

EIGHT BEATITUDES

I met eight Carthusian Monks in a Sussex lane
and later again in an untenanted Park.

UPON my outgoing journey with a message I met you. You came down the lane unconscious of the dignity of your presence and unaware of the desire you stirred in me to do you reverence. I would have left the trivial machine I rode and placed myself on my knees in the dust to express my admiration for all you represent.

You who all day consort with the Omnipotent Goodness and in your consorting plead for such as I—obtaining for us all the graces which too often go unthanked for.

You more than stirred in me the repressed desire for solitude in which alone may we creatures touch in our timidity His Garments. Around your tunics hung the history of centuries; the memory of the prophets who sought Him in the deserts; the serenity of the decades of mystical revelation which came from Him alone; and in the folds of your raiment I caught glimpses of His Saints and consorts of the future.

You passed, but not the high hope in my heart which you had provoked—the high hope of forgiveness and reconciliation, and the certitude that we are not castaways, but that in fact God still walks with His children. The wind stirred the oak leaves above me; I did not look back at you, for we are of one dimension in England now—He has so placed us in His Palisade.

It was perhaps an hour later upon my returning way I saw you again in Burrell's Park. You were lined now in prayer. You committed to the open August sky

Eight Beatitudes

your welcome frail praise of the Father; and in your bowed and covered heads lay the unspoken beauty of adoration.

The acres in which you stood are already under the doom which catches most that is mortal; but you were there to represent the glory of the hidden Kingdom—that which has no end, and out of which springs all our strength to rebuild and rededicate the land, through His protection, to the holiness of toil.

Heaven bless your feet and consecration in this world and the next! Perchance in the Halls of Heaven—entrance to which you win for me—I may know your names, when your great silence be broken and the trivialities of my imperfection will not hold me back from reminding you of Sussex on an August day, when the earth seemed hungering for the care we have, to our peril, in England so long refused.

AUGUST, 1930.