

DIANA RIDES

To Walter Ker Sanderson

THE purple night's translucent field,
Deep-threaded by Diana's car,
Unto her brow its calm doth yield.

Not any silent wandering star
Through silence rapt its way hath sped
From all the heavens confine far,

But in each dawn new-heralded,
And queen of night's soft plenilune,
The Silver One doth raise her head.

Or, hidden by the clouds bestrewn
Around her, as her way she goes,
She sails unseen, our Lady Moon.

When gentle song the night-wind blows
From his soft pipe, the flying feet
Of fawns and fays in rings and rows

Trip, lightly strong and nimbly fleet;
But if her face Diana hides,
No dancing then to piping sweet.

And if the queen triumphant rides,
The secret things that haunt the night
Pay her obeisance with the tides.

And by her halo of delight,
And by her virginal stellar comb
Swear elfin lovers, darkly bright.

The dimpling ripple of the foam—
The snow-capped hills beneath the night—
Poplars that rim the starlit dome—

The secret things that haunt the dark—
Belated wild-fowl bound for home—
Are touched by her enchanted spark.

Diana rides o'er vale and hill,
Diana rides to-night, and hark!
Her songs with sleep the night fulfil.
Diana, ah! Diana still.