

## THE VETERAN

BY EDMUND BLUNDEN

He stumbles silver-haired among his  
bees,  
Now with the warm sun mantling him;  
he plods  
Taking his honey under the pippin-  
trees,  
Where every sprig with rich, red har-  
vest nods.

He marks the skies' intents,  
And like a child, his joy still springing  
new,  
In this fantastic garden the year  
through,  
He steepes himself in nature's opulence.

Mellow between the maze of leaves  
smiles down  
September's sun, ripening his multi-  
tude  
Of gold and red and green and russet  
brown  
Lavished in plenty's lusty-handed  
mood.

For this old man who goes  
Reckoning ripeness, shoring the lolling  
sprays,  
And, fruits which daybreak gusts made  
castaways,  
From the deep grasses thriftily rescuing  
those.

Babble he will, lingeringly, lovingly,  
Of all the glories of this fruitful place,  
Counting the virtues of each several  
tree,

Her years, her yield, her hardihood, or  
grace;

While through this triumph song,  
As through their shielding leaves, the  
year's fruits burn  
In bright eye-cozening color, turn by  
turn,  
From cool black cherries till gold  
quinces throng.

Blossoming the blue mists with their  
queenly scent—  
Who hearing him can think what drag-  
ging years  
Of drouthy raids and skirmishes he spent  
With drums and fifes to drown his  
clamoring fears?

Here where the grapes turn red  
On the red walls, and honey in the hives  
Is like drift snow, contentment only  
thrives,

And the long misery of war is dead.

Resting in his old oaken-raftered room,  
He sits and watches the departing light,  
Crimsoning like his apple-trees in  
bloom,

In a deep dream of gratitude's delight.  
And fast the peering sun  
Has lit the blue delft ranged along the  
wall,

The painted clock and Squirrel's  
Funeral,  
And through the cobwebs traced his  
rusty gun.

And then the dusk, and night, and  
while he sleeps,  
Apple-scent floods and honey's fra-  
grance there,

And old-time wines, whose secret he  
still keeps,

Are beautiful upon the marveling air.  
And if sleep seem unsound,  
And set old bugles pealing through the  
dark,

Waked on the instant, he but wakes to  
hark  
His bellman cockerel crying the first  
round.

The Nation

## THE PLACE OF QUIET

Now are they come into the place of  
quiet,

Into the heart of silence where God is;  
Far, far away from all the mortal riot,  
Safe in the home of lovely sanctities.

And there they rest, who fought with  
no surrender,

Lapped in a peace like water, cool and  
bright,

Till God shall armor them again in  
splendor

To battle with the spirits of the night.  
My soul, forestall awhile the ultimate  
fiat,

A moment doff the body's hindrances  
And come thou too into the place of  
quiet

Into the heart of silence, where God is!