

**EARTH TRIUMPHANT
AND OTHER TALES
IN VERSE**

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Earth triumphant and other tales in verse by Conrad Aiken

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CONRAD AIKEN

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EARTH TRIUMPHANT

And Other Tales In Verse

BY

CONRAD AIKEN

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To My Wife.

*Whatever loveliness is in this music,
Whatever yearning after lovely things,—
Whatever crying after stars, in darkness,
Whatever beating of impeded wings:*

*Whatever climbing of the rose to sunlight,
Sweet-hearted laugh from the dark blind sod:
Whatever madness of the sea for moonlight,
Whatever yearning of the good to God:*

*All that is beautiful, and all that looks on
 beauty*

*With eyes filled with fire, like a lover's eyes:
All of this is yours; you gave it to me, sun-
 light!*

*All these stars are yours; you gave them to
 me, skies!*

▼

FOREWORD.

Not to disarm criticism, but out of justice to myself, I feel compelled to say here, in view of the fact that I am certain to be called an imitator of Masefield, that before I had ever heard of Masefield I was experimenting with narrative poems of modern daily life. In one case I had even employed the octosyllabic couplet (used so successfully in "The Everlasting Mercy") to tell the love-story of an ordinary clerk.

It will be obvious, of course, that Masefield has influenced me. I found in him many valuable hints toward a method for the work I wanted to do. If with some of his method I unconsciously picked up also some of his mannerisms, that was to be expected, and I can only hope that these echoes

are neither very important nor many. And I believe firmly that my substance and my philosophy, whatever their merits, and despite superficial resemblances, are entirely my own, and entirely different from those of Masfield.

The narrative poems in this book were written a considerable time after my reading of "The Everlasting Mercy" and "The Widow in the Bye Street." In the interim I had done work more experimental in quality and more directly reminiscent. In writing "Youth," "Earth Triumphant," and "Romance," however, I made a deliberate attempt to excise all echoes, and to leave as a basis for dreaded comparisons only the facts that these poems, like Masfield's, are narrative, and are written in certain Chaucerian forms.