

ODE TO DEATH

Oh Death, thou mighty messenger of God,
So swift and sure thine errand to fulfill,
Relentless, never checked by gold or fraud,
Thou speed'st to hut and palace at His will;
On young and old alike thy pallid chill
Is laid, and lo! the soul must straight obey
The call divine, and thou art master till
He come, on that or near or distant day,
When Vice and Sin shall groan, and Truth rejoice for aye.

Why do we shun thee, Death, both great and small,
And strive to shut thy visage from our eyes?
Or why, when man receives thy potent call,
Does he lament and wail with bitter sighs?
Show us, Oh Death, wherein thy terror lies.
"I have no terrors for the just and good
Who think of me in life," thy voice replies;
"'Tis but for him who hath in malice stood,
And not expecting, sees my sombre shade intrude."

Blessed are the means, Oh Death, which make thee known
That we betimes make smooth the way for thee,
And give, when life from this poor clay has flown,
A just account, a soul from bondage free;
For only by thine advent can we see
Beyond the deep abyss of earthly strife,
And there behold the One Eternal Three
Enthroned where angels sit with glory rife,
It is not thee, Oh Death, that dost deceive, but life.

D. S. MacD., '27.