

DE PROFUNDIS

They are more bound than I,
that tread me down;
they that would not be valor's slave
are fortune's clown.

They that would stop the ear to golden words
must fill it with the listless din
of news and numbers, hollow tunes that pall,
while nightmares cage them in.

What they have made of Your great world I must,
with eyes the sight wounds, see;
and yet this pain is memory of the good,
is liberty.

O G-d, amid their worse than futile work,
their faithless talk,
their homes that are become as market-squares
where sellers hawk,

grant them one hour to know Your wisdom is,
for all they do,
a source of counsels, flowing from Before,
which perils but renew,

and though for many years they still must toil
in falsehood's pay,
show them even now Truth's sanctuary in Time,
Your Sabbath Day!

Aye, they would know, could they but cross that sill
and leave all lies without:
Your Presence fills the world from end to end
and leaves no room for doubt.

And from that insight is endurance born,
and joy, and awe,
and constancy, and truth from mind to mind,
and acts which speak Your Law.

Esther Cameron