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A STUDY OF THE SELECTION OF
RELIGIOUS POETRY FOR THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF THE EARLY
ADOLESCENT

by

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TO MY MOTHER

Who taught me to understand and to
 love poetry,
Who shed the beauty of poetry throughout
 our childish lives,
Who lived poetry as only a mother can.

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INTRODUCTION

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and
quiet breathing."

- John Keats

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study is to set up scientific criteria for the selection of religious poetry in the Christian education of the early adolescent.¹ It will attempt to help religious educators choose the very best poetry for this age group, judging its worth by scientific standards rather than by personal judgment. Experience has shown that it is not sufficient to present poetry to youth simply because it is religious, and expect the best results. We must take into consideration whether it is the best religious poetry, and having done this, whether it is suitable to the characteristics and needs of the early adolescent.

A great deal of the religious poetry so called, is pious twaddle, wholly lacking in any literary excellence. Matthew Arnold in his essay, "Literature and Dogma" has expressed very strongly his opinion of any such poetry:

"Taking man in his totality, and in the long run, bad music and bad poetry, to whatever good and useful purpose a man may often manage to turn

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1. By "early adolescence" the author wishes to designate that period of development which is in contrast to "later adolescence" and which covers approximately the ages twelve to eighteen.

them, are in themselves mischievous and deteriorating to him. Somewhere and somehow, and at some time or other, he has to pay a penalty and to suffer a loss for taking delight in them."¹

Religious educators find it not only difficult to select the best of religious poetry, but equally as difficult to select the poetry most suitable to the needs of adolescents. Many young people today are prejudiced against poetry and all its "slushy sob stuff" simply because it has not been the type of poetry which suited their tastes or met their needs. For this reason it is hoped that this study will furnish something of a basis for the development of a larger collection of religious poetry for early adolescents.

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEED

1. The Meaning and Worth of Religious Poetry

William H. Boddy says that "Poetry is the natural language of religion, because religion is experience on a plane that logic cannot reach."² Religious worship needs something more than the ordinary phraseology of prose. Throughout the ages the natural overflow of highest and most sacred feeling has been through the medium of poetry; and the past, which through the judgment and clear in-

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1. Matthew Arnold quoted in Benson, Louis F: The Hymnody of the Christian Church, p. 134
2. Boddy, William H.: "Poetry and Religion", International Journal of Religious Education, May 1931, pp. 14-15

sight of succeeding generations always preserves the best, has handed down to us poetry which is preponderantly religious. This can only be understood when one remembers that religion is the deepest and most universal characteristic of the human heart, and that poetry is the priest of the expression of the heart.

The opening story of the Bible is called the "Poem of Creation", and is a perfect, artistic gem of the creative imagination.¹ The book of Job is one of the most glorious masterpieces of composition;² the Psalms are the purest lyric expressions of human thirsting for the Eternal; the prophets when overwhelmed by their message burst into peons of lyric flame. The whole Bible, the greatest expression of revelation and faith, is full of poetic songs and hymns. There is the song of the Horseman and the Rider,³ the song of Deborah,⁴ the Gloria in Excelsis,⁵ the Magnificat,⁶ the Nunc Dimittis,⁷ the love poem of Paul,⁸ and the glorious rhapsodies of The Revelation of John.

Throughout the history of the Christian Church, poetry has been steeped in religion; religion has been

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1. Cf. Hill, Caroline Miles: The World's Great Religious Poetry, p. xv.
2. Ibid
3. Cf. Exodus 15: 1-18
4. Cf. Judges 5:2-31
5. Cf. Luke 2:14
6. Cf. Luke 1:46-55
7. Cf. Luke 2:29-32
8. Cf. I Cor. 13

steeped in poetry. Obscure and famed, rich and poor alike have poured out their hearts in poetic utterances. Rising above the controversies over creeds, rising above denominationalisms and ecclesiastical disputes, they have never ceased to proclaim the essentials of religious faith and practice, protesting against formalism, against discord, against worldliness and the lack of faith. Great men like Browning and Tennyson have built their embattlements against the tide of materialistic agnosticism fostered by a world gone mad with reason. It is such trumpet voices as these which are needed to join in rallying the forces of Christendom. We cannot ignore them, for their works are a rich gold mine of religious heritage, the imprint of man's noblest aspirations, highest feelings and most reverent thoughts, the interpretation and expression of "the deepest passions, problems, yearnings and ambitions of the soul"¹ Ella Heath, speaking through the mouth of poetry, says:

"I am the reality of things that seem;
 The great transmuter, melting loss to gain,
 Languor to love, and fining joy from pain;
 I am the waking, who am called the dream;
 I am the sun, all light reflects my gleam;
 I am the altar fire within the fane;
 I am the force of the refreshing rain;
 I am the sea which flows to every stream;
 I am the utmost height there is to climb;
 I am the truth mirrored in fancy's glass;
 I am stability, all else will pass;

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1. Pickerill, Grace Gilbert: Youth Adventures With God,
 p. 84.

I am eternity, encircling time;
Kill me, none may; conquer me, nothing can -
I am God's soul, fused in the soul of man."¹

2. The Mission of Poetry for Early Adolescents.

Caroline Miles Hill says of poetry and youth:

"Poetry is the natural language of youth, freedom, joyousness and love of beauty. It is therefore the language of childhood and of the youth of the race It is the bold, free, spontaneous utterance of the youthful spirit of romance, adventure, admiration, the quest of the wonder and mystery of the world."²

The baby has no appreciation of beauty except a certain attraction for bright colors and pleasing sound; the child becomes aware of beauty, enjoys it, likes it, but does not wholly appreciate it. The adolescent, outgrowth of the child, comes into a deeper appreciation of beauty and a greater realization of its meaning.³ The early adolescent, made shy by the high tide of emotions welling up within, is often anxious to hide any signs of such appreciation; consequently the adult is inclined to discredit the presence of the poetic or aesthetic element in his nature. Yet this feeling does exist and the very presence of a deep emotional nature tends to intensify it.⁴

Experiments in high schools and colleges⁵ are

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1. Heath, Ella: "Poetry" from "The World's Great Religious Poetry by Caroline Miles Hill.
2. Hill, Caroline Miles: The World's Great Religious Poetry, p. xiii.
3. Cf. Tracy, Frederick: The Psychology of Adolescence, p. 150.
4. Cf. Moxcay, Mary E.: The Psychology of Adolescence, p. 85.

proving that there is not only great appreciation and grasp of poetry among adolescents but many of only ordinary ability are able to express themselves in poetry or prose "that has qualities of beauty and charm".¹ The author is personally acquainted with two high school boys who made beautifully illustrated collections of poetry, and a high school girl who was writing very lovely bits of poetry for her own enjoyment.² It was of interest to note that the greater part of these collections was religious, dealing with personal faith, the prayer life, appreciation of God's marvelous works, and full of praise to Him. G. Stanley Hall, quoting Hancock concerning adolescent interest in poetry makes the following report concerning scientific data on the subject:

"Just fifty percent of Conradi's cases, mostly in the early teens, had tried their hand at spontaneous original poetry generally concerning either living persons, nature or religious themes."³

It is not to be supposed, however, that the boy or girl is capable of developing his appreciation and understanding of the beautiful without some outside help. This is the rich privilege of the parent and teacher - to stimulate the adolescent boy or girl, to introduce him

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1. Lincoln School, N.Y. under Hugh Mearns and Bryn Mawr Summer School for Industrial Workers. Cf. Louacks, Grace: Understanding the Adolescent Girl, p. 113.
2. Two of these poems have been included in Appendix IV.
3. Hall, G. Stanley: Adolescence, Vol. II, p. 472.

to the intellectual, emotional and spiritual appeal of poetry and guide him in experiencing it for himself.¹

A striking statement appeared in an article in Scribner's Magazine entitled "Boys and Poetry",

"The awakening to poetry is an event in a boy's or girl's emotional life, a landmark in the formation of character, second in importance only to religious conversion, very similar to it in kind and in the depths of its effects, and very similar to it in suddenness and unexpectedness."²

3. Lack of Available Organized Material.

Seeing the great value and worth of religious poetry, and its particular significance for and influence on the early adolescent, it appears to the writer that there is a very definite need for a study of the selection of religious poetry for this age group. Particularly is this necessary since, as far as the writer can ascertain, no such study has been made; that is, there has been no scientific approach made to this problem.

A letter was sent to twenty-five of the leading publication houses in the United States requesting information concerning anthologies of religious poetry suitable for adolescents.³ Two did not reply; of the remaining twenty-three none reported any religious poetry books particularly suited to adolescents. The Woman's Press

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1. Cf. Moxcey, Mary E.: The Psychology of Adolescence, p.85
2. Black, Matthew Wilson: "Boys and Poetry", Scribner's Magazine, November 1925, p. 543.
3. Cf. Appendix III for list of publication houses.

recommended "The Girl's Year Book" and "The Girl's Everyday Book" as particularly suitable for adolescent girls, but these contain only a few poems. The Central Publishing House reports that they have no such book and have found none listed in the United States Catalogue. The Pilgrim Press reports that so far as they know there is no collection of religious poetry for early adolescents. In regard to the question as to whether there were any books on the presentation of religious poetry, or any concerning religious poetry and worship, all reported in the negative.

This study then opens a new field. And in spite of the large number of poems included in worship programs for early adolescents during the years 1928-1932, there has been no real scientific approach from the standpoint of the nature and needs of the adolescent,

B. PLAN AND METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The main body of this study will deal with the setting up of criteria for the selection of religious poetry for early adolescents. In the first chapter will be presented a foundational study of the early adolescent himself, involving his physical, intellectual, volitional, social, emotional, and spiritual characteristics and needs. This study will be largely selective, those points only being discussed which may be considered to have bearing on the choice of religious poetry. Six books generally

recognized as authorities on adolescents will be taken as a basis for the study. Where four or more agree on a given characteristic, it will be included in the list. The chapter will conclude with a short analytical summary of the nature and needs of the early adolescent that have bearing on the choice of religious poetry.

The third chapter will deal with the setting up of criteria of selection based on three major considerations: first, the nature and needs of the early adolescent will be taken into consideration and certain requirements laid down in view of the findings of the second chapter; second, the literary and aesthetic standards of poetry will be studied and certain basic principles given for selection of poetry. These will be discussed under the three natural divisions of subject-matter, style, and rhythm and sound; third, certain spiritual content requirements which enter into the choice of religious poetry will be considered. The chapter will conclude with a brief analytical summary of the criteria thus set up.

The fourth chapter will present the results of the application of the criteria selected to ten or more religious poems considered on the basis of general use to be particularly suitable for early adolescents. In order to discover the ten or more poems used most frequently, thirteen source materials consisting of Sunday School lesson materials for early adolescents, worship programs for

early adolescents in current religious magazines, books of worship materials for youth, and books on worship for youth. Of the poems occurring in these materials four or more times the ten or more occurring most frequently will be considered.¹ There will be a short summary and conclusion of this chapter in which the findings concerning the value of the poems will be discussed and consequent conclusions drawn concerning the practical value of the criteria and concerning poems generally used by religious educators.

Finally, there will be made a summary of the conclusions concerning the selection of religious poetry for early adolescents. This summary will include all the findings that have been of value and will give in brief form the conclusions of each chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE AND NEEDS OF THE EARLY ADOLESCENT IN RELATION
TO THE CHOICE OF RELIGIOUS POETRY

"Youth, or as it is more technically called, adolescence, may be likened to a candle in the dimness of a cathedral nave, with the white wick of the soul awaiting the kindling torch. One can but wonder of what oil the flame will feed itself."

- L. A. Athearn

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE AND NEEDS OF THE EARLY ADOLESCENT IN RELATION
TO THE CHOICE OF RELIGIOUS POETRY

A. Introduction

According to the modern scientific approach to religious education, the pupil, his nature and needs, must first be considered in relation to the subject matter and form of the material to be presented.¹ This chapter does not attempt to make a complete survey of early adolescent characteristics, as this would be impossible in one short chapter. Therefore, only adolescent characteristics and needs which bear upon appreciation and understanding of poetry will be listed.

Seven authoritative sources on the adolescent were carefully analyzed.² Wherever four of these agreed concerning an early adolescent characteristic, it was included in the list.

An arbitrary division of adolescent personality has been made, as no two of the studies classified the

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1. Cf. Betts and Hawthorne: Method in Teaching Religion, p. 38.
2. Tracy, Frederick: The Psychology of Adolescence,
Mudge, E. Leigh: The Psychology of Early Adolescence.
Brooks, Fowler D.: Psychology of Adolescence
Hall, G. Stanley: Adolescence, Vols. I and II
Moxcey, Mary E. : The Psychology of Middle Adolescence
King, Irving: The High School Age
Richardson, Norman E.: The Religious Education of Adolescents.

characteristics in the same way. It is to be understood, however, that these divisions have been made purely for the sake of convenience, since personality functions as a unit and not in separate compartments. It is also wise to remember that there is no sudden breaking off from childhood into adolescence. The personality of the individual is essentially a unit, merging from one phase of development into another with but little perceptible difference. When we think of adolescent characteristics then, we must think of them as outgrowths of the junior period of childhood. We must think of them besides as developing into the later adolescent and adult.¹ Throughout the life of an individual there is a unity and cohesion which may not be violated by any arbitrary distinctions which may have been set for convenience in studying the development and growth of the individual.

B. The Nature and Needs of the Early Adolescent

1. Physical Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

Early adolescence is a period of marked physical growth both in height, in muscular development, and in many of the more important organs of the body.² The re-

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1. Cf. Tracy, Frederick: *The Psychology of Adolescence*, p. 5
2. Cf. Mudge, E. Leigh: *The Psychology of Early Adolescence*, pp. 31-32.

sulting lack of muscular control and awkwardness makes the early adolescent often self-conscious, shy and lacking in poise. He needs to be helped in adjusting himself and in focusing his attention outside himself. Also His abnormal growth calls for exercise. Action is the watchword of youth, and while the adolescent is perhaps more capable than the child of concentration for greater lengths of time, yet we must remember that he is essentially a doing person rather than a being person.¹ He wants stirring action, revivifying stimulation, not soothing syrup. His nerves, excited by the unusual tax of growth and pubescence, are easily frayed. He needs change. For this reason the adolescent is nervously unstable. Over-stimulation is easy; often girls and boys can be worked up to abnormal and injurious states of nervous excitement most undesirable for them.² Any influence brought to bear upon the adolescent should be quiet and without exaggeration or theatrical chicanery.

2. Intellectual Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

While increase in intellectual powers is not a marked characteristic of early adolescent years, at least it is important for notice. The adolescent is gradually

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1. Cf. Tracy, Frederick: Op. Cit, p. 35

2. Cf. King, Irving: The High School Age, p. 26

shedding his old self-centeredness, and is more and more waking to the world around him. Like the junior, he is "greedy for knowledge"; like the adult, he is gaining greater reasoning powers and more comprehensive grasp of ideas.¹ "It is the age of new insight when nature and art acquire a deeper and more intimate significance."² The early adolescent needs thoughts that will stretch his mind, awaken and widen his interest, tax his reasoning powers. However, both Richardson and Brooks, two of the more scientific and experimental investigators, state that often there is a falling off rather than an increase of mental powers among adolescents. This is more characteristic of the introspective, "shut-in" temperament.³ These need a challenge of their interests and of their appreciation. The awakening to appreciation of beauty will help often in unfolding such a personality.⁴

The adolescent is an ardent revolutionist and yet at the same time, a most inconsistent and stubborn conservative. He is beginning to realize that he is an individual, who has a right to think for himself.⁵ He questions, criticizes and evaluates, sometimes with somewhat start-

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1. Brooks, Fowler D. : Psychology of Adolescence, p. 180
2. Mudge, E. Leigh: Op. Cit. p. 53
3. Cf. Richardson, Norman E.: The Religious Education of Adolescents, p. 36
4. Cf. Pechstein and McGregor: Psychology of the Junior High School Pupil, p. 107
5. Cf. Brooks, Fowler D. : Op. Cit., p. 100

lingly radical results. Doubts and questions arise which tend to unsettle his hitherto untroubled faith. He needs at this time open-minded advice and suggestions, rather than repetition of dogmas; he needs the great thoughts of great men who have answered his questions; he needs understanding; he needs sincere facing of facts.

Daydreams are one of the most notable characteristics of early adolescents. Their vivid imaginations scheme out life plans and purposes, wonderful successes, and glorious achievements. Miss Moxcey has made a vital remark concerning this characteristic:

"The shapes taken by the dreams of these boys and girls will be simple or intricate, ethereal or matter-of-fact, poetic or prosaic, according to the ability and disposition of the dreamer, but their materials cannot exceed those furnished by experience."¹

It is the task of the religious educator to enrich the adolescent experience through vicarious suggestion and direct teaching, so heightening the spiritual and moral value of the adolescent dream world. For as he "thinketh in his heart, so is he".² But how can he think what he does not know?

In relation to the intellectual interests of the adolescent with regard to the selection of suitable

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1. Moxcey, Mary E.: The Psychology of Middle Adolescence, p. 94
2. Proverbs 23:7

poetry it might be helpful to state the dominant reading interests as found by Brooks, which he obtained by a set of quite inclusive and exhaustive questionnaires. The interests were as follows: Ages twelve to thirteen - adventure; ages fourteen to sixteen - adventure and humor; ages seventeen to eighteen - adventure.¹ This is a strong proof of the necessity of action and movement in the reading materials for early adolescents.

3. Volitional Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

Volition, that force which controls the actions of the individual in response to the environment which plays upon him, is perhaps the most tardy aspect of the personality, certainly the most difficult to develop and train. The child has little or no direct volitional control. However, as outside control is set up and unfavorable results follow certain responses, a certain amount of control is established. The junior continues in this development, but it is mainly along the lines of habit formation rather than direct control. With the adolescent the transfer of control from external to internal is fully under way.² The new forces - emotional, intellec-

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1. Brooks, Fowler D.: Psychology of Adolescence, p. 296
2. Cf. Tracy, Frederick: Psychology of Adolescence, p.110

tual and social - which are influencing the adolescent at this period have a tendency to shatter his self-control. Life is too often guided by unbalanced emotional or instinctive appeals, rather than by a direct effort of the will in the light of the use of the mental powers of reasoning. Tracy says on this:

"But all through the teens there is going on a self-mastery. And if that self-mastery is not achieved by the end of this period, at least in such measure as to ensure a strong and well-poised manhood, the fault probably lies, either in some defective condition of mind or body, or in some failure of the educational process."¹

Adolescents should be taught the necessity of this inner control and the importance of its development. As Richardson says, "We dare not slash at it ruthlessly lest we destroy its vigor; we cannot let it grow wild lest it become dangerous."² We will find that we cannot "slash at it ruthlessly"; that the adolescent does not like to be preached at; and that he will respond to suggestion and reason.

4. Emotional Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

The adolescent does not develop suddenly a set of emotions; yet the emotions which are present in childhood seem to be greatly intensified for him. The stress of

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1. Tracy, Frederick: Op. Cit., p. 111
2. Richardson, Norman E.: The Religious Education of Adolescents, p. 52

this period often causes extremes of self-assertion and reticence, great enthusiasm followed by sudden indifference;¹ they may be at one moment exaggerated sentimentalists, at the next hardened cynics. They are confused and unstable,² lacking in poise or purpose. Whatever appeals to them most strongly at the moment, they attack with unusual fervor and with great impatience.³

Early adolescence is the period in which emotion plays a strong part in the moulding of ideals and in the forming of personality. Regarding this, Owen advises:

"The great task for their older counselors is to help them to see realities clearly without becoming either weeping idealists whose hearts are wrung with 'Weltachmerz', or hardened cynics who fling altruism under foot and spit upon it."⁴

They need emotional balance and control, and the emotions of the adolescent when properly controlled may be of great value to him in "relieving the monotony of a highly perfected machine"⁵ in strengthening high ideals and purposes, in breaking up other undesirable emotions, in giving "quality to personality".⁵ On account of the highly sensitized emotional life of the adolescent, it is better to be positive in the approach to him than negative.⁶ No

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1. Cf. Owen, Ralph Dornfield: Principles of Adolescent Education, p. 150
2. Cf. Mudge, E. Leigh: The Psychology of Early Adolescence, p. 59
3. Cf. Owen, Ralph Dornfield: Op. Cit., p. 161
4. Owen, Ralph Dornfield: Op. Cit., p. 161
5. Brooks, Fowler D. : Psychology of Adolescence, p. 220
6. Cf. Mudge, E. Leigh: Op. Cit., pp. 62-63.

one will ever experience an emotional thrill simply because he has been directed to do so. Emotions are controlled almost entirely by suggestion and personal appeal.¹ The adolescent is stirred by "lofty principles"², by great deeds, by all that is beautiful and good. Gerrit Verkuyl says:

"Youth loves beauty Within him there is something that responds to graceful curves and stately arches. Great poetry makes similar appeal. 'Deep calleth unto deep'."³

5. Social Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

The early adolescent is still in the "gang period," the only difference being that the gang has enlarged and developed into a larger gang or set. Other social interests have developed with members of the other sex included. The adolescent is beginning to awaken to "other selves", other individualities. His main concern is with himself in relation to those in his group.⁴ It is a case of following the leader in clothes, in recreation, in subjects for conversation, in athletics, and in all interests. In every phase of life, group opinion is the controlling factor. Often to influence the individual one must appeal to

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1. Cf. Mudge, E. Leigh: Op. Cit, pp. 62-63.
2. Cf. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 16
3. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Op. Cit., p. 17
4. Cf. Moxcey, Mary E.: The Psychology of Middle Adolescence, pp. 17-18.

the group; and very rarely can one influence the individual against the opinion of the group. This is a factor which it is well to keep in mind when dealing with early adolescents, since much can be done through the group. "Life enrichment through group experience" Hayward and Burkhart call it, and say,

"The deep drives of human life are at least as much social as they are personal. The problems of modern young people all have deeply embedded social rootages. Thus, it may readily be seen that one of the most strategic ways of guiding and enriching the life of the individual is through the enterprises and fellowship of meaningful group life."¹

This is the time of awakened interest in the opposite sex, when the highest ideals of manhood and womanhood should be held before them.² The approach should always be reverent and conducive to the highest attitudes. Often this period is a time of strain and stress at home, where the adolescent finds it most difficult to keep on amiable terms with the family. He generally finds some older person among his acquaintances who typifies the ideal to him. Whether this person is father, mother, some member of the family, aunt, uncle or cousin, or whether it is someone outside of the family circle depends largely on the atmosphere of congeniality and sympathy in

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1. Hayward and Burkhart: Young People's Method in the Church , p. 77.
2. Cf. Mudge, E. Leigh: The Psychology of Early Adolescence, p. 47.

the home. Where the home is not helpful to the adolescent, often most undesirable acquaintances are substituted, and are idolized and imitated. This is an unfortunate situation. What the adolescent needs is the highest conception of heroes and heroines, of manhood and womanhood.

Altruism is more evident in later adolescence than in early adolescence, as in early adolescence the new interest in other individuals is only just developing. "Altruism can be aroused", they say, 'but it must be by the specific appeal of concrete needs - the typically early-adolescent method. This inner urge to service and sacrifice does come - they are not deficient - but it comes after the age of eighteen or twenty.'¹ However, this is the time to awaken their interest in the needs of others and to widen their social sphere.

6. Spiritual Characteristics and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

The early adolescent more than any other individual seems indifferent to things religious. But this apparent indifference is simply a protective screen to their inner feelings. As Irving King says, "Catch the careless boy unawares and touch his quick with skilful finger, and you will always find that his tears flow ex-

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1. Moxcey, Mary E.: The Psychology of Middle Adolescence, pp. 17-18.

tremely easy."¹ This "instinctive withdrawal" is more characteristic of early adolescence than later.¹ In spite of his outward indifference, however, the adolescent is essentially spiritual in his nature; he is developing an ability to appreciate and understand more deeply spiritual things. For this reason adolescence is often classed as the time of religious awakening. The early adolescent sees further, understands more, feels more, and therefore is closer to a developed assimilation of spiritual things. And as the mental life of the adolescent is a time of new strength and vigor so the spiritual life opens up to all the glorious possibilities of beauty and God. This is the time when he is most susceptible to religious impressions.²

The adolescent becomes at this period in his life morally conscious - sin is recognized as wrong in itself. The boy or girl feels a definite responsibility to God and a definite realization of the weight and horror of sin. The Hebrew peoples recognized this in their ceremonial for the acceptance of the twelve year old boy into manhood. An interesting thing to remember about this observance is that at this time the written moral law was tied around the wrist and the forehead of the young

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1. King, Irving: *The High School Age*, p. 74
2. Cf. Starbuck, Edwin Diller: *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 28.

boy.¹ Now is the time when sin and the importance of the moral law must be impressed upon his mind, as well as the seriousness of violating religious or ethical standards.

However, it must be remembered that the early adolescent is extremely sensitive. Morbid consciousness and brooding over sin should be carefully investigated and cleared up. Now is the time when he should be adjusted religiously, be told about the Saviour that he may find release from the great weight. Doubts and worries should always be met fairly. The adolescent senses his inadequacy in dealing with the rationalistic as well as spiritual problems of religion, and is eager for understanding help.

Because of these characteristics, it is during the early adolescent years that the majority of people come into close personal contact with God. As indicated, this is due to the storm and stress of the emotional and intellectual life in which they find themselves, and to their sense of a need for a Higher Being who will help them in controlling themselves. The result is a most personal and most practical religion, personal in the sense that God is desired as a helper, a director of their lives, one upon whom they may cast the great weight of sin, one upon whom they may depend in temptation and in

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1. Hastings, James: A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. III, p. 870

trouble; practical in the sense that they want it to work and to work effectively.¹ When religion is not vital or effective the adolescent is disappointed and discouraged. He despises sham or hypocrisy of any sort.² His religious life must be real, or he will discard it altogether.

The young person needs, more than anything else, spiritual food, food which will help him to grow spiritually, which will give him moral strength, and which will give him the "abundant life" of joy and happiness in fellowship with a great Lord and Saviour. He needs warmth of spiritual appreciation; he needs the fervor of zealous Christians; he needs a personal God, presented in a personal way, one who is vitally satisfying in the solution of life's problems, and life's evils. He needs a religion that is neither a phantomistic doctrinal abortion, nor a weakling dilution of Christianity without the cross, and salvation by good works. He needs to be brought to the knowledge of the King as young Isaiah, when he cried, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts."³

C. Summary

1. Physical Needs of the Early Adolescent

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1. Cf. Tracy, Frederick: The Psychology of Adolescence, pp. 188-189.
2. Cf. Brooks, Fowler D.: Psychology of Adolescence, p.335
3. Isaiah 6:5

- a. Focusing of attention outside himself and his physical awkwardness.
 - b. Action.
 - c. Change.
 - d. Wholesome quiet influences rather than over-stimulating, emotionalizing influences.
2. Intellectual Needs of the Early Adolescent.
- a. Intellectual broadening of knowledge and reason
 - b. Open-minded answers to problems and suggestions
 - c. Inspiring presentation of high ideals
 - d. Active intellectual stimulation.
3. Volitional Needs of the Early Adolescent
- a. Realization of necessity of inner control
 - b. Suggestive and helpful advice rather than preaching.
4. Emotional Needs of the Early Adolescent
- a. Emotional balance and control
 - b. A clear grasp of realities.
 - c. Emotional tie-up with high ideals and purposes
 - d. Elimination of undesirable emotions.
 - e. Control by suggestion, personal appeal and reference to the beautiful and good.
5. Social Needs of the Early Adolescent
- a. "Life enrichment through group experience"
 - b. Positive idealism concerning sex relations
 - c. Highest ideals of manhood and womanhood
 - d. Presentation of the difficulties and needs of others - altruistic appeal.
6. Spiritual Needs of the Early Adolescent
- a. Sense of the gravity of sin
 - b. A personal and practical religion
 - c. Constructive instruction - spiritual food
 - d. Guidance in worship
 - e. A vision of the King

CHAPTER III
CRITERIA OF SELECTION OF RELIGIOUS POETRY
FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS

The Ceremonial of Roads I borrowed from the gypsies. It is the Ceremonial of the Romany Patteran. When the gypsies love a road they place there a little pile of stones, a Romany Patteran, that other gypsies may follow it. Though I am but a "Gorgios" and not of the Romany tribes, I, too, shall assist with the building of little roadside altars, that the footsteps of travelers may be guided in the ways of beauty.

- Abbie Graham

CHAPTER III
CRITERIA OF SELECTION OF RELIGIOUS POETRY FOR
EARLY ADOLESCENTS

A. Introduction

In order that the worker with adolescents may have a guide in his choice of poems aside from his own judgment and appreciation, the following criteria have been set up, based upon three very important considerations: first, the early adolescent himself, his nature and needs; second, the quality of the poetry, its literary excellence, its beauty, its aesthetic appeal; third, the spiritual truth and value of the poem, its reality in the Christian life, its message, its purpose for young people.

The first set of criteria will be based on the needs of early adolescents as discovered in the foundational study of Chapter II; the second will be based on the consensusⁿ of opinion of leading authorities on poetry both of the past and the present, the principle ones being A Handbook of Poetics by Francis Gummere, The Science of English Verse by Sidney Lanier, New Voices by Marguerite Wilkinson and the article on poetry in The Encyclopedia Britannica; the third set of criteria will be based mainly on the spiritual needs of the early adolescent as discovered in Chapter II and on certain devotional

books such as The Spiritual Message of Modern English Poetry by Arthur S. Hoyt, Devotional Life by Weigle and Tweedy and the "Objectives for the Sunday Church School" as outlined by the International Council of Religious Education.

B. Criteria of Selection of Religious Poetry For Early Adolescents

1. Criteria Relating to the Nature and Needs of the Early Adolescent.

Do modern young people like poetry? Is it possible to select poetry which will fulfill the needs of the adolescent and challenge his interest at the same time? Professor Black, rediscussing a lecture on "Boys and Poetry", reports:

"The weak point in your armor, if I may say so', challenged one man, a dramatic critic on one of the papers, 'is that you talk as though boys read poetry. As a matter of fact, scarcely anyone reads poetry, or even buys it!'.... 'I don't know what America's coming to', said a woman. 'We have ceased to dream dreams. When I think of what Pippa Passes meant to us! And my son and daughter will not even read it.' And there was general agreement. Someone quoted solemnly, 'Without vision the people perish', and 'Frankly, none of my friends, either boys or girls, ever read a word of poetry', cried a girl, to cap the climax."¹

Professor Black frankly admitting that this is so challen-

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1. Black, Matthew Wilson: "Boys and Poetry", Scribner's Magazine, Nov. 1925, p. 543.

Mr. Black is professor of English in a men's college and has had a great deal of practical experience in introducing college freshmen to poetry.

ges leaders to the "zeal of crusaders" and the "hearts of missionaries". He continues, "The only question is: What poetry shall we begin with?"¹ In answer Professor Black based his criteria of selection on his personal knowledge of the adolescent himself. In line with Black's method, the first set of requirements for religious poetry for early adolescents will be based on the characteristics and needs of the early adolescents. Chapter II was the foundational study for this selection, and the results of that chapter will be our guide. However, instead of classifying the criteria according to the divisions of Chapter II, as that would necessitate much repetition, we have put them in the divisions into which they seem naturally to fall.

a. Poetry for early adolescents should be graded.

The early adolescent has not reached mental maturity and will not appreciate poetry which is beyond his grasp of understanding.¹ The poetry should therefore be graded, that is suited to the age for which it is intended. That means that it should be clear and simple, neither flowery and elaborate, nor philosophical and involved.² This does not mean, however, that the thought should not be vital or of value, but rather that it should consist of

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1. Cf. Verkuy1, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 172
 2. Cf. Present Study, p. 13

great thoughts expressed simply,¹ stretching the mind and the imagination, full of meaning and worth. Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address, which is so well known, is one of the truest, most real expressions of human appreciation and purpose, yet it is written in the language that a young person may readily understand. Young people often do not like poetry because they do not understand it. The author in teaching college English found time after time that the students, the majority of whom were later adolescents, could not grasp the meaning of a great part of the poetry included in their textbooks without help in its interpretation. Invariably it was this poetry which they disliked. If this is so with a group of college students, it must be even more so with high-school young people, particularly those who have not had more acquaintance with poetry and its phraseology than they get in high school. This then is the first, most important requirement, that it be within the range of their intellectual grasp.

b. Poetry for early adolescents should be sincere and earnest.

There is nothing that adolescents react against more than sham or hypocrisy.² The poem must be real, must have something to say, and say it well. It should be the

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1. Cf. Present Study, p. 13
2. Cf. Present Study, p. 25

necessary expression of feeling or thought, not solely the beautiful elaboration of an artistic idea. Josephine Baldwin regarding the words of hymns for children, makes this statement:

"Is this hymn we have chosen for the children to memorize real? Is it true in itself? Is it true for the children? Is there anything in the life of Christian children to which it corresponds, and which will help the children to say out simply and directly to God and each other? If it is thus real, well and good. It stands approved."¹

The same may be said for poems for adolescents. For this reason all poems which are high-sounding, "goody-goody" in their general tone, or overly sentimental, should be excluded. The sincerity of a poem may best be judged by the strength of character shown in it, by the forcefulness of the simplicity of the language and by the genuineness of the thought. Is it all of these? Was the author feeling these things when he wrote them? Was the author sincere?

And earnest! In a sense earnestness accompanies sincerity; yet there are degrees of earnestness. A young person is earnest, serious.² He must have drive and purpose in whatever is presented to him. Young people, according to the experience of the author, are attached to Carl Sandburg's poetry simply because of its forceful expression. A speaker who is feeling to the full depths

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1. Baldwin, Josephine: Reality in Worship, p. 88
2. Cf. Present Study, pp. 16, 20 and 24.

the impact of his message will arouse the individual more than one who is disinterested and languidly sentimental. This is particularly so, for youth are sensitive and suggestible.¹ "I just like literature so much; Miss A likes it so; you just can't help but like it", is a frequent expression in the school halls. This is true with poetry also. Is the poet earnest, as well as the teacher of poetry?

c. Poetry for early adolescents should be interesting, stimulating, and full of action.

Poetry should be simple, yet rich in thought; sincere, by all means, yet challenging to the intellect, revivifying life and the meaning of life. There should be nothing dead or dull about it. It should deal with experiences in the range of adolescents, experiences which will hold meaning and value for him.² Does the poem talk about the same old things in the same old way, or does it talk about the daily problems and experiences of the adolescent freshly and invigoratingly. If it isn't interesting, the adolescent is neither going to read it nor listen to it when it is read. He is too easily bored; he loses his enthusiasm too quickly.³ It must be of interest

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1. Cf. Present Study, pp. 16 and 20
2. Cf. Athearn, Laura A.: Christian Worship for American Youth, p. 58
Pringle, Ralph W.: Adolescence and High School Problems, p. 181.
3. Present Study, p. 19

to him; it must touch him vitally. Professor Black even goes so far as to say that the poetry for young people should be of "our own time or near it"¹ so as to insure interest and understanding. Whether it is modern poetry or not certainly it should blend with the spirit and feeling of the times.

Poetry should be stimulating. The poetry should reach the adolescent emotionally as well as intellectually. Since this is the period of life when emotion plays a strong part in the moulding of ideals,² it is through this approach that we must appeal to him.³ This does not imply the use of cheap sentimentality, but rather the utilization of those strong forces of feeling, or emotion with which every adolescent is fully equipped⁴ and which may be used so forcibly in the forming and shaping of his attitudes toward life. However the emotions of the early adolescent are not the same as those of the adult or junior. As Professor Black says, we should have "poetry dealing with emotions which the boy has felt and needs" and further, "This last is the real key to the difficulty. Poetry is bound up with emotion, and the boy's emotional range is limited. How can he understand or like what he

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1. Black, Matthew Wilson: "Boys and Poetry", Scribner's Magazine, Nov. 1925, p. 543.
2. Cf. Present Study, p. 19
3. Cf. Verkuyt, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 172
4. Cf. Present Study, p. 18

does not feel, never has felt?"¹

Because the early adolescent loves action and adventure² and objects to things which move slowly, poetry for him should contain these. This does not mean that the poem should always be narrative, but rather that whether it be lyric or narrative, but rather that whether it be lyric or narrative it have movement and life. There should be a predominance of verbals in expressing the thought or even describing scenes. A good illustration may be seen in the following poem:

Into the Sunset³

Let me die working.
Still tackling plans unfinished, tasks undone!
Clean to its end, swift may my race be run.
No laggard steps, no faltering, no shirking;
Let me die, working!

Let me die thinking!
Let me fare forth still with an open mind,
Fresh secrets to unfold, new truths to find,
My soul undimmed, alert, no question blinking;
Let me die thinking!

Let me die, laughing.
No sighing o'er past sins; they are forgiven.
Spilled on this earth are all the joys of heaven;
Let me die, laughing.

Of the ninety words in the poem thirty are verbals, a third of the poem. To change some of the verbals to

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1. Black, Matthew Wilson: Op. Cit., p. 543
2. Cf. Present Study, pp. 14 and 17.
3. Young, S. Hall in Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems, Vol. I, p. 89.

nouns one can see what life and vigour are lost thereby. Maltie B. Babcock's Be Strong¹ is also an excellent illustration of this. Of the eighty-six words in this poem, twenty-eight are verbals. The twenty-third psalm is full of verbals in spite of its prevailing tone of peace and quiet. A strongly marked rhythm is also an excellent guarantee for the action and movement adolescents prefer. Professor Black states this as one of his main requirements.² However care must be taken that is not jingly. Adolescents can feel the difference between jingles and strong rhythm perhaps quicker than adults. The poem cited above is excellent in its rhythmic movement.

d. Poetry for early adolescents should be wholesome and well-balanced in emphasis.

It is necessary, however, to remember that the adolescent can be easily over-emotionalized.³ Poetry should never go to extremes in playing upon the emotions to the exclusion of reason. It should be wholesome and well-balanced in its emphasis, seeing life as much as possible in the whole rather than in parts, inclusive in the sense that while one phase of life is being pictured, other phases of life are not forgotten. It should never

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1. Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems, Vol. I, p. 10
2. Black, Matthew Wilson: "Boys and Poetry", Scribner's Magazine, Nov. 1925, p. 543.
3. Cf. Present Study, pp. 14 and 19

be "more truth than poetry" nor "more poetry than truth", but rather "more truth in poetry".

- e. Poetry for early adolescents should be positive and suggestive in appeal rather than negative or dogmatic.

In early New England days, moralizing poetry was the only kind prepared for the young. The following taken from the New England Primer is an excellent example of this:

"Take heed or else thou art undone
These thoughts are from the wicked one.
Narrow's the way that leads to life,
Who walk therein do meet with strife;
Few shall be saved, young man know,
Most do unto destruction go."¹

Such poetry has been undoubtedly of great value in the education of youth and will continue to be, but its value is limited, and too often negative. Adolescents do not like to be preached at.² In addition to this, it lacks the positive appeal to the ideal, and for this reason does not challenge or hold the interest of the young person. Poetry for early adolescents should seek to uphold the best, beautify it, enhance it, rather than to decry the worst. However there is a subtle distinction between presenting truth and moralizing. The latter takes a lofty pietistic tone to which adolescents react unfavorably;

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1. New England Primer
2. Cf. Present Study, pp. 16, 18, and 19.

the former is impersonal, universal, sincere and forceful.

f. Poetry for early adolescents should express the highest ideals and noblest purposes.

How can the adolescent think what he does not know?¹ He must have high ideals presented to him before he can accept them as his own. This applies particularly to the adolescent ideals of sex relationships, of friendships, of personal conduct; for these are the interests and problems which are confronting him.²

Since the sex problem is so significant for the adolescent and calls forth the highest adolescent idealism, it will be discussed here in full as illustrative of other ideals and noble purposes. Now perhaps more than at any other time, when he is just beginning to take an interest in the opposite sex, the adolescent needs wholesome ideals about boy and girl relations, foundations for the courtship and marriage of later adolescence. Literature is one of the strongest and most profound influences in moulding first impressions, and when we consider the enormous amount of love stories of all descriptions and varieties devoured by adolescents, and particularly early adolescents, we cannot help but appreciate the

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1. Cf. Present Study, p. 16
2. Cf. Present Study, pp. 21-22.

importance of this factor in moulding their lives. Ella Lyman Cabot says on this point:

"Books early read make a profound impression; pictures that one lives with as a child become extraordinarily endeared. It would be enormously valuable if we could trace the influence of pictures seen or books read in early childhood If these pictures or books are wisely chosen they may teach us much. I know a man who traces his earliest chivalry and reverence for women back to George Macdonald's heroine of 'Back of the North Wind'. Choose well, then, for the beauty of pictures of the Annunciation, the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, the Adoration of the Shepherds may more swiftly convey truth than any talk. Portia's nobly humble surrender to Bassanio in her moment of greatest triumph teaches more than any argument about a woman's career. Dante's vision of Beatrice encircled by light caught from looking into the eyes of God, Saint Francis' exquisite tenderness to Sister Clara, these penetrate like rain."¹

Poetry for the adolescent then should be poetry which will aid him in forming the highest most sacred and yet most natural and unstrained attitude to the opposite sex; which will portray manhood and womanhood at its highest; which will reveal sin at its worst; and teach love at its best.

g. Poetry for early adolescents should express a personal and practical religion.

Poetry is personal and subjective, particularly lyric poetry; therefore it is the function and privilege of poetry to present the personal and subjective aspect of religious experiences. This is the aspect of religion

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1. Cabot, Ella Lyman: The Seven Ages of Childhood, p. 316

which appeals most to the early adolescent particularly, who is eager for a Personality, which will touch his personality, for something close and real to him.¹ Poetry, therefore, which deals with the more abstract truths of religion is not as attractive to the adolescent as is this kind. As Professor Black says, it should be "poetry that deals with life, and not dreams poetry which deals with life dramatically - kinetic or potentially so, not contemplative, introspective"² For this reason, much of Robert Browning's poetry, excellent as it is, could not be used suitably for the early adolescent.

Not only should the religious experience expressed be personal but it should also be practical,³ suited to the life of the early adolescent, to his surroundings and his present-day needs. Much of the mystic religious poetry for this reason is not of a character to appeal to early adolescents. A glance at that excellent collection of mystical poetry compiled by Dr. Albertson will convince one that most of it is beyond the spiritual as well as intellectual comprehension of the early adolescent.⁴ One of the reasons for the great popularity of the poem, "I Would Be True", is the personal and practical value of

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1. Cf. Present Study, p. 25
2. Black, Matthew Wilson: "Boys and Poetry", Scribner's Magazine, Nov. 1925, p. 543.
3. Cf. Present Study, p. 25
4. Albertson, G. C.: Lyrica Mystica

its theme and its suitability to the spiritual comprehension of youth.

h. Poetry for early adolescents should act as a guide and stimulant to worship.

The early adolescent has not yet learned the full meaning of worship. He is still groping for means of expression and for that intimacy of contact with the Father which he craves but does not know how to acquire.¹ Reverent and prayerful poetry may be the wings by which the adolescent is lifted to the highest realms of true adoration and praise. It is well to remember in this connection the following remark of Verkuyl:

"Youth's mental training has been so far superior to his spiritual training that by this time his mental grasp greatly surpasses his spiritual grasp. It is more difficult to reach his soul than to reach his reason, for the soul field lay fallow while the mind field was being cultivated. Our efforts, therefore, must be stronger and more persistent along worship lines than among instructive lines."²

He says again, "Growing people are constantly in need of more language and imagery whereby to express their thoughts."³ The "language and imagery" then should always be conducive to worship. Any poetry lacking in respect or appreciation of the highest things should be excluded. The adolescent needs stimulation in the spiritual world just

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1. Cf. Present Study, p. 24

2. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 18

3. Ibid, p. 185

as much as he does in the physical or intellectual world. A religious poem which does not stimulate him spiritually is consequently a failure.

- i. Poetry for early adolescents should reveal the beautiful.

It has become a fashion among some modern poets to choose the most objectionable subjects and treat them in the baldest way. There is no point or purpose in revealing things ugly simply because of their being ugly. Objectionable subjects do not stir to higher impulses except by repulsion. Poetry should aim to unveil the lovely and beautiful in life, because adolescents love beauty and respond to it.¹ As was quoted from Caroline Miles Hill, "Poetry is the natural language of youth, freedom, joyousness and love of beauty."²

And not only should poetry reveal the beautiful in its subject matter, but it should reveal the beautiful in its form; it should be beautiful itself and enhance the truths it holds that they may be of greater value in the Christian education of the early adolescent, and that in the everyday things of life the boy or girl may see

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1. Cf. Present Study, p. 20
2. Hill, Caroline Miles: World's Great Religious Poetry p. xiii. See p. 5 of Present Study.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."¹

j. Poetry for early adolescents should portray
the reality of Jesus and the Father and their
influence in life.

Because the adolescent needs more than ever to be brought into a knowledge and experience of the Saviour,² because he is come to the time when he demands to know and to experience for himself,³ poetry should contribute towards his understanding and appreciation of Jesus and God. They should be made very real to him, very vital in his life. He has come to the time when he can better understand God in his various aspects of just judge and loving Father, when he can understand Christ as son of God, and son of man. Christ's personality should be made very real and warm to him; God's reality very sure and abiding. Stock says, "Poetry expresses our deepest appreciation of Jesus more than argument does."⁴ And Dr. Verkuyl makes the statement that "Our songs must be of God, through God and to God."⁵

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1. Browning, Elizabeth Barrett in Clark: Golden Book of Faith, p. 41.
2. Cf. Present Study, p. 25
3. Cf. Present Study, pp. 15-16
4. Stock, Harry Thomas: Intermediate Worship Program, Christian Endeavor World, March 1934, p. 18
5. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 172

2. Criteria Relating to the Literary and Aesthetic Values of the Poem.

The poetry selected should not only be suited to the characteristics and needs of the early adolescents as presented in the preceding section, but should also be of the highest literary form and aesthetic appeal.¹ Unfortunately this has not been universally observed. In the attempt to choose poetry which meets the interests of the adolescent, poetry of a comparatively low grade has often been included. This does not mean that only poetry from the classics, from Shakespeare, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Shelley, Browning, and others, should be included, nor that the poetry should necessarily be great poetry, but that it should be good poetry and of the highest literary type. The value of beauty in style and form in religious poems is unquestioned. Louis F. Benson in his book, The Hymnody of the Christian Church, makes the following comments on the well known hymn, "Jesus Lover of My Soul":

"Now we are dealing with the best-loved hymn in the language, the favorite of learned and illiterate, high and humble. And why is it so? No critic urged its acceptance. Average Christians could not analyze its appeal. Its tenderness is a part of that, but hundreds of the Wesleyan hymns are equally tender. Its spiritual reality is a partial explanation, but the hymns in general have

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1. Cf. Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p.35
- Cf. Verkuyll, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 172
- Cf. Stock, Harry Thomas: Church Work With Young People, p. 100.

as much. And after due tribute to these qualities the suspicion remains that the secret of its appeal lies in a poetic beauty that the average man feels without analyzing it, and in a perfection of craftsmanship that makes him want to sing it simply because it awakens the spirit of song in him rather than a mood of reflection."¹

And again he says, "Is it not true of some of our church hymns that they fail to fulfill their high mission simply because they are not 'good poetry'?"² An argument presented by many has been that we should look first for spiritual truth and value, that the high poetic standards should be secondary and incidental, something to be regarded as fortunate if achieved but unnecessary in conveying the message.³ But, after all, the lack of one will detract from the other, and the two are so co-related as to be inseparable and to be indispensable to each other.

Therefore this section is given in the present study to discussing the literary standards of poetry for the setting up of criteria. There is so much disagreement on the definition and character of "good poetry" that the requirements set down will necessarily be rather general, and only those which have been designated by the majority of leading, conservative authorities of both the past and present.

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1. Benson, Louis F.: The Hymnody of the Christian Church, p. 121.
2. Ibid, p. 134
3. Ibid, pp. 116 and 137.

The discussion will be conducted under the three natural divisions of Subject Matter, Style, and Rhythm and Sound.

a. Subject Matter

The first requirement of a poem is that it contain a message. Sidney Lanier's remark on this is most apt: "First and foremost: look upon the rhyme as merely the good garment of reason, and beware leaving the coat with no body in it."¹ This requirement is so essential that it bears repeating. So many religious poems have subject-matter, but no real vital, spiritual message, and like many religious pictures are simply illustrations, comments, or injunctions. The writer of the article in The Encyclopedia Britannica is most emphatic on this point:

"The 'message' of poetry must be more unequivocal, more thoroughly accentuated, than that of any of the other fine arts. With regard to modern poetry, indeed, it may almost be said that if any writer's verse embodies a message, true, direct, and pathetic, we cannot stay to inquire too curiously about the degree of artistic perfection with which it is delivered, for Wordsworth's saying 'That which comes from the heart goes to the heart' applies very closely indeed to modern poetry."²

This message then must be in accord with truth; it must come from the sincerity of the heart, and from experience.³

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1. Lanier, Sidney: *The Science of English Verse*, p. 296
2. Watts-Dunton, Walter Theodore: "Poetry", The Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XXI, p. 879
3. Cf. John Drinkwater's tests of poetry in Benson, Louis F.: *The Hymnody of the Christian Church*, p. 118

A second requirement is that the poem be expressed in concrete terms, not ethereal abstractions.¹ This will exclude a great deal of the didactic element so common in religious poetry.² After all, the value of didactic poetry may be questioned, and one might even challenge its position as poetry. Might not such poetry take a more real and vital place as prose? Gummere even goes to the extent of stating that it cannot be called, in the strictest sense, poetry.³ The poets of today are more and more tending towards this view, as Marguerite Wilkinson says,

"Moral didacticism in poetry is seldom pleasing to the contemporary poet. He prefers to leave lessons to the teacher and sermons to the preacher. For this reason many thoughtful persons have questioned the moral value and the moral importance of our contemporary poetry. But sincere thinking should suggest the idea that poetry may be very valuable morally, even when morals are not pointed out and explained in it. 'Rhythmic ethics' and 'rhythmical persuasions' are not necessarily productive of the finest worship and wonder."⁴

Poetry then must have a message, the message must be truthful, and it must be concretely expressed.

b. Style

The essential of style is lucidity and clarity of expression.⁵ There was a time in the history of poetry

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1. Cf. Benson, Louis F.: Op. Cit. p. 118
2. Cf. Watts-Dunton, Walter Theodore: Op. Cit., p. 877
3. Cf. Gummere, Francis B.: A Handbook of Poetics, p. 51
4. Wilkinson, Marguerite: New Voices, p. 298
5. Cf. Benson, Louis F.: Op. Cit, p. 116
Cf. Austin, Alfred: "The Essentials of Great Poetry",
The Living Age, June 1909.

when the more obscure the passage the more praise it received. This is no longer true, and indeed has never been deemed true by the best poets.¹ Browning's best poetry is not the most difficult; even Wordsworth, who was the exponent of simplicity of style, falls into the mistake of obscurity at times.² Today the stigma that the average person places upon poetry is its unintelligibility. It is not meant by this that all poetry should be such that everyone may at once understand and grasp its full import. That would allow for no depth of thought. The distinction is between depth of thought and obscurity of language. The essential purpose of language is to clarify and make plain the thoughts of man.

Not only should the diction be clear and lucid, but it should be the diction of the best speech of the day,³ and unless the poem is a dialectal poem it should above all things be grammatically correct and have good rhetorical structure. The day of poetic license is past. Today the thought must be carried along smoothly and easily and the approach must be simple and direct. As Marguerite Wilkinson says, "All ornament, therefore must be structural, not superadded and superficial ... and there must

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1. Cf. Lanier, Sidney: *The Science of English Verse*, p.iii
2. Cf. Austin Alfred: *Op. Cit.*,
3. Cf. Wilkinson, Marguerite: *Op. Cit.*, pp. 12 and 114

be no long-winded explanatory moralizing",¹ no bombast. The choice of words has much to do with the vitality of the poem. If the words are empty and dull, the poem is so; but if they are "pregnant and living"², the poem has strength and vigour.

c. Rhythm and Sound

The following is a suggested definition of poetry:

"Absolute poetry is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language while prose requires intellectual life and emotional life, poetry seems to require not only intellectual life and emotional life, but rhythmic life."³

This does not mean necessarily an even metre. Rhythm is a part of life; it is manifested in every phase of life.⁴ It is that rhythm which is inherent in life that is essential to poetry. Poe called it the "rhythmic beating of the heart of God."⁵ It was stated that if the poet had a message, true, direct and sincere, much could be endured in the way of defective verse.⁶ While this is true, nevertheless it is possible for certain defects to so spoil the poem that the message is lost. As Watts-Dunton remarks:

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1. Benson, Louis F.: The Hymnody of the Christian Church p. 118.
2. John Drinkwater quoted in Benson, Louis F.: Op. Cit., p. 118
3. Watts-Dunton, Walter Theodore: "Poetry", The Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XXI, p. 877
4. Cf. Lanier, Sidney: The Science of English Verse, p. 248
5. Poe, Edgar Allen quoted in Lanier Sidney: Ibid, p. 248
6. Cf. Present Study, p. 46.

... "Unless the rhythm of any metrical passage is so vigorous, so natural, and so free that it seems as though it could live, if need were, by its rhythm alone, had that passage any right to exist? and should it not, if the substance is good, be forth-with demetricized and turned into prose?"¹

An example of poor metre and jingly rhythm may be seen in the following verse which is included in one of the leading sources of religious education:

"The Lord is Wonderful and Wise
 As all the ages tell;
 O learn of Him, learn now of Him,
 Then with thee it is well;
 And with its light thou shalt be blest
 Therein to work and live,
 And He shall be to thee a rest
 When evening hours arrive."²

The fourth line is pitifully defective; the whole effect of the rhythm is degrading. Such doggerel has no place in religious worship.³ It is a travesty on the Wonder and Wisdom of God. The difference between doggerel and elemental rhythm is easily understood after examination of this poem. Doggerel is a swing of even metre into which word ideas have been arbitrarily forced without reference to feeling or thought; elemental rhythm of the thought ideas and feelings. Doggerel is monotonous, belittling, even humorous; organic rhythm is living, pulsing, ennobling. The rhythm then should be an inherent part of the message, one with the emotion and the

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2: Lynch, Thomas T.: "Tuxis in the Christian Quest", Worship Suggestions for Oct. 4, 1931, Westminster Departmental Graded Materials.

1. Watts-Dunton, Walter Theodore: Op. Cit., p. 878

3. Cf. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship, p. 100

thought, blending with it and heightening its value.¹

Poor rhymes may sometimes be endured in a song or hymn, since the words may be pronounced correctly and the defect in rhyme passed unnoticed, but in a poem to be read it is reprehensible. In the above poem "live" and "arrive" manifestly do not rhyme, yet evidently were meant to do so; the reader is either forced to pronounce "live" as though it were "alive" or "arrive" in a way to bring laughter. Such verse is not poetry. As Sidney Lanier says, "If the rhyme is not perfect, if it demands the least allowance, it is not tolerable: throw it away."² It is much better to have no rhyme at all than to have a poem whose whole composition shows the effects of what Watts-Dunton calls "word-kneading". The word should be chosen first for its expression of the thought and not simply because it rhymes with another word.

Poetry then should be rhythmic, and not only rhythmic, but organically rhythmic and melodious, with no harsh or grating sounds, and no monotonous jingles. It should not stumble in its line nor on the other hand degenerate into doggerel; if rhymed it should be rhymed well and without apparent effort. In a word, poetry should be rhythmic and melodious.

In conclusion, as far as literary criticism is concerned, beauty is the one requirement - beauty of subject -

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1. Cf. Wilkinson, Marguerite: Op. Cit. p. 12

2. Lanier, Sidney: The Science of English Verse, p. 296

matter, beauty of style, beauty of rhythm and sound.¹ All that has been said concerning poetic standards has only been an elaboration on the one requirement - beauty in its fullest and highest sense. All the literary requirements may be summed up in the following quotation:

"And the questions to be asked concerning any work of art are simply these - Is that which is here embodied really permanent, universal and elemental? and, Is the concrete form embodying it really beautiful - acknowledged as beautiful by the soul of man in its highest moods? Any other question is an impertinence."²

3. Criteria Relating to the Spiritual Truth and Spiritual Value of the Poem.

In ancient times the name for prophet and poet was the same, "vates". After all, poetry cannot be poetry without the prophetic element,³ and religious poetry, if it is not true to the spiritual standards of religion, will be more detrimental than helpful and its whole purpose will be frustrated.

This does not mean that the poetry need be moralizing or preachy. As Marguerite Wilkinson says,

"The religious spirit is in the poetry of

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1. Cf. Lanier, Sidney: The Science of English Verse, p. 315.
2. Watts-Dunton, Walter Theodore: Poetry; Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XXI, p. 877.
3. Cf. Hoyt, Arthur S.: The Spiritual Message of Modern English Poetry, p.6

today not as a theme in itself, and not as propaganda, but as an all-pervading force."¹

Religious poems should contain the essence of spiritual truth and should be rich in spiritual worth. A poem may be beautiful and filled with the spirit of Christ and yet lack actual truth. The following poem is an excellent example. Except for this characteristic, it is perfect in every way:

"They borrowed a bed to lay His head
When Christ the Lord came down
They borrowed an ass in the mountain pass
For Him to ride to town.

But the Crown that He wore
And the Cross that He bore
Were His own.
The Cross was His own.

He borrowed the bread when the crowd He fed
On the grassy mountain side.
He borrowed the dish of broken fish
With which He satisfied.

He borrowed a ship in which to sit
To teach the multitude.
He borrowed a nest in which to rest,
He had never a home so rude.

He borrowed a room on His way to the tomb,
The passover lamb to eat.
They borrowed a cave for Him the grave,
They borrowed a winding sheet.

But the Crown that He wore
And the Cross that He bore
Were His own.
The Cross was His own."²

As Dr. Sargent says, this poem has not a word of truth in it. The bed was Christ's, the ass was Christ's, the hills

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1. Wilkinson, Marguerite: New Voices, p. 298
2. Church Bulletin, Church of St. Bartholomew, N.Y.
(Quoted from a sermon preached by Dr. Sargent.)

were Christ's, all were Christ's - except the crown of thorns and the Cross which were ours. The Crown and the Cross were ours. Not all poems have even this much of spiritual value. What possible worth could there be in the following lyric quoted by Weigle and Tweedy:

"I want to be an angel;
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand."¹

or this:

"I rode in the sky (freely justified I)
Nor envied Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher in a chariot of fire,
And the moon it was under my feet."¹

Such "theological crudities", so styled by Stock,² are a stigma to the name of religion. Fortunately they are rare today; yet it is surprising to see some of the poems presented for youth.

Our religious poems should contain the most lofty and inclusive conception of God, the highest conception of Christ, the noblest conception of self and the individual, the most moral and spiritual conception of humanity and human relationships. For,

"if spiritual insight, ethical vitality and emotional power be lacking, the loveliest of lyrics is not fitted for purposes of worship."³

Perhaps the best standard for spirituality in religious

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1. Weigle, and Tweedy, p. 37
2. Stock, Harry Thomas: Church Work With Young People, p.100
3. Weigle and Tweedy: Op. Cit. p.36

poems is the objectives for the Sunday Church School stated by the International Council of Religious Education:

- "1. Does it lead the pupil into a personal relationship with God?
2. Does it give the pupil an understanding and appreciation of the life and teachings of Jesus and lead him to accept Christ as Savior, Friend, Companion, and Lord, and lead him in loyalty to Christ and His cause?
3. Does it lead to a progressive and continuous development of Christ-like character?
4. Does it lead into enthusiastic and intelligent participation in the building of a Christian community and world?
5. Does it develop the ability and desire to participate in the life and work of the church?
6. Does it give a Christian interpretation of life and the universe?
7. Does it give a knowledge, understanding, and love of the Bible, and an intelligent appreciation of other records of Christian experience?"¹

No poem could possibly be expected to fulfill all these requirements, but it is well to keep these objectives of Christian education requirements in mind while choosing poems for early adolescents.

4. Analytical Summary of Criteria for the Selection of Religious Poetry for the Early Adolescent.

1. Criteria relating to the nature and needs of the early adolescent:

- a. The poetry for early adolescents should be graded.
- b. The poetry should be sincere and earnest.
- c. The poetry should be interesting, stimulating and full of action.
- d. The poetry should be wholesome and well-balanced in emphasis.

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1. International Council of Religious Education: Standard A for the Sunday Church School, p.5

- e. The poetry should be positive and suggestive in appeal rather than negative or dogmatic.
- f. The poetry should express the highest ideals and noblest purposes of mankind.
- g. The poetry should express a personal and practical religion.
- h. The poetry should act as a guide and stimulant to worship.
- i. The poetry should reveal the beautiful.
- j. The poetry should portray the reality of Jesus and the Father and their influence in life.

2. Criteria relating to the literary and aesthetic value of the poem:

a. Subject Matter

- (1) The poem must have a message.
- (2) The message of the poem should be in accordance with truth.
- (3) The subject matter should be concretely expressed.
- (4) The poem should not be didactic or moralizing.

b. Style

- (1) The diction of the poem should be lucid and clear.
- (2) The diction of the poem should be in accordance with the best contemporary usage.
- (3) The sentence structure should be grammatically correct.
- (4) The flow of language should be simple, direct, and easy.
- (5) There should be no superficial ornamentation of style.
- (6) The wording should be fresh and vigorous, not stilted or hackneyed.
- (7) The style should be in accord with the message and thought.

c. Rhythm and Sound

- (1) The poem should have elemental rhythm.
- (2) The poem should have organic rhythm, that is, rhythm which naturally blends with the emotion expressed.
- (3) The rhythm should be "natural and free", not halting or defective.
- (4) The poem should in no way suggest doggerel or jingle.

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- (5) The rhymes should be natural and unstrained.
- (6) The poem should be melodious, with no harsh or grating sounds.

3. Criteria relating to the spiritual truth and value of the poem:
- a. Religious poetry should be rich in spiritual value.
 - b. It should conform to the essence of spiritual truth.
 - c. It should avoid "theological crudities" of expression.
 - d. It should contain the highest conceptions of God the Father, His Son and the Kingdom of Heaven.
 - e. It should contain the highest conceptions of self, individuality, humanity and human relationships.
 - f. It should have "emotional vitality" and power to aid in the development of character.

The list appears long? Can the poem possibly be accepted so measured? Does it seem as though very few poems can pass this test? Perhaps this is best, for our young people's materials have been flooded with mediocre poetry.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF FOURTEEN RELIGIOUS POEMS RECOGNIZED BY
AUTHORITIES AS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS

Quit you like men, be strong;
There's a burden to bear,
There's a grief to share,
There's a heart that breaks 'neath a load
of care.
But fare ye forth with a song.

Quit you like men, be strong;
There's a battle to fight,
There's a wrong to right,
There's a God who blesses the good with
might -
So fare ye forth with a song.

Quit you like men, be strong;
There's a work to do,
There's a world to make new,
There's a call for men who are brave and
true -
On! On with the song!

Quit you like men, be strong;
There's a year of grace,
There's a God to face,
There's another heat in the great world
race -
Speed! Speed with a song!

- William Herbert Hudnut

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF FOURTEEN RELIGIOUS POEMS RECOGNIZED BY
AUTHORITIES AS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS

A. Introduction

In order to discover the poems judged most suitable for use with early adolescents, since poems were not found recommended as such by authorities, it was necessary to examine the poems included in early adolescent materials to see what is actually used by religious educators. The sixteen following sources were examined:

1. Church School Lesson Materials:
 - a. The Standard Graded Bible School Lessons for Oct. 1930 - September 1931
 - b. The Graded Press, 1928-1929
 - c. The Constructive Studies Series, 1925-1927
 - d. The Abingdon Religious Education Texts, 1922, 1924, 1925, 1927
 - e. The Westminster Departmental Graded Materials Oct. 1929- Sept. 1932
 - f. United Church of Canada Sunday School Lessons, Graded for Oct. 1930 -Sept. 1933
 - g. American Baptist Publication Society, Uniform Jan. 1929 - March 1934
2. Religious Education Magazines:
 - a. International Journal of Religious Education 1928-1932 - Worship Materials for Young People
 - b. Christian Endeavor World - 1928 - Feb. 1934
3. Books on Worship and Worship Materials
 - a. Athearn, L.A.: Christian Worship for American Youth.
 - b. Stacy, Gussie Brown: Worship Programs for Youth, Vols. I and II.
 - c. Verkuyl, Gerrit: Adolescent Worship.

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- d. Burkhart, Roy A.: Seeking the Living Way.
- e. Pickerill, Grace Gilbert: Youth Adventures With God.
- f. Worship for Youth, Pamphlet of Christian Quest Material.
- g. Shaver and Stock: Training Young People in Worship.

Out of these materials 2,102 poems were listed; of these fourteen occurred eight or more times; eight occurred seven times; seven occurred six times; seventeen occurred five times; twenty occurred four times; thirty-one occurred three times. These total ninety-seven and were taken as the poems used most frequently for early adolescents.¹ It is realized that these ninety-seven poems do not represent altogether the actual decision of authorities as to the best poems for early adolescents, and were chosen most likely because they suited the thought of the worship program rather than because they were felt to be best for early adolescents. It might be noted, however, that these poems represent what educators do rather than what they say, and therefore represent more fully what they think to be good adolescent poems.

It is also realized that the list could not be highly accurate on account of the small amount of material examined and the few poems listed; however, the materials themselves were carefully selected as representative of the field, consisting of lesson materials, both graded and uniform, of worship programs as outlined by authorities

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1. Poems occurring five or more times are found in Appendix I

for use month by month in the churches, and of worship books for young people.

The fourteen poems which occurred eight or more times in the investigation have been taken as those judged most suitable for use with early adolescents, and will form the basis of the study of this chapter. The plan is to analyze these fourteen poems in the light of the criteria set up in Chapter II and to evaluate them accordingly.

B. Analysis of Poems

1. "The Ways" by John Oxenham

The Ways

To every man there openeth
 A Way, and ways, and a way;
 And the high soul climbs the high way,
 And the low/soul gropes the low,
 And in between, on the misty flats,
 The rest drift to and fro.
 But to every man there openeth
 A high way, and a low.
 And every man decideth
 The way his soul shall go. ¹

This poem is particularly suited for early adolescents, in its clarity and simplicity; the poem is written in the language of a boy or girl, yet grasps a thought which is essential to life and which is one of the basic principles of life. There is the use of poetical language here such as "openeth", "decideth". "to and fro", but these

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1. Oxenham, John : Taken from the Church School Hymnal for Youth, p.401. This poem occurred twenty-two times in the worship materials examined, a decided evidence of its practical value and usefulness with adolescents.

are perfectly understandable to any age whether there has been former contact with poetry or not.

There is no doubt as to the sincerity and earnestness of the writer; there is no sentimentality, no "goody-goody" expression. The whole tone of the poem is one of reality. We feel that John Oxenham realized this principle of life through personal experience and observation and that he set it down just as he felt it. Such conviction carries weight with early adolescents.

The poem is an interesting one, particularly for early adolescents for its graphic, pictorial qualities and its action, but most of all for the subject with which it deals. This is something which they are experiencing - life decision; this is the age when the individual is more conscious than ever of responsibility for his own life. For this reason the poem is gripping and stimulating. It is interesting to notice that although there are but seven verbals in the whole poem, yet the poem, because of the inherent action in the subject matter, does not lack the movement and drive necessary. There is nothing unbalanced or unwholesome in the poem, and particularly no sentimentality, or over-emotionalism. It is perhaps one of the most sane presentations of life-decision to be found. There is a note of dignity, and firmness which the adolescent cannot fail to see and feel.

The way in which John Oxenham has approached the

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subject is most unique; the whole poem is simply a statement of fact, neither positive nor negative, yet the whole effect is one which elevates, ennobles and stimulates to decision. The negative element in the poem - the "misty flats" - is most suggestive, including in its two short lines a depth of teaching without a trace of dogmatism or "preachiness", which is remarkable. There is beauty in the poem, too. Something about the weird suggestion of the misty flats and the people drifting to and fro has a fascination for the imagination.

As has been intimated, the poem is most practical and most real to the religious life of the early adolescent, and while it does not lead directly to God or to worship of God, if used properly it may be a vital factor in bringing the adolescent to God. Certainly it will bring him to the necessity of accepting or rejecting God.

"The Ways" is not only particularly suited to early adolescents, but it is in itself a poem of literary value. In the first place it is a poem with a distinct message, a message which has come out of the heart of the poet, out of a true experience and it has been concretely expressed in that most apt illustration of the ways, an illustration so simple, so universal and understandable that it is of the greatest value. It was just such illustrations as this which Jesus used and which make us see Him as the greatest teacher the world has ever known. In

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fact Jesus himself used it when he said, "I am the Way".¹

The diction is natural and unstrained, in the language of the day except for the terms "openeth" and "decideth". These it can be seen, were employed for a purpose, since neither the rhythm nor the meaning requires such a form. As in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's paintings, the use of the archaic is for atmosphere. Something of the tone of the gospel narratives is added to the poem. Try using "opens" and "decides" instead and see how much color and warmth are lost. It is possible for such a thing to be overdone, but John Oxenham has been most choice in his selection. Throughout the poem he has admirably suited his expression to his thought - the language could never be called hackneyed, because it is too real and natural just as the experience is real and natural.

There is perfect rhythm in the poem, one which is neither jingly nor defective, smooth and free, and in accord with the thought, which is deliberative. The rhythmic movement is correspondingly slow, there being a predominance of long syllables. Notice particularly the third line. According to the rhythm, the line should be read as follows:

"And the high soul climbs the high way,"-

but the length of the word sound "soul" is such that it cannot be tripped over; it must be pronounced slowly, so also with "way". Such monosyllables throughout the poem

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1. John 14:6. ~~A~~most impressive consecration service might be built around these two references.

as "man", "high", "climb", "gropes", "drift", "go" are all long and require deliberative reading. These same words are melodious in their sounds and perfectly suited to the thought. The sound "o" is one of wailing, of sorrow and sadness. Edgar Allen Poe's "The Raven" is a classic example of this. In his "The Ways" Oxenham has used the sound most effectively in expressing the state of the drifting, undecided man and the man who has chosen the low way. The contrast of the second and third lines is most interesting. Throughout the first there is the lifting long "i" sound: "high", "climb" and again "high"; the next line, describing the low soul, is all long "o's": "low", "soul", "gropes", and again "low". Pages could be spent on the rhythmical sound effects of this poem; the foregoing discussion is simply a suggestion of its literary value.

The spiritual value of the poem, while not direct, is perhaps for this very reason more forceful.¹ It is not lacking in emotional vitality or power and for that reason may be of great value in bringing the adolescent to life-decision for Christ.

2. "I Would Be True" by Howard Arnold Walter¹

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1. This poem occurred sixteen times in the poems listed, an unusually high number, second only to "The Ways" It has proved its value in poetry and song. Young people love it, even when as a hymn it is dragged, even when as a poem it is sung, because the poem expresses themselves.

I Would Be True

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
 I would be pure, for there are those who care;
 I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
 I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all - the foe, the friendless;
 I would be giving, and forget the gift;
 I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
 I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.¹

The simplicity of this poem is its most outstanding quality; there is not a word in it which is in the least confusing, not a thought which is involved or difficult. Yet it is interesting because it is adapted to adolescent interest. There is the problem of truth and falsity at school, of purity in thought life, of suffering in the world, all of which the adolescent is actually facing. There is the adolescent admiration for bravery, and desire for friendship, his destestation of pride and conceit, his idealism, his love of fun, all these in one short poem and in such a way as to inspire emulation. The incentive is one of the highest, particularly if the Heavenly Friend is made the chief of those who care. There are no word pictures in this poem, there is no action, no movements, as in Oxenham's "The Ways", where the souls are groping and drifting, and going their appointed ways. For this reason Howard Walter has used verbals to give life to the poem. Of the seventy-eight words in it, thirty are verbals, almost half. The

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1. Walter, Howard Arnold: Quoted from the Church School Hymnal for Youth, p. 193.

poem is stimulating, yet one can not conceive of a more wholesome or unemotionalized presentation of ideals.

The poem is written from the standpoint of the writer. It is "I would be true", not "Be true". This method is most conducive to an atmosphere of sincerity and earnestness. We feel as though the poet meant it for himself, and this makes the early adolescent more ready to accept it for himself. It also avoids the didactic element which could so easily creep in to a poem which includes so much ethical teaching: truth, purity, strength in temptation, courage, love, generosity, humility, reverence, joy, helpfulness - the whole gamut of the highest and noblest ideals. Every thought is practical and personal: what I will be, what I will do, what I will experience; for the poem, in spite of its strong emphasis on ethics does not fail to include worship in its theme - "I would look up". The worshipful element is so included as to make it seem real and natural, as though prayer and joy went together, as they do.

As far as literary value is concerned the poem is excellent. There is much meat and no fat; it is neither didactic nor moralizing, and expressed in as natural a manner as one would use in ordinary speech, with words that are vigorous because they are elemental and real, with movement that is easy and unstrained. The vowel sounds are most euphonious in their relation to each other, particularly the last line, "laugh and love and lift". "I Would Be True"

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is not outstanding for its beauty of expression, but as has been intimated, it is most outstanding for the beauty of its simplicity, sincerity and earnestness.

The spiritual value of the poem is high. It is a prayer, a direct, unadorned prayer. The poem has been criticized for the verb tense, "I would be true," Instead it is thought there should be the more active form, "I will be true". But the whole intention and feeling of the writer is lost by this change, and we are brought into a falsity of position of which Walter is guiltless. It is in truth a prayer; those who change it to "I will be true" make it a declaration, a determination, as though the individual were capable of accomplishing such bold endeavors without aid from above. There appears to be too much of that ethical self-sufficiency in the Christian life of today. The poem as it stands is a real worship experience and can be, if properly presented, a real aid in development of character, not because it preaches but because it prays.

3. Selection from "The Vision of Sir Launfal", by
James Russell Lowell¹

From The Vision of Sir Launfal

And the voice that was calmer than silence said,
"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here, - this cup which thou

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1. Lowell, James Russell: The World's Great Religious Poetry edited by Hill, p. 373 and 374. This selection occurred fifteen times in the material examined.

Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
 This crust is my body broken for thee,
 This water His blood that died on the tree;
 The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
 In whatso we share with another's need;
 Not what we give, but what we share,
 For the gift without the giver is bare;
 Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,-
 Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

The selection from Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal", as can be seen, is insufficient in itself. Without the whole story these lines are unintelligible, lacking in interest and appeal. With the whole story, however, it becomes a powerful poem if used by one skilled in technique of delivering poetry. For this reason the following discussion will be based on the entire narrative poem with special reference to the selection here included.

The story interest of "The Vision of Sir Launfal" is especially strong for early adolescents with its action, its imagery, its theme of knighthood and adventure. They are all acquainted with the stories of knights and ladies from their studies in the public schools if not from their own reading so that they have a background for the historic character of the subject. It is true that they know very little if anything about the Holy Grail, but this can be easily explained to them, and as it is a subject of great intrinsic interest, it will no doubt open up to them new fields of interest and knowledge, particularly concerning the historic reality of Christ.¹ The language on the whole

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1. Reference should be made to the Chalice of Antioch on exposition at the World's Fair, Chicago, the summer of 1933. Much real interest could thus be aroused.

is suited to the early adolescent, and the archaic speech is not only perfectly permissible but necessary for the atmosphere of the story. Adolescents might be confused at times by some of the phraseology, particularly in the selection where reference is made to the Holy Grail - "Behold it is here". Then follows the explanation that this cup is the Grail. Unless the poem were well read there might be some doubt as to its being understood.

The keynote of the poem is sincerity; it is its message and its purpose - to challenge sincerity of heart and deed, something to which adolescents will always respond, in spite of the fact that the moral is at times a little too evident as though the story had worn thin at points and shown the inner framework. The plot is strong enough, however, to carry the message as presented without undue cumbrance.

There is an ennobling worshipful element in this poem which is very beautiful - it finds its climax in the selection we are studying. The reality of the living Christ and the meaning of His life and influence are vividly presented.

From the literary standpoint the poem is a very beautiful one except for the perhaps too even swing of the meter, which tends a little toward monotony. For this reason it is best to tell the story of the Vision of Sir Launfal in prose form rather than to recite it, ending with

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the selection as a climax, especially, since, as was indicated, it is the message and the story of the work which have the greatest appeal to early adolescents. That this selection appears by itself may indicate that this was intended. The last few lines are so well expressed, in such simple, natural language that much would be lost in the attempt to paraphrase.

4. "In Christ There is No East or West", by John Oxenham.¹

In Christ There Is No East or West

In Christ there is no East or West
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord
Close binding all mankind.

Join hands then, brothers of the faith,
Whate'er your race may be
Who serves my Father as a son
Is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West,
In Him meet South and North;
All Christly souls are one in Him
Throughout the whole wide earth.

This poem is easily within the intellectual scope of adolescents, but does not appeal particularly to their emotions. The poem seems cold, perhaps sincere in an in-

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1. The Church School Hymnal for Youth, p. 261
This poem occurred fourteen times in the materials examined.

tellectual way but not earnest. It lacks stimulation and action both of which are essential qualities for early adolescents. The only interest it bears is its message, which might be as inspiringly expressed in prose.

The difference in emotional value may be seen by a simple comparison with "The Ballad of East and West" on a similar theme, the last stanza of which is:

"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the
twain shall meet
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great
Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor
Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they
come from the ends of the earth."¹

There is an intangible emotional appeal about Kipling's poem which John Oxenham has failed to reach. The poem has a message, but the expression of it is dead; it lacks action.

There is a touch of sentimentality in the poem which is perhaps the cause of its lack of strength. The "fellowship of love", the "brothers of the faith" smack of mawkishness. The whole poem is inclined to be preachy if not actually didactic.

The diction is quite simple and clear, but lacking in force. The wording is trite and overworked. Such expressions as the two quoted above, as "true hearts", "whole wide earth", "golden cord" are a trifle cliché

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1. Kipling, Rudyard: "The Ballad of East and West", Barrack Room Ballads and Other Verses, p. 94

The rhythm is good, but forced and regular, as though the thought had been pressed into the service of rhyme and rhythm. "North" and "earth" do not quite rhyme; though the fault is a minor one which might easily be overlooked were there freshness and vigour in the poem.

However, there is a very real message, here, teaching which might be of the greatest value were it made more vital. Perhaps it is because of the very fineness of the message, that "In Christ There Is No East or West" has been widely used.

5. "The Song of a Heathen", by Richard Watson Gilder¹

The Song of a Heathen

(Sojourning in Galilee, A. D. 32)

If Jesus Christ is a man -
 And only a man - I say
 That of all mankind I cleave to him
 And to him will I cleave always.

If Jesus Christ is a god -
 And the only God - I swear
 I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
 The earth, the sea, and the air!

The strength and dignity of this poem commends itself to an adolescent's understanding and appreciation; its evident sincerity and earnestness command admiration. The interest of it lies mainly in the evident conviction and feeling of the author, the tensivity of the thought, the

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1. The Church School Hymnal for Youth, p. 261
 This poem occurred twelve times in the materials examined.

intensity of emotion, exaggerated for effect. There is nothing over-emotional about it, however. The loyalty it expresses does not demand a corresponding loyalty in the reader, but instinctively arouses it by positive suggestion. It is most personal, calling for an attachment to Jesus Christ which is out of the ordinary. It is more of a stimulant than a guide to worship, and should be used accordingly. One might question the conception of Christ as given here for early adolescents, as there might be some doubt raised in their minds as to just who Jesus Christ is. Such a poem should be used with care.

As a poem this is a perfect gem - the clear-cut words seem to come from the mind of a man who meant what he said so strongly that there could be no room for superfluity of expression. Every word is necessary. Such a strong word as "cleave" or "only" gives it vigor and freshness. There is nothing ornamental or unnatural. The perfect rhythm is so welded to the thought as to seem inseparable. One is hardly conscious of the mechanics of it. As in "The Ways", by Oxenham, the words are so chosen as to require emphasis; the predominance of long syllable words requires slow, deliberative reading suitable to the thought.

As far as the spiritual message is concerned, "The Song of a Heathen" is very vital and real. The note of comment at the beginning of it makes it plain that the poem

is not meant to be Christian poem but to show the whole-hearted loyalty of one who does not yet fully accept and understand Jesus Christ. Where the poem is often quoted without the title, the poem may be injurious rather than helpful. "The Song of a Heathen" need not be questioned, however, when one considers it in the history suggested by its parenthetical description which appears with it.

6. "Prayer", by Richard C. Trench¹

Prayer

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others - that we are not always strong -
That we are sometimes overborne with care -
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled - when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee.

This is a poem which very few early adolescents experience; however, there is nothing which an adolescent cannot understand in the poem and there is much of it which he has felt in part. Its value might lie in the very fact that it portrays a spiritual development beyond his own and so inspires to a deeper and more powerful prayer life. The poem lacks much of the color and beauty which are so

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1. Church School Hymnal for Youth, pp. 404 and 405.
2. This poem occurred eleven times in the material examined.

necessary for early adolescents. It is suggestive, undogmatic, expressive of the highest spiritual truths, yet the personal touch is absent, the touch which lends reality to God and to prayer to Him. We feel His power and influence, but we do not feel Him. For these reasons it may not appeal to an adolescent as much as something more practical and personal. It is a beautiful sonnet, quite perfect, quite simple with a great deal of strength and meaning in it. It has a message very real and vital to one who has experienced it, one perhaps somewhat beyond the spiritual appreciation of an early adolescent.

7. "Prayer" by Alfred Tennyson.¹

Prayer

Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

In contrast to the poem, "Prayer" by Trench is this one by Alfred Lord Tennyson. The appeal of Trench's "Prayer" was to one's self; this appeal is for others, and

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1. From "Idylls of the King" by Alfred Lord Tennyson in Hill, Caroline Miles: *The World's Great Religious Poetry*, pp. 414 and 415.
 This poem was mentioned ten times in the materials examined.

for this reason will have more direct interest for adolescents. The practical rather than the mystical is emphasized. The altruistic appeal to their sympathy and to friendship is one which they have felt and can appreciate. Not only this, but the poem also has concrete images - the fountain, sheep and goats, lifted hands of prayer. Such things are not always essential to poetry but they lend a color and beauty which attract adolescents.

The poetical composition is excellent; there is no jingle, no forced lines, simple phraseology, and carry-over lines which break any danger of monotony, and also hurry the poem out of any slowness of action which it might possess. There is an imagery, and feeling, but with it a touch of didactics, hardly noticeable however, since its form is more that of an appeal than of a command.

The spiritual message of intercessory prayer is a beautiful one - the thought of the dignity of the office of prayer and the mission it holds in binding people to each other and to God is one of the greatest a poet may conceive.

8. "God's Dreams" by Thomas Curtis Clark¹

God's Dreams

Dreams are they - but they are God's dreams!
 Shall we decry them and scorn them?
 That men shall love one another,
 That white shall call black man brother,

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1. Clark, Thomas Curtis: Quotable Poems, Vol. I, p. 83

That greed shall pass from the market-place,
 That lust shall yield to love for the race,
 That man shall meet with God face to face -
 Dreams are they all,
 But shall we despise them -
 God's dreams!

Dreams are they - to become man's dreams!
 Can we say nay as they claim us?
 That men shall cease from their hating,
 That war shall soon be abating,
 That the glory of kings and lords shall pale,
 That the pride of dominion and power shall fail,
 That the love of humanity shall prevail -
 Dreams are they all,
 But shall we despise them -
 God's dreams!

This poem is quite within the range of understanding of the early adolescent, within his experience and therefore within his appreciation. The reference to dreams will always catch his interest, because he himself is at the age when he loves to dream, and his dreams mean much to him. Then the term "God's dreams" would naturally be one of great interest to him. The appeal to the changing of present world affairs, the far outlook, the stupendous sweep of the undertaking are enough to catch the attention of the early adolescent who is eager for change. The poem is so practical and real, yet so stupendous, deals with the deepest problems of mankind, hate and greed, lust, war, false glory and pride, yet without didacticism. There is little color, little beauty in the poem. After one has read it one feels challenged but not uplifted, in spite of the fact that the poem leads from God to man and back again to God. It is neither a guide nor a stimulant to worship;

the appeal is almost altogether intellectual. It lacks emotion.

Of its literary excellence, the criticism might be made that the subject-matter lacks concreteness - the teaching is general and somewhat vague, lacking in specific detail. In addition to this, though the diction is natural and easy, the rhythm is rather rough and choppy. It is true that a ruggedness of movement is fitting to the thought, and the rugged qualities would be excellent were they not broken by unexpected lines of almost jingly rhythm which one finds very difficult to read without falling into a sing-song. Yet with careful reading the poem may be made to show qualities of beauty which a slipshod reader would overlook. The strongest point of the poem is the expression, "God's Dreams".

The religious teaching is excellent, as has been indicated, leading to God. But, in spite of the direct challenge, it lacks the emotional vitality which is necessary for the richest spiritual value.

9. "Live and Help Live" by Edwin Markham¹

Live and Help Live

"Live and let live!" was the call of the Old -
 The call of the world when the world was cold -
 The call of men when they pulled apart -
 The call of the race with a chill on the heart.

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1. Clarke-Gillespie: Quotable Poems, Vol. I, p. 163

But "Live and help live!" is the cry of the New -
 The cry of the world with the Dream shining through -
 The cry of the Brother World rising to birth -
 The cry of the Christ for a Comrade-like earth.

This poem is especially suited to early adolescents, because it touches a phase of life which is very evident in their own experience, especially that of boys, among whom the motto of "laissez faire" in the "other fellow's" difficulties is quite general. "He got himself into the fix; let him get himself out" is a recognized sentiment. The appeal then is to something which they themselves feel and know. Then there is the interest of the old and new which the author has used most effectively. Young people always feel that their's is the new, and anything that claims the new holds attraction for them. The reference to the dream is also appealing to them. The whole is filled with unusual and striking images - the "chill on the heart", the "dream shining through" and the "call"s and the "cry"s, giving sound to the poem fill it with life and action. There is emotional stimulation - a call for help from the needy - a cry for loyalty , an appeal from Christ. Very few adolescents will fail to respond in some way to a call for their aid, particularly from one they respect and admire. In this way they are led to worship and resolve in worship which is more than puremystical appreciation for it contains behind it the practical, personal impulse which they love. The poem is a beautiful one, and one which shows Jesus as real, Someone who is

asking for hearts and hands to help Him.

The message of this poem is concretely expressed in the cries of the old world and the new; of men and of Christ; it is very simple, yet very stirring, the wording and style fitting admirably the thought and atmosphere of the poem. But perhaps the most admirable part of the poem is the swinging rhythm, strong, sure, moving with the pulse of the thought. Contrast this with the lines criticized in "God's Dreams" by Clark. There is a decided difference in the inherent value of the rhythm.

"Live and Help Live" is rich in spiritual value, because of the high quality of the message, and its conception of man's duty to man, heightened by the emotional vitality and power which are necessary in developing character.

10. "Credo", by John Oxenham¹

Credo

Not what, but Whom, I do believe,
 That, in my darkest hour of need,
 Hath comfort that no mortal creed
 To mortal man may give;
 Not what, but Whom!
 For Christ is more than all the creeds,
 And His full life of gentle deeds
 Shall all the creeds outlive.
 Not what I do believe, but Whom!
 Who walks beside me in the gloom?
 Who shares the burden wearisome?
 Who all the dim way doth illumine,
 And bids me look beyond the tomb
 The larger life to live?
 Not what I do believe,
 But Whom!
 Not what
 But whom!

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1. The Church School Hymnal for Youth, p. 102

The early adolescent will not realize, as the later adolescent may all the significance of the objections to creeds, though he will be able to understand and appreciate the message of the poem, "Credo". He will feel the positive reaction to "Whom I do believe". This, after all, is the essential part of the poem, the part which appeals to the craving for the personal touch, the sympathetic understanding, the spiritual religion, and the Person, Christ. This poem is admirably suited to that need, and is made concrete for that purpose. It is a real guide and stimulant to worship, a real presentation of the Christ.

Its literary excellence is high, except that there is a little "word-kneading" and forcing of rhyme in the third section. "Wearisome" does not naturally rhyme with "gloom", "illumine", and "tomb". One might question the necessity or advisability of the use of "hath" and "doth" in the poem, since there is no need or call for the archaic form. But this is a minor point. However there is a lack of freshness in the diction of the last section which detracts from the strength of the poem. One feels that the author was most sincere and vigorous in the reiterated "Not what, but Whom", and this thought carries conviction with it accordingly and the force of that feeling is carried over through the first eight lines where the poem begins to struggle for vitality of life. The ending with the repetition of the strongest phrase in the poem is most impres-

sive.

The poet had a message, one which he sincerely felt. The poem has a deep truth in it which the poet has excellently revealed. He has shown the comforting, gentle, burden-bearing Christ who guides us in our daily lives step by step and who is a sure promise to us of that eternal life which is present and to come. The personal appeal of Christ is rich and strong.

11. "God, Who Touchest Earth With Beauty", by Mary S. Edgar.

This is a poem which fits in perfectly with the experience, the interest and the desires of an early adolescent. The great appeal here is to his love of beauty, not only in the reference to God who creates beauty but in the continual comparison between the beauty of soul and the beauty of nature. To a beauty-loving adolescent this poem is a delight. It is full of the movement of nature: "running waters", "towering rocks", "dancing waves", "arching heavens". The whole of it is wholesome and free from any fear of piety or religiousness, fresh and unsentimentalized. It is in the form of a prayer which is the surest way to stimulate and guide worship. Somehow prayer lends itself to poetry, perhaps because of its lyric uplifting thoughts. Every thought expresses an aspiration, a thirsting which every adolescent feels but can't express. There is nothing mystical about the requests - simple re-

quests asking for things each young person feels the need of. God is made very real here by the attitude of confident, trustful approach, by the intimacy of contact and by the full acceptance of His influence in nature and in life. There is a trust and sincerity which no adolescent will fail to sense.

The beauty of the poem has already been mentioned, the loveliness of the worship, the beauty of the imagery, the purity of the diction, the simple, unstrained language which is so natural it might easily be the prayer of an early adolescent himself, the perfect rhythm, elastic and suited to the thoughts and recurring moods - all tend to make this poem a perfect gem. Notice how the rhythm of each line blends with the thought as well as the choice of word sounds does. Contrast the first two and the last two lines of the second stanza, and see how well the artist has composed them. The vowel sounds throughout the poem are excellently and melodiously placed. The poem is beautiful.

The spiritual note of exaltation and aspiration is kept at the highest level throughout the poem, and as has been indicated, the worshipful representation of God is most real and vital. This is a poem which is spiritually rich as well as aesthetically beautiful.

12. "Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul"¹

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1. Oliver Wendell Holmes: The Chambered Nautilus in Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems, Vol. I, p. 115

Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul

Build thee more stately mansions, oh, my soul,
 As the swift seasons roll!
 Leave thy low-vaulted past!
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
 Till thou at length art free,
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
 sea!

The early adolescent, like the nautilus is outgrowing his shell; he is beginning to feel the swell of new life and new impulses. For this reason the poem holds the greatest interest for him. The story of the chambered nautilus is in itself, intellectually of great interest, something that stretches the mind and widens one's outlook on the world. The comparison is so perfectly conceived as to carry the mind instantly into the element of the personal. The beauty and concreteness of the image are so clear and illuminating that the early adolescent cannot fail to understand and feel it. It is one of the most suggestive appeals to a nobler life, to a growing life, and the end is not some specific accomplishment but a continual development, the spiritual growth of the Christian which never ends until it has reached that glorification which God has promised his children. It is the most beautiful, most glorious conception of the Christian religion, portrayed and illustrated in a most beautiful manner.

The diction is simple and expressive; the language easy and flowing; there is no halting, no stiffness, no word-kneading, nothing stilted or hackneyed. The roll of

the rhythm blends in perfect harmony with the roll of the ocean and the small swaying shell, the words themselves convey the sounds of the unresting sea.

13. "Man Am I Grown" by Alfred Tennyson¹

Man Am I Grown

Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.
Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King -
Else, wherefore born?

"Man Am I Grown" is youth himself speaking, the words of the young Gareth, intense eager, ready for action, filled with ideals of life and service. The plea is one which every right-minded adolescent makes in his own heart. His response to this ringing declaration of Gareth's will be instant and genuine. The power of action in the poem, the urge to do is strong and positive in its drawing power. This poem is offering something to do, not mollicoddle sentimentality but energetic loyalty to the King - this is the adolescent's conception of worship. This carries the young person straight to Christ, and from Him immediately to his own personal life and actions.

The selection is short, but very concise, packing into its few strong words the thought and feeling of youth. The rhythm of iambic pentameter is well broken to fit the thought. Mechanically the meter is perfect, actually it varies according to the feeling and thought expressed. One must pause after the high indignant question, one must pause after each enumeration in the succeeding line and each word

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1. From "Idylls of the King" in Rolfe, W.J: The Poetic and Dramatic Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, p. 313

in that line requires due consideration; each one is weighted with intensity. There is so much naturalness in the poem, just like a young boy - The shrill indignant question; the positive retort; the earnest purpose; ending with the sweeping impulsive question, "Else, wherefore born?" The device of selfloquy, as though the boy were speaking more for himself than for his mother is an excellent one, as it lends a touch of vividness and reality which might otherwise be lacking in a poem so filled with matter.

14. "O Brother Man" by J. G. Whittier¹

O Brother Man

Oh, brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was "doing good";
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

One cannot escape from the impression that the poet is talking down to us. An early adolescent wishes to be considered a man - "Man am I grown". He objects to the slightest tone of condescension. Whittier has made himself very clear but so evidently that the good effects are lost. The adolescent response to such kindly advice is more likely to be a mental reservation of "You're telling me?" or "Oh, that's sob stuff." This poem seems to have a ring of sentimentality. An occasional word over-does the effect noticeably, "each kindly deed", "each loving

1. From "Worship" in Fields, Osgood, & Co.: The Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier, p. 39

life". The poem calls for the highest relationship between man and man in too didactic a way. The author has forgotten to be real in his expression and is instead attempting to teach the Sunday School lesson, whereas that should be left to prose. Christ is not made real or personal, there is no real interest or active stimulation. One can visualize the adolescent's acceptance of "O brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother", particularly the early adolescent. Nor would one need to be confined to the imagination. It has been done quite graphically. The wording is easily understandable, but the words are old and dead; there is nothing fresh or invigorating in either the wording or the method of presenting the message. The whole is abstract, lacking in concrete expression. The words and thought have been forced into a prescribed rhythm. The last stanza was evidently a struggle with rhyme. Neither "example" and "temple", nor "good" and "gratitude" rhyme. The whole is cliché and lifeless.

This does not mean that the poem may not be of great value spiritually but as was stated concerning didactic poetry, its mission and worth are limited. There is much religious teaching here but little spiritual value. We agree with all that is said while at the same time we feel no urge to respond. "O Brother Man" is a concrete example of the lack of emotional vitality.

C. Summary

Of the fourteen poems judged by authorities as most suitable for early adolescents, nine were found to measure up in every way to the criteria as set up in Chapter III. The nine poems are:

- "The Ways" by John Oxenham
- "I Would Be True" by Howard Arnold Walter
- "Prayer" by Alfred Tennyson
- "Live and Help Live" by Edwin Markham
- "Credo" by John Oxenham
- "God, Who Touched Earth With Beauty" by Mary S. Edgar
- "Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul" by
Oliver Wendell Holmes
- "Man Am I Grown" by Alfred Tennyson
- "The Song of a Heathen" by Richard Watson Gilder

Those which were judged very good, yet lacking in one or two requirements are:

- Selection from "The Vision of Sir Launfal" by James
Russell Lowell
- "Prayer" by Richard C. Trench
- "God's Dreams" by Thomas Curtis Clark

Those found to be of comparatively small value are:

- "In Christ There Is No East or West" by John Oxenham
- "Oh, Brother Man" by J. G. Whittier

The number of poems which subscribed to the criteria as set up in chapter III is high considering the strict and full requirements. Only two did not measure up to the standard. In the light of the fact that these fourteen poems which have been proven to be of great value in working with early adolescents, since they occurred so often in the material, have been found to coincide so closely with the criteria set up for the selection of poetry, we may assert that the criteria have practical as well as the

oretical proof of its accuracy and value.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to discover by scientific means criteria for the selection of religious poetry for early adolescents, and to apply the results of this study to poems which are recognized by religious educators as suitable for early adolescents.

The investigation was developed inductively: The psychological nature of the early adolescent was studied to discover the characteristics which would necessarily guide one in selecting religious poetry for this age group. It was found that adolescents respond most to poems that are earnest and sincere, full of action and imagery, and graded to their interests, experiences and problems. In addition to this there were found certain needs which should be met, such as a wholesome presentation of the highest ideals, a stimulant and guide to worship, presentation of a living, practical religion, of a personal, living Christ, and of a real, loving God. In addition to this, the literary and aesthetic standards were considered under the headings of subject matter, style, and rhythm and sound. The main results of this section were the discovery of the necessity for poems which convey a true message concretely expressed without didacticism or moralizing, a lucid diction in accordance with the best contemporary usage, a graphic and vigorous style which is in

accordance with the thought, and a free, natural, organic rhythm. Certain spiritual requirements, such as the necessity for rich religious value, for the essence of spiritual truth, the highest conceptions of God, ourselves and the relations of mankind, and, most important, an emotional vitality which will arouse the spiritual appreciation of the early adolescent. In the concluding chapter, an evaluation was made of the poems recognized by religious educators as particularly appropriate for early adolescents according to the criteria of selection previously set up.

From this study certain conclusions may be drawn. At the outset it was discovered that in spite of the seeming lack of interest of early adolescents in poetry of any sort, the adolescent is well-fitted psychologically to respond to the emotional and aesthetic appeal of religious poetry. The apparent indifference of the early adolescent to poetry has been exaggerated, for behind the shy or brusque exterior lie depths of emotion and appreciation which only require the right touch to awaken; however it is the wrong touch and the wrong type of poetry which is only too often employed.

It was found that in spite of this basic emotional need there has been no study made of poetry for early adolescents whatsoever, much less a scientific approach to the problem of selection. In addition to this, through the course of the study, it was discovered that

there are floods of mediocre poetry to be found in early adolescent worship and study materials. From a very close examination of these poems, the conclusion was reached that there is too much religious poetry with too little discrimination of choice. One may infer from this that there is a distinct need for an anthology of religious poetry for early adolescents, and an anthology, based on scientific and practical criteria. No anthology of religious poetry ^{for early adolescents} was found to exist.

However, it was also found that in spite of the fact that there has been no scientific approach to the subject, the poems recognized by religious educators as appropriate for early adolescents on the basis of their own judgment and experience in working with that age group measure up most favorably to the criteria of selection and thus give proof of the practical as well as theoretical accuracy and correctness of the criteria.

The chief value of this study is the scientific and practical guide for the selection of religious poetry for early adolescents, a guide which should be of service to anyone attempting to compile an anthology of religious poetry for this age group.

The chief challenge of this study is the call to a more careful and more thorough consideration of the type of emotional appeal employed with early adolescents and the type of materials used to bring about this development of

his nature, and more particularly, the type of poetry selected for use.

APPENDIX I

POEMS OCCURRING FIVE OR MORE TIMES IN ADOLESCENT WORSHIP

MATERIALS EXAMINED

EIGHT POEMS OCCURRED SEVEN TIMES

1. Be Strong!

Be strong!
 We are not here to play - to dream, to drift.
 We have hard work to do and loads to lift.
 Shun not the struggle - face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!
 Say not the days are evil. Who's to blame?
 And fold the hands and acquiesce. - O shame!
 Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be strong!
 It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong,
 How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
 Faint not - fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

Maltbie B. Babcock from
 Clarke Gillespie: Quotable Poems,
 Vol. I, p. 10

2. My Captain

Out of the light that dazzles me
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be
For Christ, the Conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance
I would not wince, nor cry aloud;
Under the rule which men call chance
My head with joy is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears,
That life with Him, and His the aid,
Despite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and shall keep me unafraid.

I have no fear though strait the gate;
He cleared from punishment the scroll;
Christ is the Master of my fate,
Christ is the Captain of my soul.

Dorothea Day
Church School Hymnal for Youth
p. 398

3. Recessional

God of our fathers, known of old,
 Lord of our far-flung battle line,
 Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
 Dominion over palm and pine -
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget - lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
 The Captains and the Kings depart:
 Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
 An humble and a contrite heart.
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget - lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
 On dune and headland sinks the fire:
 Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
 Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
 Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
 Lest we forget - lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
 Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
 Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
 Or lesser breeds without the Law -
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget - lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
 In reeking tube and iron shard,
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,
 And guarding calls not Thee to guard,
 For frantic boast and foolish word -
 Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!

- Rudyard Kipling
 Clark-Gillespie: Quotable
 Poems, Vol. I, pp. 42-43

4. Once to Every Man and Nation

Stanzas from "The Present Crisis"

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide;
 In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or
 evil side,
 Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the
 bloom or blight,
 Parts the goats upon the left hand and the sheep upon the
 right,
 And the choice goes by forever 'twixt the darkness and that
 light.

For humanity sweeps onward: where today the martyr stands,
 On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
 Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling
 fagots burn,
 While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
 To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good
 uncouth;
 They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast
 of Truth;
 Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pil-
 grims be,
 Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the des-
 perate winter sea,
 Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rus-
 ted key.

- James Russell Lowell
 Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems,
 Vol. I, pp. 265-266

5. God's Quest

Youth, O youth, can I reach you,
Can I speak and make you hear,
Can I open your eyes to see me,
Can my presence draw you near?
Is there a prophet among you,
One with a heart to know?
I will grant my peace unto him,
He shall help my Kingdom grow.
For I, the God the Father,
The quest, the Final Goal,
Still search for a prophet among you,
To speak my Peace in his soul.

Unkown
International Journal of
Religious Education, Oct. 1931
p. 37

6. A Prayer of the Quest"

Take us on the Quest of Beauty,
Poet Seer of Galilee,
Making all our dreams creative
Through their fellowship with Thee.

Take us on the Quest of Knowledge,
Clearest Thinker man has known.
Make our minds sincere and patient,
Satisfied by Truth alone.

Take us on the Quest for Service,
Kingly Servant of man's need.
Let us work with Thee for others,
Anywhere Thy purpose leads.

All along our Quest's far pathways,
Christ our leader and our guide,
Make us conscious of Thy presence,
Walking always at our side.

- Eleanor B. Stock,
Pickerill, Grace: Youth Adventures
With God, p. 129

7. Proem to In Memoriam

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

- Alfred Tennyson
Rolfe, W.J: The Poetic and Dramatic
Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, p. 163

8. One Ship Drives East

One ship drives east and another west
While the selfsame breezes blow;
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
That bids them where to go.

Like the winds of the air are the ways of fate,
As we journey along through life;
'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal
And not the storm or the strife.

- Ella Wheeler Wilcox
Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems
Vol. I, pp. 148-149

SEVEN POEMS OCCURRED SIX TIMES

1. Good Company

To-day I have grown taller from walking with the trees,
The seven sister poplars who go softly in a line;
And I think my heart is whiter for its parley with a star
That trembled out at nightfall and hung above the pine.

The call note of a red bird from the cedars in the dusk
Woke his happy mate within me to an answer free and fine;
And a sudden angel beckoned from a column of blue smoke -
Lord, who am I that they should stoop - these holy
folk of Thine?

- Karle Wilson Baker
Church School Hymnal for Youth
p. 407

2. White Captain of My Soul, Lead On

White Captain of my soul, lead on;
I follow thee, come dark or dawn.
Only vouchsafe three things I crave:
Where terror stalks, help me be brave!
Where righteous ones can scarce endure
The siren call, help me be pure!
Where vows grow dim, and men dare do
What once they scorned, help me be true!

- Robert Freeman
International Journal of Religious
Education, Dec. 1929, p. 33

3. What Christ Said

I said, "Let me walk in the fields."
 He said, "No; walk in the town."
 I said, "There are no flowers there."
 He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the skies are black,
 There is nothing but noise and din;"
 And he wept as he sent me back;
 "There is more", he said, "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,
 And fogs are veiling the sun."
 He answered, "Yet souls are sick,
 And souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,
 And friends will miss me, they say."
 He answered, "Choose tonight
 If I am to miss you, or they."

I pleaded for time to be given.
 He said, "Is it hard to decide?
 It will not seem hard in Heaven
 To have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the fields,
 Then set my face to the town;
 He said, "My child, do you yield?
 Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into his hand went mine;
 And into my heart came he;
 And I walk in a light divine,
 The path I had feared to see.

- George MacDonald
 Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems
 Vol. I., pp. 2 and 3

4. Apparitions

Who goes there, in the night,
 Across the storm-swept plain?
 "We are the ghosts of a valiant war -
 A million murdered men!"

Who goes there, at the dawn,
 Across the sun-swept plain?
 "We are the hosts of those who swear:
 It shall not be again!"

- Thomas Curtis Clark
 Clark-Gillespie: Quotable
 Poems, Vol. I - p. 281

5. Jesus Christ - And We

Christ has no hands but our hands
 To do his work today;
 He has no feet but our feet
 To lead men in his way;
 He has no tongue but our tongues
 To tell men how he died;
 He has no help but our help
 To bring them to his side.

We are the only Bible
 The careless world will read;
 We are the sinner's gospel
 We are the scoffer's creed;
 We are the Lord's last message
 Given in deed and word -
 What if the type is blurred?

What if our hands are busy
 With other work than his?
 What if our feet are walking
 Where sin's allurements is?
 What if our tongues are speaking
 Of things his lips would spurn?
 How can we hope to help him
 Unless from him we learn?

- Annie Johnson Flint
 Clark-Gillespie: Quotable Poems
 Vol. I, p. 169

6. Abou ben Adhem

Abou ben Adhem (May his tribe increase!)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold;
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the Presence in the room he said,
 "What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
 And with a look made of all sweet accord,
 Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
 "And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
 But cheerly still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
 Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."
 The angel wrote and vanished; the next night
 It came again with a greatawakening light,
 And showed their names whomalove of God hath blest
 And lo! ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

- Leigh Hunt
 Hill, Caroline Miles: World's
 Great Religious Poetry, p. 616

7. Trees

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

- Joyce Kilmer
Hill, Caroline Miles: World's Great
Religious Poetry, p. 253

SEVENTEEN POEMS OCCURRED FIVE TIMES

1. The Spacious Firmament on High

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round this dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice nor sound
Amids their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
Forever singing, as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."

--Joseph Addison, Church School
Hymnal for Youth, p. 45.

2. From "Nobility"

True worth is in being, not seeming-
In doing, each day that goes by,
Some little good - not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in their blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

--Alice Cary from Quotable Poems,
Clark, Gillespie, vol. II, p. 247.

3. The Search

I sought his love in sun and stars,
And where the wild seas roll,
And found it not. As mute I stood,
Fear overwhelmed my soul;
But when I gave to one in need,
I found the Lord of Love indeed.

I sought his love in lore of books.
In charts of science' skill;
They left me orphaned as before -
His love eluded still;
Then in despair I breathed a prayer;
The Lord of Love was standing there!

--Thomas Curtis Clark, Hill,
World's Great Religious Poetry, p.33.

4. Myself

I have to live with myself, and so
I want to be fit for myself to know.
I want to be able, as days go by,
Always to look myself straight in the eye;
I don't want to stand with the setting sun,
And hate myself for the things I've done.

I don't want to keep on a closet shelf,
A lot of secrets about myself,
And fool myself, as I come and go
Into thinking that nobody else will know,
The kind of a man that I really am;
I don't want to dress up myself in sham.

I want to go out with my head erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect;
And here in the struggle for fame and pelf,
I want to be able to like myself.
I don't want to look at myself and know
That I'm a bluster, a bluff and an empty show.

I can never hide myself from me;
I see what others may never see;
I know what others may never know;
I never can fool myself, and so
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free.

—Edgar A. Guest, Creative Living,
Cynthia Maus.

5. Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do or to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Till all this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

--Edwin Hatch, Church School
Hymnal for Youth, p. 129.

6. A Ballad of Trees and the Master

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to him,
The thorn-tree had a mind to him
When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo him last,
From under the trees they drew him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew him- last
When out of the woods he came.

--Sidney Lanier, Quotable Poems,
Clark, Gillespie, vol. I, p. 225.

7. The World Stands Out On Either Side

From "Renaissance"

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide;
Above the world is stretched the sky, -
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand;
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat - the sky
Will cave in on him by and by.

--Edna St. Vincent Millay,
Untermeyer, Louis: Modern American Poetry,
N.Y., c. 1930, p. 640.

8. What is Prayer?

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed -
The motion of a hidden fire,
That kindles in the breast.

Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear -
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try -
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And cry, "Behold! He prays!"

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath -
The Christian's native air -
His watchword at the gates of death -
He enters heaven with prayer.

The saints in prayer appear as one
In words and deed and mind,
Where with the Father and the Son
Sweet fellowship they find.

Nor prayer is made by man alone -
The holy spirit pleads -
And Jesus, on the eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes.

O Thou by whom we come to God -
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray!

--James Montgomery, World's Great
Religious Poetry, Caroline Miles Hill.

9. In Such An Age!

To be alive in such an age!
With every year a lightning page
Turned in the world's great wonder-book
Whereon the leaning nations look
Where men speak strong for brotherhood
For peace and universal good;
When miracles are everywhere
And every inch of common air
Throbs a tremendous prophecy
Of greater marvels yet to be.
O, Thrilling age!
O, Willing age!
When steel and stone and rail and rod
Welcome the utterance of God
A trump to shout his wonder through
Proclaiming all that man can do.

To be alive in such an age!
To live in it!
To give in it!
Rise, soul, from thy despairing knees,
What if thy lips have drunk the lees?
The passion of a larger claim
Will put thy puny grief to shame.
Eling forth thy sorrow to the wind
And link thy hope with humankind:
Breathe the world-thought, do the world-deed
Think highly of thy brother's need
Give thanks with all thy flaming heart,
Crave but to have in it a part -
Give thanks and clasp thy heritage -
To be alive in such an age!

--Angela Morgan, International Journal,
December 1932, p. 31.

10. Risen

The Lord is risen!
Now earth again
Lift up to heaven the joyful strain,
Life-out-of-Death's eternal gain -
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
To wake the souls of men.
The Lord indeed is risen
From out His earthly prison,
And now, all kings above,
He reigns for evermore -
The Lord of Life, the King of Love,
Life's loving Conqueror.

The Lord is risen!
The heavenly choir
With all creation doth conspire
To swell the strain still higher, higher,-
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
Mankind with love to inspire.
etc.

The Lord is risen!
O Wondrous Word,
Which heaven and earth enraptured heard
And to their heights and depths were stirred,
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen,
Our loving, living, Lord.
etc.

The Lord is risen!
Immortal Love,
That for mankind so greatly strove
On earth below, in heaven above, -
The Lord is risen, is risen, is risen
To show that God is Love.
etc.

--John Oxenham, from Gentlemen--the King!
p. 80.

11. Come, Share the Road With Me!

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
Through good and evil weather;
Two better speed than one alone,
So let us go together.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
You know I'll never fail you,
And doubts and fears of the unknown
Shall never more assail you.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
I'll share your joys and sorrows.
And hand in hand we'll seek the Throne
and God's great glad to-morrows.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
And when the black clouds gather, -
I'll share thy load with thee, My son,
And we'll press on together.

And as we go we'll share also
With all who travel on it,
For all who share the road with Me
Must share with all upon it.

So make we all one company,
Love's golden cord our tether,
And, come what may, we'll climb the way
Together - aye together!

--John Oxenham, from Gentlemen--the King,
pp. 39 and 40.

12. We Would See Jesus

We would see Jesus, lo! His star is shining
Above the stable while the angels sing;
There in a manger on the hay reclining,
Haste, let us lay our gifts before the King.

We would see Jesus, Mary's Son most holy,
Light of the village life from day to day;
Shining revealed through every task most lowly,
The Christ of God, the Life, the Truth, the Way.

We would see Jesus, on the mountain teaching,
With all the listening people gathered round;
While birds and flowers and sky above are preaching
The blessedness which simple trust has found.

We would see Jesus, in his work of healing,
At eventide before the sun was set;
Divine and human, in his deep revealing,
Of God and man in loving service met.

We would see Jesus, in the early morning
Still as of old he calleth, "Follow me";
Let us arise, all meaner service scorning,
Lord, we are Thine, we give ourselves to Thee!

--J. Edgar Park, Church School Hymnal
for Youth, p. 92.

13. All That We Need To Do

All that we need to do,
Be we low or high,
Is to see that we grow
Nearer to the sky.

--Lizette Woodworth Reese,
International Journal of Religious
Education, June 1932, p.36.

14. Flower in the Crannied Wall

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies; -
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower - but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

--Alfred Tennyson, Hill, World's Great
Religious Poetry, p. 263.

15. Move to the Fore

Move to the fore!
Say not another is fitter than thou.
Shame to thy shrinking - up - face thy task now.
Own thyself equal to all a soul may,
Cease thy evading - God needs thee to-day.
Move to the fore!

God Himself waits and must wait till thou come;
Men are God's prophets though ages lie dumb.
Halts the Christ Kingdom with conquest so near,
Thou art the cause, thou soul in the rear.
Move to the fore!

--Author unknown, Church School Hymnal
for Youth, p. 401.

16. Love and Light

There are many kinds of love, as many kinds of light
And every kind of love makes a glory in the night.
There is a love that stirs the heart, and love that
gives it rest,
But the love that leads life upward is the noblest
and the best.

--Henry Van Dyke, (Copyright by Charles Scribner's
Sons) Church School Hymnal for Youth, p.402.

17. Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity
Interpreted by love!

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease:
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earth-quake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

--John Greenleaf Whittier, Church
School Hymnal for Youth, p. 201.

APPENDIX II

TWENTY-FIVE SUGGESTED POEMS WHICH MEET TO THE FULLEST EXTENT
THE CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF RELIGIOUS POETRY

1. The Ways

To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way;
And the high soul climbs the high way,
And the low soul gropes the low,
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A high way, and a low.
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go.

--John Oxenham, The Church School Hymnal
for Youth, p. 401.

2. I Would Be True

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all - the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

--Howard Arnold Walter, The Church Hymnal
for Youth, p. 193.

3. Live and Help Live

"Live and let live!" was the call of Old -
The call of the world when the world was cold -
The call of men when they pulled apart -
The call of the race with a chill on the heart.
But "Live and help live!" is the cry of the New-
The cry of the world with the Dream shining through-
The cry of the Brother World rising to birth -
The cry of the Christ for a Comrade-like earth.

--Edwin Markham, Quotable Poems, vol. I,
Clark-Gillespie, p. 163.

4. God Who Touchest Earth with Beauty

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too;
With Thy Spirit re-create me,
Make my heart anew.

Like Thy springs and running waters
Make me crystal pure;
Like thy rocks of towering grandeur
Make me strong and sure.

Like Thy dancing waves in sunlight
Make me glad and free;
Like the straightness of the pine trees
Let me upright be.

Like the arching of the heavens
Lift my thoughts above;
Turn my dreams to noble action -
Ministries of love.

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too;
Keep me ever, by Thy Spirit,
Pure, and strong, and true.

— Mary S. Edgar, Church School Hymnal
for Youth, pp. 190 and 191.

5. Build Thee More Stately Mansions, O My Soul,

(From "The Chambered Nautilus")

Build thee more stately mansions, oh, my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, Quotable Poems,
vol. I, p. 115.

6. Man Am I Grown

(From Idylls of the King)

'Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.
Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King -
Else, wherefore born?'

--Alfred Tennyson, from Gareth and Lynette, in Rolfe,
The Poetic and Dramatic Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson,
p. 313.

7. Be Strong

Be strong!
We are not here to play--to dream, to drift.
We have hard work to do and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle--face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!
Say not the days are evil. Who's to blame?
And fold the hands and acquiesce. --O shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be strong!
It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
Faint not--fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

--Maltbie D. Babcock, Quotable Poems,
vol. I, p. 10.

8. Apparitions

Who goes there, in the night,
Across the storm-swept plain?
"We are the ghosts of a valiant war--
A million murdered men!"

Who goes there, at the dawn,
Across the sun-swept plain?
"We are the hosts of those who swear:
It shall not be again!"

--Thomas Curtis Clark, Quotable Poems,
Vol. I, p. 281.

9. White Captain of My Soul, Lead On

White Captain of my soul, lead on;
I follow thee, come dark or dawn.
Only vouchsafe three things I crave:
Where terror stalks, help me be brave!
Where righteous ones can scarce endure
The siren call, help me be pure!
Where vows grow dim, and men dare do
What once they scorned, help me be true!

--Robert Freeman, International Journal
of Religious Education, December 1929, p.33.

10. Move to the Fore

Move to the fore!
Say not another is fitter than thou.
Shame to thy shrinking--up--face thy task now.
Own thyself equal to all a soul may,
Cease thy evading--God needs thee to-day.
Move to the fore!

God Himself waits and must wait till thou come;
Men are God's prophets though ages lie dumb.
Halts the Christ Kingdom with conquest so near,
Thou art the cause, thou soul in the rear.
Move to the fore!

--Author Unknown, Church School Hymnal
for Youth, p. 401.

11. The Pilgrim Way

But once I pass this way,
And then--and then, the silent Door
Swings on its hinges--
Opens Closes
And no more
I pass this way.
So while I may
With all my might
I will assay
Sweet Comfort and delight
To all I meet upon the Pilgrim Way
For no man travels twice
The Great Highway
That climbs through darkness up to light
Through night
To day.

--John Oxenham.

12. Sacrament of Fire

Kneel always when you light a fire!
Kneel reverently, and thankful be
For God's unfailing charity,
And on the ascending flame inspire
A little prayer, that shall upbear
The incense of your thankfulness
For this sweet grace
Of warmth and light!
For here again is sacrifice
For your delight.

Within the wood,
That lived a joyous life
Through sunny days and rainy days
And winter storms and strife;--
Within the peat,
That drank the moorland sweet
Of bracken, whin, and sweet bell-heather,
And all the joy of gold gorse feather
Flaming like Love in wintriest weather,--
While snug below, in sun and snow,
Peat heard the beat of the padding feet
Of foal and dam, and ewe and lamb,
And the stamp of old bellwether;--

Within the coal,
Where forests lie entombed,
Oak, elm, and chestnut, beech and red pine bole,--
God shrined His sunshine, and enwombed
For you these stores of light and heat,
Your life joys to complete.
These all have died that you might live;
Yours now the high prerogative
To loose their long captivities,
To give them new sweet span of life
And fresh activities.

Kneel always when you light a fire!
Kneel reverently,
And grateful be
To God for His unfailing charity!

--John Oxenham, Church School Hymnal for Youth
p. 396.

13. Follow the Gleam

(From "Merlin and the Gleam")

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel
And crowd your canvas,
And, eree it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

--Alfred Tennyson, Rolfe, W.J.:
The Poetic And Dramatic Works of Alfred
Lord Tennyson, p. 551.

14. Prayer Hymn

Lord of all pots and pans and things, since I've not time to be
A Saint by doing lovely things, or watching late with Thee
Or dreaming in the dawnlight, or storming Heaven's gates,
Make me a saint by getting meals, and washing up the plates.

Although I must have Martha's hands, I have a Mary mind;
And when I black the boots and shoes, Thy sandals, Lord, I find.
I think of how they trod the earth, what time I scrub the floor;
Accept this mediation, Lord, I haven't time for more.

Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and light it with Thy peace;
Forgive me all my worrying, and make all grumbling cease.
Thou who diast love to give men food, in room, or by the sea,
Accept this service that I do--I do it unto Thee.

--M.K.H., written by a girl in service, Quotable Poems,
vol. II, p. 304. (Thomas Curtis Clark).

15. Prayer to the Mountain Spirit

Navajo Indians

Translated by Cronyn

Lord of the Mountain,
Reared with the mountain,
Young man, Chieftain,
Hear a young man's prayer.
Hear a prayer for cleanness.
Keeper of the strong rain
That restores the earth in newness;
Keeper of the clean rain,
Hear a prayer for wholeness.

Young man, Chieftain,
Hear a prayer for fleetness.
Keeper of the deer's way,
Reared among the eagles,
Clear my feet of slowness.
Keeper of the paths of men,
Hear a prayer for straightness.

Hear a prayer for courage.
Lord of the peaks,
Reared amid the thunders;
Keeper of the headlands
Holding up the harvest,
Keeper of the strong rocks
Hear a prayer for staunchness
Young man, Chieftain,
Spirit of the Mountain.

---World's Great Religious
Poetry, Hill, p. 456.

16. Awareness

God--let me be aware.
Let me not stumble blindly down the ways,
Just getting somehow safely through the days,
Not even groping for another hand,
Not even wondering why it all was planned,
Eyes to the ground unseeking for the light,
Soul never aching for a wild-winged flight.
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.
God--let me be aware.

God--let me be aware.
Stab my soul fiercely with other's pain,
Let me walk seeing horror and stain.
Let my hands, groping, find other hands.
Give me the heart that divines, understands.
Give me the courage, wounded, to fight.
Flood me with knowledge, drench me in light.
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.
God--let me be aware.

--Miriam Teichner, Quotable Poems, vol. I,
p. 34, Clark-Gillespie.

17. The Pure Heart

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure.

--Alfred Tennyson, from "Sir Galahad",
Quotable Poems, Clark-Gillespie, p. 137.

18. Faith

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
I shall believe the Hand which never fails
From seeking evil worketh good for me;
And though I weep because those sails are battered,
Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,
"I trust in Thee."

I will not doubt, though all my prayers return
Unanswered from the still, white realm above;
I shall believe it is an all-wise Love
Which has refused those things for which I yearn;
And though at times I cannot keep from grieving,
Yet the pure ardor of my fixed believing
Undimmed shall burn.

I will not doubt, though sorrows fall like rain,
And troubles swarm like bees about a hive;
I shall believe the heights for which I strive
Are only reached by anguish and by pain;
And though I groan and tremble with my crosses,
I yet shall see, through my severest losses,
The greater gain.

I will not doubt; well anchored in the faith,
Like some staunch ship, my soul braves every gale,
So strong its courage that it will not fail
To breast the mighty unknown sea of Death.
O, may I cry, when body parts with spirit,
"I do not doubt" so listening worlds may hear it,
With my last breath.

--Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Quotable Poems, Clark,
vol. II, p. 107.

19.

19. Into the Sunset

Let me die working.
Still tackling plans unfinished, tasks undone!
Clean to its end, swift may my race be run.
No laggard steps, no faltering, nor shirking;
Let me die working!

Let me die thinking.
Let me fare forth still with an open mind,
Fresh secrets to unfold, new truths to find,
My soul undimmed, alert, no question blinking;
Let me die, thinking!

Let me die, laughing.
No sighing o'er past sins; they are forgiven.
Spilled on this earth are all the joys of heaven;
Let me die, laughing!

--S. Hall Young, Quotable Poems, Clark, Gillespi.

20. De Massa ob de Sheepfol'

De massa ob de sheepfol'
Dat guards de sheepfol' bin
Look out in de gloomerin' meadows,
Wha'r de long night rain begin--
So he call to de hirelin' shepa'd,
"Is my sheep, is dey all come in?"
Oh den, says de hirelin' shepa'd:
"Dey's some, dey's black and thin,
And some, dey's po' ol' wedda's ;
But de res', dey's all brung in."

Den de massa ob de sheepfol',
Dat guards de sheepfol' bin,
Goes down in de gloomerin' meadows,
Wha'r de long night rain begin--
So he le' down de ba's ob de sheepfol',
Callin' sof', "Come in. Come in."
Callin' sof', "Come in. Come in."

Den up t'ro' de gloomerin' meadows,
T'ro' de col' night rain and win',
And up t'ro' de gloomerin' rain-paf',
Wha'r de sleet fa' pie' cin' thin,
De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol'
Dey all comes gadderin' in.
De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol',
Dey all comes gadderin' in.

--Sarah McClain Greene, Quotable
Poems, vol. II--Thomas C. Clark.

21. Prayer of a Boy

God, Who created me
Nimble and light of limb,
In three elements free,
To run, to ride, to swim;
Not when the sense is dim
But now from the heart of joy,
I would remember Him:
Take the thanks of a boy.

Jesus, King and Lord,
Whose are my foes to fight,
Gird me with thy sword--
Swift and sharp and bright.
Thee would I serve if I might,
And conquer if I can,
From day-dawn until night:
Take the strength of a man.

--Henry C. Beeching.

22. My Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of
the shadow of death
I will fear no evil:
For thou art with me:
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me
In the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil;
My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the
days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

--King James Version of the Bible,
Saalfield Publishing Company --(original set up.)

23. Jehovah's Immovable Throne

Psalm XCIII

The Lord reigneth; he is apparelled with majesty;
The Lord is apparelled, he hath girded himself with strength.
The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved:
Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.

Above the voices of many waters,
The mighty breakers of the sea,
The Lord on high is mighty.

Thy testimonies are very sure:
Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forevermore.

--Caroline Miles Hill, The World's Great Religious
Poetry, p. 93.

24. Recessional

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine--
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget--lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
And humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget--lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget--lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law--
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget--lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls on Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word--
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!

—Rudyard Kipling, Quotable Poems,
Clark, Gillespie, vol. I, p. 42 and 43.

25. The Heavens Above and the Law Within

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice cannot be heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.
His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it;
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul:
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes
The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever:
The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:
Sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
In keeping of them there is great reward.
Who can discern his errors? Clear thou me from hidden faults.
Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins;
let them not have dominion over me:
Then shall I be perfect,
And I shall be clear from the great transgression.

.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my
heart be acceptable in thy sight,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

--Moulton's Modern Reader's Bible; World's Great
Religious Poetry, Caroline Miles Hill.

APPENDIX III

PUBLISHING HOUSES QUESTIONED CONCERNING AVAILABLE RELIGIOUS
POETRY FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS

PUBLICATION HOUSES

Abingdon Press
New York, New York

Allen, Lane & Scott
Philadelphia, Pa.

Association Press
New York, New York

American Baptist Publication Society
Philadelphia, Pa.

Publication Department Baptist Sunday School Board
Nashville, Tenn.

Bobbs-Merrill Co.
Indianapolis, Ind.

Central Publishing House
Cleveland, Ohio

Charles Scribner Sons
New York, New York

Christian Board of Publication
St. Louis, Missouri

Doubleday, Doran & Co.
Garden City, New York

Harcourt Brace & Co., Inc.
New York, New York

Harper & Brothers
New York, New York

Heidelberg Press
Philadelphia, Pa.

Henry Holt & Co.
New York, New York

Houghton Mifflin Co.
Boston, Mass.

Lutheran Book Concern
Columbus, Ohio

The Macmillan Co.
New York, New York

Methodist Protestant Book Concern
Baltimore, Maryland

Publishing House of M. E. Church South
Nashville, Tenn.

Pilgrim Press
Boston, Mass.

Presbyterian Board of Christian Education
New York, New York

Presbyterian Committee of Publication
Richmond, Va.

Fleming H. Revell Co.
New York, New York

Willetts, Clark & Co.
Chicago, Illinois

Woman's Press
New York, New York

APPENDIX IV
POEMS BY ADOLESCENTS

POEMS BY ADOLESCENTS

1. Prayer Hymn

(Written by a young girl in service)

Lord of all pots and pans and things, since I've not
time to be
A Saint by doing lovely things, or watching late with
Thee
Or dreaming in the dawnlight, or storming Heaven's gates,
Make me a saint by getting meals, and washing up the
plates.
Although I must have Martha's hands, I have a Mary mind;
And when I black the boots and shoes, Thy sandals, Lord,
I find.
I think of how they trod the earth, what time I scrub the
floor;
Accept this meditation, Lord, I haven't time for more.
Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and light it with
Thy peace;
Forgive me all my worrying, and make all grumbling cease.
Thou who didst love to give men food, in room, or by
the sea,
Accept this service that I do - I do it unto Thee.

M. K. H.
Clark, Thomas Curtis:
Quotable Poems, Vol. II, p.304

2. My Loves

Love of a clean wind blowing,
Love of the thrushes call,
Love of the sunset's glowing,
Love of the soft rainfall.
Love of service in homely deeds,
Love of the soft, green sod,
Love of the crackle of swaying reeds
And love in serving God.

Mary Hine - Age 17
Written on Star Point,
Lake Sue, Orwin Manor,
at sunset.

3. My Playmate

He is my Chum, my Playmate,
My Comrade and my Friend;
The noblest boy I ever knew
Is faithful to the end.

When I am on the lake shore,
When I am on the hill,
My Comrade helps me rule myself
By counsel and strong will.

He's just a boy, about my age,
He plays the games I play,
He learns the things I'm learning,
He is with me every day.

If ever I may anger him
As long as I may live
I never will be quick enough
To ask him to forgive.

And he is always waiting there
In the place where he abides.
We go once more to playing
Upon the mountain sides.

If you want him for a playmate,
Will you come and play with me?
For he will be there by my side
On the hills of Galilee.

Long years ago, long miles away,
Some distant hill, some foreign strand
Yet Jesus still is by my side,
And leads me by the hand.

- Roxie Ward
A boy of fourteen
Source unknown

4. God's Gift of Beauty

Think, Oh nature-loving world,
Of the beauty on God's earth!

The leaping torrent
Of crystal water
Falling over the cool, gray rocks,
A mountain fall;
Beauty, sheer as a bridal veil -
God made it!

The stately mountain
Rising, a guardian of all the land,
A pine-covered sentinel,
A tower of strength;
Beauty, transcendent, awing the soul -
God made it!

The glowing sunset,
Radiance sublime,
Shedding a thousand lights
On mountain, lake, and plain;
Beauty, inspiring as an artist dream -
God made it!

The arched rainbow, -
Delicate tints
Send rays of tranquil light
To every nook of nature;
Beauty, ethereal as a fairy's wing -
God made it!

The deep blue sky
Touched by moonbeams,
Heaven's dome, with twinkling stars
Veiling our Father's face;
Beauty, silent, sacred to all -
God made it!

The deep blue sky
Touched by moonbeams,
Heaven's dome, with twinkling stars
Veiling our Father's face;
Beauty, silent, sacred to all -
God made it!

Can you who see the sparkling falls,
The tallest mountain, the setting sun,
The rainbow, and the star-filled heaven -
Forget the God who made such beauty?

5. Sensitiveness

I like to dream,
 For then
 I meet the souls of people that I know
 And find them friends.
 Ones who in the daytime gave me laughs
 or frowns
 Have burst the binding bars of earthly
 bounds
 And soar as silent souls in my soft- misted
 dreams.
 I like to dream, for then I feel
 And know that they are friends.

I like to pray,
 For then
 I meet God at his mercy seat
 And beg for friends.
 And when I rise I find my heart new-girded
 With his strength - to win.
 I like to pray,
 For then I find the strength to make me
 friends.

Anonymous
 Taken from notebook of
 author.

6. Thy Passion

To share Thy passion -
 This our plea, Oh Christ.
 To know in part the sorrow and the pain,
 To love without a selfish tho't our
 fellow men,
 To say in all sincerity, "Thy will, not
 mine, Oh God" -
 That would be to share.

To share Thy passion -
 Lord, this our prayer,
 That in suffering we might grow more
 tender,
 That by loving we might bring to others joy,
 That sharing thus our lives might then be
 wholly Thine

Mary Hine - Age 19
 Taken from notebook of author

7. Never Too Old To Yearn
(A Study of St. Paul)

I've always thought I'd like to go
To lands beyond the sea,
That people everywhere might say,
"Paul converted me."

I've traveled far on every side,
But have not reached my aim;
I still would like to work among
The folk in sunny Spain.

It also is my dreamful aim -
And I pray it may come true -
To travel far the other way
To places I have been to.

There's Philemon and Titus
And friends in Philippi,
Whose homes I'd like to visit
Once more before I die.

Then there's the town of Ephesus
Which seems almost like home,
Where Christians live who'd welcome me,
Should I return from Rome.

The town of Thessalonica,
And Corinth down in Greece,
Would be fitting places to land,
After I've put out to sea.

Another place I really think
That I again should see,
Would be the town where Jesus taught
Along by Galilee.

Since the day of my conversion
On that mission of great sin,
I've always thought I'd like to find
New roads to wander in.

Rhone River and the hills of France!
And, oh, how much I'd give
To visit the homes of those heathens
While God gives me to live!

And then I'd cross the mountains
And travel into Spain,
Where I'd visit all the people
Nor be stopped by wind or rain.

Seems like those places call me
To start again to roam;
I hear the call of the needy,
But I remain here in Rome.

I'm getting old and feeble,
With little time before the turn;
And yet - well, at any rate,
I'm not too old to yearn.

Bertha Coffman
Taken from manuscript given
to Dr. V.D.Melconian by
author

8. A Boy Friend's Poem to a Girl Friend

I like your body, for its strong
And beautiful, and fine.
Your life is clean and wholesome, like
I'm trying to make mine.

I like your mind, pure, eager, quick,
Your intellect is keen;
Your thoughts are fair, unbiased, rich,
While mine seem small and mean.

I like your spirit. You've a heart,
A personality,
Your sweetness and your loveliness
Tell what I ought to be.

In body, mind, and spirit, girl,
Your life is full and real;
Because I'd like mine that way, too,
I I cherish your ideal.

And so you do all this for me
That no one else can do.
I pray to be more worthy, see?
More worthy, girl, of you.

- Larry

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