

On a Statue of the Buddha

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Flower of the Lotus, nobly born,
Spring thou amidst our English corn,
And let us smile thine eyes beneath,
Deep-purple in their fringed sheath:
Peaceful beyond our dreams of ill
And good, thou smilest and art still.

What secret chamber hast thou found
Within the gloom of thought profound?
Wisely thou smilest: naught, naught less
Than deep translucent Nothingness—
The word that all wide space shall fill.
But thou? thou smilest and art still.

Dim dreams of dawn within thy breast
Have set thy yearning heart at rest;
Thou sittest in the dark green shade
Beyond the need of dumb god's aid:
Thine eyes were lit beyond the Hill;
Thine eyes smile ever, and are still.

O Lord who found'st the gates of truth
Too low for gods, too strait for youth—
Who saw'st the winding paths that bring
All men within the mystic Ring—
How may we find the hidden Rill
Whose healing waters made thee still?

Thou smilest and art still, but we
Lie deep-enmeshed in mystery:
Thine eyes have made a truce with Pain,
For thou hast found how life is vain;
The clarion soundeth loud and shrill,
But thou, Lord, sittest ever still.

Lord of the unforgetting birth,
Whose doorways spanned the arch of earth,
What lamp hath led thee to the door

With dark beyond and light before?
Thy striving wearied thee, until
Thou saw'st, and then thy heart was still.

Far from the web, Siddhārtha, Lord,
Thou sittest at the gods' dim board,
And holdest in thy stern caress
Thine ever-virgin Nothingness.—
Not thine the cup that men fulfil—
Thou smilest ever, and art still.

We lie within the choking dust,
In pain and hate, in love and lust;
Thou mayst now our pain forgo,
Who cast off life with joy and woe—
Thou see'st our life, our love, our skill:
Thou smilest, and art ever still.

Lord of the opening lotus-flower,
With shells of æons for thy bower,
Teach us indeed that we may know
The vanity of life and woe;
We strive, we bear, beget and kill,
But thou, O Lord, remainest still.

O vain for thee the word to teach
In soaring song, in wondrous speech;
Not thou the gift of sleep may'st bring,
Deep-merged within the mystic Ring—
We die and live, drink blood and spill,
But thou, Lord, smilest and art still.

Thou smilest, for thou art the Law;
Thou smilest not in love or awe,
But, seeing to the end of space
And time, thou bear'st a god-filled face:
We creep into the lotus-flower,
And sleep an hour, and sleep an hour.

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