

The Manxmen

We were born to a background symphony -
To the sound of the ever-changing sea.
The song that the changeless sea has sung
Around this Isle since the World was young
The fairweather wavelets' gently splash
When they reach the summer shore.
The great grey rollers' frenzied crash
When they hear the west wind roar.
The undertones
Of the rumbling stones
On the slope of the shingly floor.

We were born to silences, deep and still.
The silences of the mist-clad hill,
When the white vapour swirls in the cooling air
And the whole wide world seems ten yards square.
When the droplets hang on heather and ling,
And footsteps are quiet on the peat.
Till a grouse swirls away on startlet wing
From practically under your feet.
Then the only sound
For miles around
Is the thump of your own heart's beat.

We were born to colourful country scenes -
Of yellows and blues and purples and greens
And the scarlet and gold of the dying sun
That streams in the sky when the day is done.
And the honey-brown of the ripened corn
That falls to the reapers' blades.
And the russet hues of the leaves, just shorn
To carpet the woodland glades.
On every hand
Throughout the land
Are nature's most subtle shades.

But most of all we were born to the call
Of the free unfettered spaces,
With sun-bright skies to delight our eyes
And the wind upon our faces.
And though often necessity says we must,
we can never settle down
In the noise and smoke and toil and dust
Of industrial city and town.
Where the furnace flares,
And the skyline wears
A permanent, petulant frown.

Though we travel the farthest ends of the Earth,
We remember with pride the land of our birth.
And no matter where, or why we roam,
At the end of our time we journey home.
So let us go back to our lovely Isle.
Let us live, let us die by the sea.
Under the wind and the sun's warm smile -
And ever with nature in harmony -
Hear the sound of the waves
As we lie in our graves
For ever, and endlessly.