

## CONTRAST

BY GEOFFREY F. FYSON

I have wandered far from my boy-  
hood's pathway  
And soiled my hands in the mud and  
the mire;  
I have left the best of my youth behind  
me —

Laughter and music and high desire;  
For I've heard the scream of the shells  
go over,

And seen no stars for the flare and  
flame,  
Have killed my man and found joy in  
the killing,  
Held hate in my heart and known no  
shame.

But night and morning the heart re-  
membered

The twilit peaks of a Sussex Down.  
Oh! gold of the gorse and scent of the  
clover

And shroud of smoke from the hid-  
den town;  
Rush of wind thro' the weary pine-  
woods,

Setting sun on the bracken'd loam!  
Night and morning the heart remem-  
bered,  
And found a peace in the thoughts of  
home.

I have left the perilous days behind me  
And stand again on the pine-clad  
hills.

I have cooled my face in the green of  
the meadows  
And cleansed my hands in the rush  
of the rills.

Virginal blue is the sky above me  
And pure the breeze as a maiden's  
sigh,  
And a lark's song falters, and falls, and  
rises,  
And bids me forget the days gone by.

But ever and ever the heart remembers  
The desolate winds on an empty  
plain.

The dying trees with their leafless  
branches,

The clamor and cursing, the blood  
and the rain;

The clean, clear tones of the silent  
voices,

The laughing lights in the empty  
eyes —

Ever and ever the heart remembers  
And finds no peace for its memories.

The Observer

## THE LITTLE TOWN THAT WAS

BY PHYLLIS ERICA NOBLE

Underneath her martyr-crown, burnt  
and broken, shattered down,  
There she stands, a ruin dread, deso-  
late, with beauty dead,  
That was once a little town.

Her unnumbered tragedies, torn earth,  
mutilated trees,  
Her blind windows and dumb doors, her  
shell-shattered walls and floors,  
All are silent witnesses.

Thro' the ravaged fields around, o'er  
the scarred and cross-marked  
ground,

Runs the crimson poppy-flood, but she  
knew the fields of blood,  
And the dreadful battle sound.

For she heard the anguish'd cries,  
heard the great guns shake the  
skies —

And the windows of stain'd glass,  
which her little church still has,  
Glimmer out like tearful eyes.

Burnt and broken, shattered down —  
once she was a little town!

And the soul that all towns have still  
survives her ashen grave  
Underneath her martyr-crown.

The Bookman