

# HYMN TO AIR

BY ARTHUR SYMONS

## I

BECAUSE the ways of breath  
Belong not to the soul,  
Which may not even control  
How it shall come on death;  
Therefore, beholding thus  
What secret and wise care  
Silently follows us,  
Let the soul praise the air!

## II

Shadow of life in me,  
August familiar, dear  
Companion ever near  
Whose form I may not see;  
I, when alone I walk  
With men walking, or trees,  
With this enchanter talk  
Of older things than these.

## III

This breath that enters in  
To warm and purify  
The source of life which I  
Deem all my own within,  
Has felt the earth reel round  
From outer space that lies  
Somewhere beneath the ground,  
Somewhere above the skies.

## IV

This humble unseen friend  
Whom I go elbowing, —  
What if it bid take wing  
And in the spirit ascend  
Where foot hath never trod,  
Where bird hath never come,  
Where man may look on God  
And his thought find a home?

## V

Joy wraps me round in air,  
On mountain-heights I drink  
Rapture, until I think  
My being everywhere  
Into the universe;  
I laugh with divine mirth  
To see the pretty, fierce  
Babe-scramblings of the earth.

## VI

Yet, day by day more sure,  
This mercy, which I praise,  
Silently all my ways  
Doth follow, and endure,  
Buffeted, to control  
The ceaseless watch of death:  
I praise thee with my soul,  
Delicate air, for breath.

# THE ODYSSEY OF THE SOCKEYE SALMON

BY WILLIAM CHARLES SCULLY

## I

THE fishing industry of British Columbia is of enormous importance. The aggregate value of the fish captured each year is over \$14,000,000. Toward this the salmon — so-called — contributes about two thirds, and of the five species of fish classed locally as salmon, that known as the 'sockeye' is most numerous and economically the most valuable. However, it is not now proposed to deal either with the economic or the strictly scientific aspects of the sockeye, but rather to describe some of the known features of its remarkable life. These are of quite extraordinary interest.<sup>1</sup>

In a technical sense the five species of fish known as salmon on the Pacific Coast are not salmon at all — although more or less closely related to the *Salmo* genus. All five belong to the genus *Oncorhynchus*, the sockeye being known as *O. nerka*. The derivation of the term 'sockeye' is obscure; Dr. Jordan suggests that it may be derived from the word 'sukie,' by which this fish was known to a tribe of Indians which in old days inhabited parts of the southern section of what is now British Columbia. The sockeye is the smallest but one of the five species, its adult

weight being about six pounds and its length averaging some twenty-four inches. It is lithe and graceful in form. While in the sea the back and upper portions of its sides are of dark, metallic blue; it is silvery-white beneath. When the fish enter the fresh water the colors dim; later the back becomes suffused with a reddish hue. Throughout the journey to the spawning-ground the sockeye never breaks its fast. And this journey (up the Yukon, for instance) may involve a swim for some fifteen hundred miles against a swift and turbulent current, the temperature of which is but little above freezing-point. The range of the sockeye is from Northern Alaska to the Columbia River.

The beginnings of this creature's life are well known. From the embryonic stage to the end of approximately the first year of its existence as a free-swimming 'fingerling' in one of those crystal-clear lakes with which the northwestern part of America is so richly dappled, the nature and habits of the sockeye have been carefully observed and studied. But in late spring or early summer the young fish disappear into 'the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea' — and of their life therein for upwards of two and a half years, there is literally no record. No sockeye between the fingerling and the adult stages has ever been captured. In early summer, just before the run inland, adult sockeye have been taken in purse-nets on the Swiftsure Bank, just outside the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

<sup>1</sup> What is here set forth is based upon official reports of the careful and searching investigations as to the life-history of the sockeye, made by such men as Dr. C. H. Gilbert of Stanford University and Mr. J. P. Babcock, Assistant Commissioner of Fisheries for British Columbia, and upon such observations as the writer has been enabled to make. — THE AUTHOR.