Pierrot, Pierrot, I heard your vows And left my blossomed apple boughs, And sorrows dark Are on my brows. Albeit winter still is in the air. And the earth troubled, and the branches bare, Yet down the fields to-day I saw her pass " The spring " her feet went shining through the grass. She touched the ragged hedgerows " I have seen Her finger-prints, most delicately green ; And she has whispered to the crocus leaves, And to the garrulous sparrows in the eaves. Swiftly she passed and shyly, and her fair Young face was hidden in her cloudy hair. She would not stay, her season is not yet, But she has reawakened, and has set "The sap of all the world astir, and rent Once more the shadows of our discontent. Triumphant news " a miracle I sing " The everlasting miracle of spring. Down the streets of London He asked the crowded people Where would he the crowning A nd when would it begin. Dveaniing John of Grafton Looked upon the people. Laughed a little laugh, and then Whistled and was gone. II As twilight touched with her ghostly fingers All the meadows and mellow hills, And the great sun swept in his robes of glory " Woven of petals of daffodils And jewelled and fringed with leaves of the roses- Down the plains of the western way, Among the rows of the scented clover Dreaming John in his dreaming lay. And now, with a vagabond heart untroubled And proud as the properest man alive, He sat him down with a limber spirit That all men covet and few may keep, 15 And he watched the summer draw round her beauty The shadow that shepherds the world to sleep. And up from the valleys and shining rivers, And out of the shadowy wood-ways wild, And down from the secret hills, and streaming Out of the shimmering undefiled Wonder of sky that arched him over, Came a company shod m gold And girt in gowns of a thousand blossoms, Laughing and rainbow-aureoled. Wrinkled and grey and with eyes a-wonder And soul beatified, Dreaming John Watched the marvellous company gather While over the clover a glory shone ; They bore on their brows the hues of heaven, Their limbs were sweet with flowers of the fields, And their feet were bright with the gleaming treasure That prodigal earth to her children yields. Spirits of clouds and skies and rivers, Leaves and shadows and rain and sun, A crowded, jostling, laughing army, And Dreaming John knew every one. Among them then was a sound of singing And chiming music, as one came down The level rows of the scented clover. So back along the long roads. The leafy roads of England, Dreaming John went carolling, Travelling alone, And in a summer evening, Among the scented clover. He held before a shouting throng A crowning of his own. And when the sunshine has its way In Lady Street, then

all the grey Dull desolation grows in state More dull and grey and desolate. And the sun is a shamefast thing,  
A lord not comely-housed, a god Seeing what gods must blush to see, A song where it is ill to sing, And each  
gold ray despiteously Lies like a gold ironic rod. He never bent Life to his will, his travelling feet Have scaled  
no cloudy continent, Nor has the sickle-hand been strong. He lives in Lady Street ; a bed, Four cobwebbed  
walls. But all day long A time is singing in his head Of youth in Gloucester lanes. He hears The wind among  
the barley-blades, The tapping of the woodpeckers On the smooth beeches, thistle-spades Slicing the sinewy  
roots ; he sees The hooded filberts in the copse Beyond the loaded orchard trees, The netted avenues of hops ;  
He smells the honeysuckle thrown Along the hedge. Alone " yet not alone, for sweet Are Gloucester lanes  
in Lady Street. For down below The cobwebbed room this grey man plies A trade, a coloured trade. A show  
Of many-coloured merchandise 21 Is in his shop. Brown filberts there, And apples red with Gloucester air,  
And cauliflowers he keeps, and round Smooth marrows grown on Gloucester ground, Fat cabbages and yellow  
plums, And gaudy brave chrysanthemums. And times a glossy pheasant lies Among his store, not Tyrian dyes  
More rich than are the neck-feathers ; And times a prize of violets, Or dewy mushrooms satin-skinned, And  
times an unfamiliar wind Robbed of its woodland favour stirs Gay daffodils this grey man sets Among his  
treasure. All day long In Lady Street the traffic goes By dingy houses, desolate rows Of shops that stare like  
hopeless eyes. Day long the sellers cry their cries, The fortune-tellers tell no wrong Of lives that know not any  
right, And drift, that has not even the will To drift, toils through the day until The wage of sleep is won at  
night. His stall Of many-coloured merchandise He makes a shining paradise, As all day long chrysanthemums  
He sells, and red and yellow plums And cauliflowers. In that one spot Of Lady Street the sun is not Ashamed  
to shine and send a rare Shower of colour through the air ; The grey man says the sun is sweet On Gloucester  
lanes in Lady Street. The seasons work their will On golden thatch and crumbling stone, And every soft-lipped  
breeze Makes music for the Grafton men In comfortable trees. And to a woven wonder Conspired with one  
accord The labour of the servant, The labour of the Lord. And momentarily to Grafton Comes in from vale and  
wold The sound of sheep unshepherded, The sound of sheep in fold, And, blown along the bases Of lands that  
set their wide Frank brows to God, comes chanting The breath of Bristol tide. With hands upfolded and with  
silent wings, In unimpassioned mystery the day Passes ; a lonely thrush its requiem sings. The dust of night is  
tangled in the boughs Of leafless lime and lilac, and the pine Grows blacker, and the star upon the brows  
Of sleep is set in heaven for a sign. Under the grey drift of the town The crocus works among the mould As  
eagerly as those that crown The Warwick spring in flame and gold. And when the tramway down the hill  
Across the cobbles moans and rings, There is about my window-sill The tumult of a thousand wings. Death,  
master of the great assize, Love, falling now to memories, You two alone I need to prove. Forgive me, Death,  
forgive me, Love. For every tenderness undone, For pride when holiness was none But only easy charity, O  
Death, be pardoner to me. Take, Love, this laggard penitence. For cloudy words too vainly spent To prosper  
but in argument. When truth stood lonely at the gate, On your compassion. For love that kept a secret cruse,  
For life defeated of its dues, This latest word of all my breath " Forgive me, Love, forgive me, Death. What  
is it you gather in the frosty weather, Is there any treasure here to carry in your sack? You and this and that  
man, All of you are making things that none of you would lack. And so your eyes grow dusty, and so your  
limbs grow rusty " But mad Tom Tatterman puts nothing in his sack. So leave the road to Mamble And take  
another road To as good a place as Mamble Be it lazy as a toad ; 31 Who travels Worcester county Takes any  
place that comes When April tosses bounty To the cherries and the plums. Theirs was the bitterness we know  
Because the clouds of hawthorn keep So short a state, and kisses go To tombs unfathomably deep, While  
Rameses and Romeo And little Ariadne sleep. Now dawn comes to my window Breathing midsummer roses,  
And scythes are wet with dew. Is it not strange for ever That, bowered in this wonder, Man keeps a jealous  
heart? That June and the June waters, And birds and dawn-lit roses, Are gospels in the wind, Fading upon the  
deserts. COME down at dawn from windless hills Into the valley of the lake, Where yet a larger quiet fills The  
hour, and mist and water make With rocks and reeds and island boughs One silence and one element, Where  
wonder goes surely as once It went By Galilean prow. Moveless the water and the mist. Moveless the secret  
air above, Hushed as upon some happy tryst The poised expectancy of love ; What spirit is it that adores What  
mighty presence yet unseen? What consummation works apace Between These rapt enchanted shores? Where

now we move with mortal oars Among Immortal dews and fires. So the old mating goes apace. Wind with the sea, and blood with thought, Lover with lover ; and the grace Of understanding comes unsought When stars into the twilight steer, Or thrushes build among the may, Or wonder moves between the hills, And day Comes up on Rydal mere. I think that holiness would take This laughter by the hand. Till both should understand. Who died in i, aged Lord was he, For seventy years, of sheaves that stood Under the perry and cider tree ; Anthony Cviindle, R. And because he prospered with sickle and scythe, With cattle afield and labouring ewe, Anthony was uncommonly blithe, And played of a night to himself and Sue Anthony Crundle, eighty -iivo. The earth to till, and a tune to play, And Susan for fifty years and three, And Dorrington Wood at the end of day. May Providence do no worse by me ; Anthony Cviindle, R. How shall it be with you, and you, and you. How with us all who have gone greatly here In friendship, making some delight, some true Song in the dark, some story against fear? Shall song still walk with love, and life be brave, And we, who were all these, be but the grave? And the new seas shall take the new ships home Telling how yet the Dymock orchards stand. And you shall walk with Julius at Rome, And Paul shall be my fellow in the Strand ; There in the midst of all those words shall be Our names, our ghosts, our immortality. Seem fixed and glowing on the air. Until a flutter of blackbird wings Shakes and makes the boughs alive. And the gems are now no frozen things, Uut apple-green buds to thrive On sap of my IVIay garden, how well The green September globes will tell. Also my pear-tree has its buds, But they are silver yellow. Like autumn meadows when the floods Are silver under willow, And here shall long and shapely pears Be gathered while the autumn wears. And there are sixty daffodils Beneath my wall.

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