

**THE CALL OF THE
OPEN FIELDS AND
OTHER POEMS**

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The call of the open fields and other poems by Imri Zumwalt

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IMRI ZUMWALT

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OPEN FIELDS

and Other Poems

By Imri Zumwalt



Bonner Springs, Kansas
Imri Zumwalt, Publisher
1916

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PREFACE

Among friends a gift that is the handiwork of the giver always possesses a peculiar value that is dependent in only a small degree on the intrinsic worth or merit of the article itself.

This little volume, published primarily for private distribution among a few personal friends, lays no claim to any special merit, but relies chiefly on the good will and kindly interest of those who have shown in so many ways their friendship for the writer, for whatever measure of appreciation may fall to its lot.

Incidentally a limited number of copies have been produced for sale. If they find favor with the public the writer will be glad, if not he will not be deeply disappointed, for he labors under no delusions concerning the merits of his own work.

If the reading of the pages that follow shall give ever so small a measure of enjoyment or inspiration and ever so little truer a comprehension of the great realities of life to those into whose hands they fall, the writer will be content.

With a few minor exceptions the sketches that accompany the poems are the work of a personal friend, Mr. Abe Gordon of the Kansas City Journal.

Bonner Springs, Kansas, Nov. 1, 1916.

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THE CALL OF THE OPEN FIELDS

The street is full of turmoil and loud, discordant din,
Of greed and lust for power and the reeking stench of sin.

Come out to the quiet places,
To the land of the open sky,
Afar from the thronging faces,
Where sun-lit meadows lie.

The street is full of hatred, an eye for an eye its rule;
It crucifies the hero and crowns the knave and fool.

Come out where the truth is welling
From nature's springs divine;
Come out where the free are dwelling
In a world of peace benign.

Forget the street and its baubles that tarnish ere they're won.
Come out to the open spaces and find a place in the sun.

Come out when the day is sinking
Behind the western height,
When the world is darkness drinking
From the kindly hand of night.

When like some vast cathedral with dome far upward flung
Rises the vault of heaven with starry curtains hung.

Come bathe your fevered faces
In nature's healing wine
And here in the quiet places
Bow at nature's shrine,

While all around the pillars of the hills eternal rise
In majesty and silence toward the vastness of the skies.



THE CROWN

The crown belongs not to the genius,
Nor to him who sits high in the state,
Not to law-giver, poet, nor painter,
Nor to any the world would call great.

But to him who toiled long at the furnace
Or wrought in the dust of the mill,
Kept faith through it all, and departed
With the heart of a child in him still.





MANGER AND CROSS

A score of centuries ago, within a stable dark,
Amid the sheep and oxen, one was born,
A peasant's son. His life was like his birth,
Among the lowly. He toiled like other men
And never knew the easy ways of life.

But once upon a mountain top he saw
The world, its coffers rich, its kingdoms vast
Outstretched before him, his to have and hold,
And there renounced them all and went his way
Of persecution and a Roman cross.

Men scoffed at him because for others' sake
He chose Gethsemane's dark path, a crown
Of thorns and death upon Golgotha's hill.
But out from that uplifted cross there passed
A message to the world that swept beyond
Judean hills and far Phoenecian shores,
Resounded through imperial Rome, echoed
From Hymalayan snows to Andes rugged
Sides and rang from ice-bound northern capes
To far antarctic seas, until today
His name is lisped on baby tongues, and prattling
Lips of happy children in all climes,
While from unnumbered throats of bright-eyed girls
And thoughtful women, smooth-faced boys and sturdy
Snburned men there rises, 'mid the gathering
Shadows of the eventide, a prayer
To heaven, in His name sent who died that men
Might live.



THE DESERT

Morning

A landscape wild and barren
With shadows flying west
As morning's streaming banners
Rise o'er the mountain's crest.

A tide of amber sunlight
Flooding a waste of sand
To where the walls of granite
In golden glory stand.

Noon

A waste of sand and cacti
Stretching far away
To where the hazy mountains
Rise from the desert gray.

An infinite desolation
Under a sky of brass
With never a habitation
And never a blade of grass.

A scorching sun in the zenith
Pouring its burning rays
Down on the sand and sage brush,
Down on the desert and haze.

Evening

An expanse of trackless desert
Under a fading sky,
The warmth of parting sunbeams
On eastern summits high.