

THE SILENT MEETING

Here is no greyness
But Autumn ripeness
With the Spring's burgeoning,
In peace conjoining,
All here led
In silence proceeding
From the fountainhead
In the ground of Being ...
The silence breaks
Like a tree that shakes,
Air-freshened, earth-enriching,
Leaves far-scattering.

Gerald A. Morsman

Et Vidit Deus Quod Esset Bonum

I cannot understand
This world at all;
Nothing is what it seems
And all is fugitive.
And God knows this
And sends from time to time
Small consolations:
Sunsets that surpass
Their natural causes,
Unexpected love,
Chopin and Shakespeare,
Michelangelo.
And every now and then
A moment's naked sight
Of pure divinity
Most terrible and sweet
With otherness.
But always I come back,
Am driven sadly back,
To thinking I should try to understand
This world of his,
This world he made and loved,
Much better than I do.

Kathleen Herbert

MEETING HOUSE THOUGHTS

Do you ever, on a Sunday,
As in Meeting House you sit
Find your thoughts are apt to wander Just a
teeny weeny bit?

I do too.

Do you ever look at faces,
From them try to get inspired,
Make a concentrated effort,
Though you're feeling awfully tired?

I do too.

Do you ever think of cricket,
When the match you're in will start,
And with fine athletic prowess
You will play a leading part?

I used to do.

Do you ever think of dinner,
Was the oven set at 4?
Will thick smoke come out to greet you
When you open up the door?

I never do.

Do you ever from another
Across the room a smile receive,
And so gratefully return it,
Loving threads so pleased to weave?

I sometimes do.

Do you ever feel quite thankful
When at last the hands are shook,
And on every relaxed visage
Comes a glowing happy look?

I confess - I do.

Ken Bulled

Stillness, Silence, Space

Not the stillness of the dumb rock,
Nor the frozen stillness of the blocked
lava-flow, or, rather,
Not these only,
but the living stillness
of the growing rose.

Not the silence of the air-less desert,
Nor the frozen silence of inert
fossil shells - or, rather,
not these only,
but the living silence
of the swelling fig.

Not the space beyond the air-lock,
Nor the frozen space within the packed
crystal lattice - or rather,
Not this only,
but the sensed continuum
of the living universe.

Dennis Tomlin

How Big is a Community?

Community is any
group, grown slowly,
strength gathered in
gay and grave silences,
seeking the same goals
sharing grace,
together growing.

Community can be
just you and me,
or we three,
or four,
or many more.

dennis tomlin

FOR HELEN

It was fine that day
strange buses plied the unfamiliar streets
from Morden station. On the one-one-eight
though early I scanned every thoroughfare
fearful of getting off too soon, too late.
An aged couple
 got on at the next station
 manoeuvred up the steps
 a sapling birch
 too tall to stand up straight
in front of me a young black man
 cradled his white-swathed son
as from the upper deck
schoolgirls spiralled
 broke off their chatting
 laughing delightedly
 ' Oh look - the baby!'
 before cascading off
and the couple
 who had struggled on with a tree
 so tall, it had to bend
 throughout the ride
 carefully eased it out,
the driver waiting patiently.
And so we went
 past houses, common land
 May-bright with hawthorn and cow-parsley
 until at last we reached
the crematorium
and it was time
 for me to leave the bus
 walk down the sunlit drive
 and be with all the friends who gathered there
to say goodbye to you

Jill Sheppard (1993)

Farewell to Brenda Heales, travelling for Appleseed with Chris Cook

Leave of absence from Sutton Meeting

And so we say farewell to Brenda!
Every lass and chap'll need
To heave a sigh and sadly send her
Off to further Appleseed

What a gap it will engender,
With which we will grapple! She'd
Rather stay with us, said Brenda,
If it weren't for Appleseed

But we know on her agenda
Is a plan that gap'll heed;
Come retirement, Chris and Brenda
Will return from Appleseed

May the Light illumine Brenda!
Be her life a dappled mead!
Friends in Sutton hereby lend her
(For a while) to Appleseed

Helen Drewery, October 1995

Sonnet to Ann and Kurt

How will we miss you? Let us count the ways.
We'll miss you to the depth and breadth and height
Of friendship's reach, when joyful in the Light
Or living through the winter's darkest days.
We'll miss you Ann, and here give thanks and praise,
For all your loving care and oversight.
And Kurt - we'll miss your thorough and forthright
Approach so much. When on these premises we gaze
We'll think of you with thanks. To both we tell
Our love as now to Wimbledon you go,
That Meeting's gain our loss. But wait! You dwell
No further off than heretofore - and though
We'll miss you every Sunday, we know well
Our friendship will endure - and surely grow.

Helen Drewery, February 1996

On the thirtieth anniversary of Tuesday Group

These thirty lines with gratitude are
penned
To Pat and Gordon. We our blessings
send
For giving Sutton Meeting thirty years
Of Tuesdays filled with laughter, joy and
tears,
Of widening horizons, subjects deep
And even, for a few, a moment's sleep.
At eight for eight-fifteen the Friends troop
in
And just when all have settled to begin
A couple more arrive - more chairs are
sought,
We move along. At last, to order brought
By Gordon's introduction of our speaker,
We each become a student and a seeker.
To learn, we open up our minds and
hearts
To slides and Gospels, sciences and arts,
And glean from silence and from music's
glories,
From journals, essays and our lifetimes'
stories
Some truth, some wisdom, some small
spark of light
Some leap to help imagining take flight,
Some lively argument, our minds to tease,
Some Friendly comforting, our souls to
ease.
However thoughtful, witty, deep we be,
By half past nine, Pat's nobly making tea
And soon we hear that welcome tinkling
sound -
Enter the trolley! Tea and cakes come
round.
Oh flapjacks, shortbread, rock cakes,
tempting fare!
Some can resist, but others munch a pair.

We say farewell and part soon after ten,
But Tuesday evenings soon come round
again.

Twelve hundred Tuesdays may have
passed this way!
Our gratitude is more than we can say.

Helen Drewery 1997

If we only had a song for Tom and Nancy!

It would hit it on the button
To say that here in Sutton
You'll be remembered long.
From our hearts the feelings issue
And we'd sing of how we'll miss you
If we only had a song!

Oh our cheeks are getting paler
As Tom and Nancy Taylor
Prepare to say "so long!"
And to music we'd aspire
Lift our voices like a choir
If we only had a song!

Oh you have been so true
To Sutton Meeting Friends
We would thank you with the style that music
lends
Before your time among us ends.

As for Michigan you're heading
Your English life you're shedding,
The thoughts of home will throng.
We'd sing "Please come back and visit
For it really ain't far, is it?"
If we only had a song!

Helen Drewery, January
1998

