

In Time of Great Trial

("Why, O Lord, hast Thou retired afar off?")

The seams of the world's deep meaning
Unbuckle;
These threads never hold:
Bolstering,
Basting belief
With new notion
I wait out the crisis of days,
Handing on
Morning to the evening,
And night
To the next day's dawn.

On the face of the world
I walk in
Is order philosophical
And settlement of being:
But in the within—real world of me,
Of my was
And my is
And my going to be
The bonds extenuate,
And the seams
Bulge back their thin meaning.

But
Against the daily day now
The dyke of endurance,
Re-sized with new mustered opinion,
Will
(Somehow)
Hold in
The brain's tossing river
Of error,
Doubt-scald,
And the questing of precarious truth.

And I stand in this bucket-brigade
Of days,
Handing on
This outside of me

Well ordered
Philosophical world:
And its thousands and one
Remote possibilities
Pass me by,
And its million caged confrontations
Face not me;
But they gyrate
(Dull, with never a jingle)
Down the long brigade.

But even from afar
God holds:
And the held-in surge
Goes on,
In the cranial pit,
Each day
Hand-over-handing
Down the chain,
Heart watching
The dark mind's play,
Still held
By the flickering gaids
Of truth.

—A. P. C.

