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## Appendix. Poems

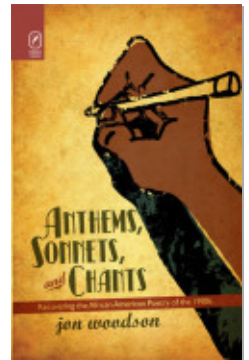
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# Appendix

## POEMS

### OWEN DODSON

#### NEGRO HISTORY: A SONNET SEQUENCE

##### ON THE SLAVE SHIP

We must not pray that death which now has passed  
Too many times for fear will sleep again,  
Or swim to other galleys till the last  
Black exile dies or smites these pallid men,  
Oh tears that fall like splinters from the stars  
We would dry up your source, for salty tears  
Will never wear away these iron bars  
Or drown the ominous pounding of our fears.  
Oh groaning men whose bodies sweat in pain,  
Oh women with your infants on your breasts  
Who chant your agonizing songs, the rain  
Will come and wash these rancid nests,  
The rain will come, be silent, we must wait  
For time to change the destinies of fate.

##### PAST AND FUTURE

“You must not damn the future or the past;  
That death will come in season and delay  
The disillusion of this life (the last

Slow breath will come to cleanse the clay)  
 You know, yet knowing beat your dusky wings  
 And curse the men who made your blackness pain,  
 And chant your agonizing hymn that brings  
 An ointment in its notes to wash your stain.”  
 This worshipper of dying is like a breath  
 Of hopeless resignation at the end  
 Of flaming autumn—forecasting death,  
 Blotting out the hope that we will mend  
 The patches of these transitory years  
 With swords, with hate, in spite of frequent tears.

#### POST EMANCIPATION

Rescind the hope that we may walk again  
 Without the heavy chains of servitude  
 That bind our flesh to soil and heartless men  
 Who mould our lives to fit each fickle mood.  
 Rescind the hope although it was decreed  
 That freedom would be ours to wear and keep  
 For centuries, aye, for eons till the seed  
 Of freedom died or earth was rocked to sleep.  
 The parchment that declared that we were free  
 Is now collecting dust in some dark spot,  
 Despite the promise and the certainty  
 We thought its words would give, but gave them not.  
 Distrust all words that echo to the stars  
 When earth is bound with unrelenting bars.

#### HARLEM

Harlem—deep, dark flower of the west  
 With girls for hollow stamens ribbed with joys,  
 Reject the easy sun, be wary lest  
 It shrivel up the pollen of your boys.  
 Together you must grow your flowers anew,  
 Not asking whose the gain or whose the gold;  
 Together you must silence winds that blew  
 Your fragrant copper petals to be sold  
 And not for beauty’s dress or beauty’s walls.  
 Remember that the ex-ray of the years

Reveals the rotting of the shallow halls  
 Within the petal's veins, reveals the fears  
 The copper must be conscious of  
 If they would hold their life. Grow strong or starve.

#### WELBORN VICTOR JENKINS

Almost nothing is known about Welborn Victor Jenkins (1879–?), a resident of Atlanta, Georgia. Aside from his volume of poems *Trumpet in the New Moon* (1934), his books are *The "Incident" at Monroe: A Requiem for the Victims of July 25th, 1944* (1948), a long Whitmanian protest poem; *We Also Serve: (Apologies to O. Henry)* (1920), a collection of short stories; and an essay, "Who Are the Thespians?" (ND).

#### TRUMPET IN THE NEW MOON

You have work to do, America—  
 You have work to be done.  
 The goal which was set for you in the dreams of your founders  
 Has not been realized.  
 You are off the trail, America—  
 You are wandering in the Wilderness like the Israelites of old.  
 You are worshipping strange gods, America—  
 You have lost your first love and fallen  
 From grace.

In your early garb, I thought you beautiful.  
 Your coon-skin cap, your leathern breeches, your brogans,  
     your axe and your flintlock were beautiful to me, America,  
 Because your motives were pure.  
 Then was your Love boundless,  
 Then was your Hope boundless,  
 Then was your Enthusiasm boundless  
 Because  
 Your faith was boundless.  
 The clean wild air, the free new world seemed to animate  
     you with a fraternal benevolence; and I even condone  
     your questionable treatment of the Indians  
 Because  
 You were honor bright; and, at least, your heart was right.  
 And you have a rich heritage, America—

Your history reads like the songs of the bards  
 When the earth was young.  
 Remember the twilight years—  
 Remember the years of the dawn—  
 Sing of the heroic days of the Scandinavian Rovers  
 Who first saw your shores.  
 Sing of Cabot and Drake and Magellan and Balboa and De Soto  
 And Columbus, who gave you your song-name and  
     started you on your way to Plymouth Rock and Yorktown!  
 Nay, sing of the slave-ships and Christopher Attucks.  
 Sing of the Declaration of Independence; there is  
 No grander human document.  
 I hear the opening lines which read like the cry of a  
     new-born man-child—  
 lusty and defiant!  
 I hear the closing lines which read like a lover's sacred oath.  
 I see a young man riding out of Boston in the night;  
 I see a signal flashed to him from the belfry of a church;  
 And "embattled farmers firing the shot heard round the world."  
 I see suffering and sacrifice and trails of blood across  
     the snows of Valley Forge;  
 And a dignified, Virginian gentleman looming to the  
     stature of Hannibal, Alexander, Napoleon, Marlborough  
 Anon; and then I saw a mighty nation born into the world!  
 I saw that nation spreading toward the westward.  
 Horace Greely gave good advice to the young men—  
 St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver, San Francisco  
 Took form and grew like mushrooms in the night.  
 New Orleans, child of the Mississippi, basking in the  
     rich cotton fields of the Delta,  
 Glanced proudly at the rising suns of Promise and Fulfillment.  
 Erelong I heard the boom of a cannon athwart the  
     ramparts of Ft. Sumpter.  
 I saw Puritan and Cavalier come to grips over an idea:  
 Bull Run—Vicksburg—Missionary Ridge—  
     Antietam—The Wilderness—  
 Lee—Grant—McClelland—Beauregard—Stone-wall Jackson—  
 And the finality of Appomattox!  
 Above all, I heard the peroration at Gettysburg:  
 "May not perish from the earth,"  
 Like a benediction

And a prayer . . . .

O you came from that fire like pure gold, America,

With high Purposes:

With noble Resolutions:

And lofty Aspirations.

I saw you write the “Fourteenth Amendment” in the Book

I saw you wish the Freedman :God speed”

As he launched his frail bark upon the sea of Emancipation.

I saw you “bind up the nation’s wounds” while rebuilding  
your prosperity upon a sounder foundation.

Came now the matchless Grady

Wrapped in sunlit clouds of eloquence—

He of the silver tongue and the golden throat—

With the earnest hope for a new orientation;

With the hope that there should be “no further misunderstanding;”

With the hope North and South should make common  
cause to “consummate our great destiny.”

I saw you build great railways; rear factories; dig mines.

I saw the black man patiently helping you to perform these miracles.

I saw you reorganize the Empire that was to amaze the world.

I saw your commerce begin to whiten every sea.

I saw you apply your mind to Experimental Science—

Sing, O Sing, of strange secrets wrested from nature—

Telegraph!—Telephone!—Phonograph!—Incandescent!

I saw mighty orators step forth into the arena of debate

With the winged words that challenged days of Ancient Greece.

I heard the voices of gifted poets rise in harmonious cadences,

Else in the dissonance of raw truth and highest art—

Emerson—Whittier—Whitman—Sandburg—Lindsay.

I saw you take on girth; your pockets bulge—

Astor—Vanderbilt—Harriman—Rockefeller—Ford—

And then I saw a great cloud overspread the sky.

I saw you mobilize, and shoulder gun and spade and march,

With hearts aflame, to “Make the World

Safe for Democracy!”

Sing of Submarines and Torpedoes! the mud of Brest!

the blood of Verdun! the Fire of Chateau-Thierry!

Sing of “Flanders Fields!” and the “Rendezvous with

Death!” of “Zeppelin Raids!” “Too Proud to Fight!”

“Liberty Bonds!” “Victory!” “Versailles!”

But now I though I saw another shadow creeping  
 over the epic canvass:  
 Unrest—The casting Adrift from the Moorings of Faith—  
 “The Revolt of Youth”—Candor Run Riot—Morals Amuck—  
 A Break in conduct—A Loss of Respect for many of the Ancient Virtues.  
 So what have you? I ask you, America—  
 What have you done? ad what have you come upon?  
 Cynicism! Disillusionment! Night Clubs! “Legs” Diamond!  
 “Speakies!” Capone! Joy Rides! “Whoopie!!!”  
 You have work to do America—  
 Your have work to be done.  
 Directly I thought I saw the bitter fruit of that “Disillusionment.”  
 I saw you build a great colossus:  
 Intolerance!  
 I saw the zeal with which you fashioned your Idol.  
 I saw you offer up the incense of Prejudice;  
 And the smoke rise from the altars of Human Sacrifices!  
 Go hide your head in Shame, America,  
 And wrap yourself in Sack-Cloth and Ashes.  
 Erstwhile I heard your groan under your “white man’s burden;”  
 Black men shivered while you wreaked vengeance at  
 Tulsa, Atlanta, Washington, Chicago—  
 “O Masters, Lords and Rulers of the Land,”  
 Who are they who drove the shaft of hate between  
 the working black and the working white?  
 Why can not a spirit of humane co-operation exist  
 between these two?  
 You Masters who have exploited the black laborer for centuries,  
 Held us up as a constant threat to the white working-man,  
 Causing him to despise us,  
 Causing him to consider us a perennial menace to his well-being—  
 Is the light worth the candle?  
 Does the end justify the means?  
 Are all the years of the past forgotten?  
 Forgotten all the loyalties, the faithfulness, the tender  
 care of your children, the genuflections, the service?  
 Sing of the service—  
 Remember the service:  
 “Come Susie, rock the baby—Go Hannah, get the  
 dinner—Uncle Jim, go plough the new-ground—  
 Here Sambo, grab my satchel and get to hell—”

Remember the service.

Remember the sweat, the cotton fields, the lumber  
logs, the brick yards, the saw mills and turpentine  
plantations—all black labor.

And in the field of Higher Service, Remember the immortal  
“Tenth Cavalry” and the “Hot Time in San Juan when they got there.”

“—With regard to the Bravery in Action and the Exceptional  
Behavior (under the enemy’s continuous fire) of the  
Negro Units in the 91st Division, American Expeditionary  
Forces, U. S. Army, I have the honor, Sir, to report—”

Remember the Service!

Remember, too, that black soldiers may be needed again.

Some day the Eagle may be wounded;

Some day the Flag may be insulted.

“Black-a-moors” make good cannon-fodder.

The World War seems not to have satisfied certain nations.

Every now and then there is a great rattling of sabers—

“Black-a-moors” make good cannon-fodder.

Black breasts can stop bullets like the Devil!

And Remember their 100% Loyalty—

President Wilson asked for a detail of “Black-a-moors”  
to guard the Executive Mansion

In those days when everyman mistrusted every man.

Then, as now, a Black Face was badge of Loyalty no  
one doubted.

Remember the Service!

Remember, too, the Rocky Road, the “Deep Rivers”—

Sing of “Deep Rivers!”

Remember the silence and the patience—

Sing of the Patience!

You speak of the burdens—You speak of the “white man’s burden!”

But you speak patronizingly,

And you boast overweeningly—

The “white man’s burden!”

“A Negro should know his place” —

“A Negro should be taught his place” —

“A Negro should stay in his place” —

The “white man’s burden!”

Listen, I shall tell you a true story, America:

There was a young Norseman came up from Obscurity  
Upon wings.



Sing, O Sing, of wings—and the dark earth—and  
     mountain crest—and stormy skies—  
 Sing of Wings!  
 He was intrepid; he was “American Youth Incarnate”  
 Sing of “Youth Incarnate!”  
 You saw him hover upon the shore of the Atlantic  
 Like some “Lone Eagle” poised above the rocky promontory;  
 And then you saw him point straight into the gloom  
     of the ocean, America,  
 and the Night and a Silence like Death swallowed him up.  
 “Flying Fool!” said some;  
 “God keep his soul!” prayed some.  
 The World held its breath, America—  
 The World had one thought, America:  
 Black water, angry—menacing—frightful—deep—  
 Black night, deep as all Eternity—  
 Loneliness sublime, infinite—  
 But Paris and Glory at least! America.  
 Glory for your Prowess, your Institutions,  
 Your undismayed and invincible Youth,  
 Your virile and intrepid Manhood,  
 Your courageous and Unquenchable Spirit!  
 Glory for the “Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave”—  
 A Land where a Rail-splitter may become a King!  
 Yet what have you Done, America—  
 How have you rewarded him who pawned his life for your Glory?  
 Gold you gave him—yes;  
 Fame you gave him—yes;  
 But the Dregs in the Cup you gave him to Drink—  
 Sing of the Bitterness, the Wormwood and the Gall!  
 Go hide your head in Shame, America.  
 You speak of burdens;  
 But you speak condescendingly,  
 And you boast unbecomingly.  
 Think, will you, of your underworld, America.  
 Ah! Here is the sore that is galling your back;  
 Here is the ulcer that is eating your vitals;  
 Here is the virus that is chilling your heart;  
 And the lethal fumes that are choking your spirit.  
 How can you denominate the black man Burden?  
 How be guilty of such Travesty upon Justice,

Or countenance such a Distortion of Truth,  
 Or heap such Humiliation upon him?  
 Stand forth before the Bar, America,  
 While I read from the Indictment;  
 While I enumerate your Transgressions;  
 While I prosecute before the Jury!  
 You have made of "Success" a fetish;  
 "Go-Getters" have been your high priests;  
 "Fail not" has been your watchword;  
 "Win out" has been your slogan.  
 You forgot Love and Justice,  
 You forgot Truth and Beauty:  
 You forgot Life and Humanity  
 In your mad race to "Win."  
 You trampled down the finer impulse of the soul  
 In a wild desire to "Compete"—  
 In a wild desire for "Riches"  
 And "Success" at all hazards.  
 And you worshipped Gold;  
 You idolized the Material;  
 You dwarfed the Spiritual—  
 Greed was your religion;  
 Gold was your God!  
 Vanity was your Raiment;  
 Prejudice, your Daily Bread;  
 Class hatred, your Life-Blood;  
 And Inconsistency, your Castle.  
 You hero-worshipped Jesse James;  
 You lionized Bandits—  
 You have been "Weighed in the Balances, America,  
 And found Wanting."  
 You have let rich murderers escape who had gold;  
 You have hanged poor wretches who had nothing  
 You have winked at injustice in high places,  
 And punished many unfortunates who may have been innocent.  
 You have Condoned the biting poverty of the many.  
 Racketeers infest your streets;  
 Dealers in "hot goods" lurk on every corner.  
 Kidnappers drive a thriving business;  
 "Come-on", men and Crooks consort with Ward-heelers  
 and "Public Citizens."

Your children are abducted.  
 And you call high heaven to witness your sorrow;  
 But you shell out the “Spondulux.”  
 Because the Underworld is so Powerful.

There was an eminent foreigner visited our Country  
 To observe and study our manners and customs.  
 Was told of certain Creeds and Laws and Restrictions  
 That held the two races in separate compartments.  
 Was told that the Noose and the Rack and Faggot  
 Are oftimes evoked to maintain these Restrictions.  
 The visitor listened in grave and respectful silence,  
 Then asked: “Whence so many octoroons and quadroons  
                   and mulattoes?”  
 Was told of a ship leaving port at a certain hour:  
 And that we were grieved he so soon must be going.

Wake up, America!  
 The black man is not your Real Burden.  
 Your inconsistency, your Selfishness, your Indifference, your  
                   materialism, your Intolerance, your descent from the Ancient Virtues,  
 Make up your Real Burden.  
 Buck up, America!  
 And “Come out of the Wilderness  
 Leaning on the Lord.”  
 Drop some of your Prejudice—  
 Some of your Intolerance—  
 Some of your Disdain for the Common Man, the Forgotten  
                   Man, the Man Farthest Down.  
 Discard some of your Scorn for the Darker Races;  
 For the Darker Races will be living in their present habitat  
 When Chicago, London and Berlin are one  
 With Tyre, Sidon, Sodom, Gomorrah,  
 And all the buried cities of the past.  
 Gray beard Chinamen will be carrying burdens upon  
                   their backs in their native fields  
 When your civilization shall lie buried beneath the  
                   rust and dust of forgotten centuries.

Unless  
 You shall change your ways, America,

And get yourself a new Religion  
 Based on Humane Co-operation  
 And Brotherly Love twixt Man and Man;  
 And unless  
 You shall strip your hearts of Intolerance,  
 And turn unto the ways of Justice and Love,  
 The germs of decay will proceed unrestrained;  
 And your paths will lead down to Confusion and Death.

And now particularly to “white” America,  
 And the sovereign commonwealths of Georgia and Alabama—  
 I address myself to you:  
 You are direct descendants of the men  
 Who made the greatest contribution  
 To the conserving forces of civilization  
 This side of the crucified Jesus.  
 And it is not your science, nor your art, nor your citadels,  
       nor your political power, nor your industrial efficiency,  
 (In all of which you have no peer  
 Under the smiling canopy of heaven);  
 But in your “Noble English Chivalry”  
 You have vouchsafed to mankind  
 The nearest approach to a redeeming perfection  
 Which has appeared upon this earth.  
 Emblazoned high in the blue field of your escutcheon  
 Is the historic, the immortal legend;  
 “LIBERTY—WISDOM—JUSTICE—MODERATION—”  
 The germ and essence of Chivalry.  
 You are really accountable to no higher tribunal;  
 And your own conscience need be your only guide.  
 You can therefore afford to be Tolerant;  
 You can therefore afford to be Just!  
 Chivalry bestows upon the lowliest man  
 An inalienable right to Justice;  
 And develops in him an pride to have privilege  
 To suffer, even die, for his country.  
 Look to “ATLANTA,” America—  
 Have you been Tolerant?  
 Look to “SCOTTSBORO,” America—  
 Have you been Just?  
 I am appealing to your Heart of Hearts, America—

You can afford to be Just.  
 I am appealing to the hearts of Georgians and Alabamians—  
 You can afford to be fair.

There is a classic example  
 Of High English Chivalry in action:  
 I see a ship leaving her berth at Southampton  
 Upon her maiden voyage  
 She is the ill-fated Titanic,  
 Largest and fastest boat in all the seven seas.  
 She points first for Cherbourg,  
 Steams gracefully past the Isle of Wight,  
 Then drops anchor at Queenstown  
 Her port of last call,  
 At one-thirty P.M., April eleventh, Nineteen-twelve,  
 The Titanic stands out from Queenstown  
 With two and twenty hundred human souls aboard.  
 She ports her helm,  
 And signals her pilot,  
 While charting her course for New York  
 Where she is due in record time.  
 I see her as she begins her stately march  
 Across the storm-swept Atlantic,  
 Measuring her majestic tread to the muffled beat  
 Of her mighty turbines.  
 The great Titanic! Queen of the Ocean!  
 Mistress of the seas!  
 And “Monarch of all she surveys!”  
 At midnight all is calm and serene  
 Aboard the world’s greatest ship,  
 Although the black water lay beneath her keel  
 Three thousand fathoms deep.  
 Suddenly a cry:  
 “Iceberg ahoy!”  
 As with the force of a falling mountain,  
 The ship plunges to her doom.  
 Panic and Horror!  
 Men and women crazed with fear!  
 A scramble for the life-boats!  
 It is now that Captain Smith  
 Walks coolly to the bridge

And gives voice to an expression  
 Which must go down in history:  
 “The law of the sea is women and children first;  
 Be British my men.”  
 Erstwhile frantic men snapped to Attention  
 And saluted Captain Smith;  
 And after safely ensconcing what women and  
     children they could  
 In what life-boats were available,  
 One thousand brave men (of the sixteen hundred humans lost)  
 Went down with Captain Smith to their doom!

What did Captain Smith mean: “Be British?”  
 That was the greatest compliment  
 Ever paid the British Empire  
 Upon whose flag the sun is said  
 Never to go down;  
 For it means that England sets a very high Standard  
 For the behavior of her Sons;  
 A Standard so high  
 That Mediocrity could never reach it  
 And none could attain to it  
 Save Gentlemen and Heroes!  
 God hasten the day when “Be American”  
 Shall carry the selfsame Inspiration  
 To call forth all the heroism and nobility  
 That lie dormant in the human spirit.  
 But how can it be thus, O my Countrymen,  
 While you are so Intolerant.  
 How can it be thus, O America,  
 While you are so Unjust.

As they entered into mortal combat  
 For the entertainment of the pampered patricians,  
 The gladiators of old used to shout:  
 “Caesar,  
 We who are about to die  
 Salute thee!”  
 But that was the homage of Despair  
 To the Iron Imperialism and Tyranny of Rome.  
 There’s higher homage, deeper love for Country,

The grip of Faith, the Substance of Devotion,  
The proper ring of unalloy'd Sincerity  
Embodied in the Shout of Negro Soldiers:  
"America,  
Farewell! Goodbye!  
You may not always have been kind to us;  
We may have much to forgive;  
But we'll return your Sacred Flag  
In Honor,

Or else report to God the reason why."  
Spirit of Truth and light, O Sacred Muse,  
That didst inspire the Hebrew Harpist to declaim  
In days of old:  
"Blow up the Trumpet in the New Moon,  
And the Appointed Time"—  
Inspired by Thee,  
Have I now Blown the Trumpet into the air,  
That America may hear and well prepare  
For the Joys of Rebirth and Regeneration  
That shall come  
At the solemn Love-Feast of Brotherhood and Democracy.

## RICHARD WRIGHT

TRANSCONTINENTAL  
(FOR LOUIS ARAGON, IN PRAISE OF RED FRONT)

Through trembling waves of roadside heat  
We see the cool green of golf courses  
Long red awnings catching the sunshine  
Slender rainbows curved above the spirals of water  
Swaying hammocks slung between trees—  
Like in the movies . . .

*America who built this dream*

Above the ceaseless hiss of passing cars  
We hear the tinkle of ice in tall glasses

Clacks of croquet balls scudding over the cropped lawns  
 Silvery crescendos of laughter—  
 Like in the movies  
 On Saturday nights  
 When we used to get our paychecks . . .

*America who owns this wonderland*

Lost  
 We hitch-hike down the hot highways  
 Looking for a ride home  
 Yanking tired thumbs at glazed faces  
 Behind the steering wheels of Packards Pierce Arrows  
 Lincolns La Salles Reos Chryslers—  
 Their lips are tight jaws set eyes straight ahead . . .

*America America America why turn your face away*

O for the minute  
 The joyous minute  
 The minute of the hour of the day  
 When the tumbling white ball of our anger  
 Rolling down the cold hill of our lives  
 Swelling like a moving mass of snow  
 Shall crash  
 Shall explode at the bottom of our patience Thundering  
 HALT  
 You shall not pass our begging thumbs  
 America is ours  
 This car is commandeered  
 America is ours  
 Take your ringed fingers from the steering wheel  
 Take your polished shoe off the gas  
 We'll drive and let you be the hitch-hiker  
 We'll show you how to pass 'em up  
 You say we're robbers  
 So what  
 We're bastards  
 So what  
 Sonofbitches  
 All right chop us into little pieces we don't care



Let the wind tousle your hair like ours have been tousled  
Doesn't the sun's hot hate feel sweet on your back  
Crook your thumbs and smudge the thin air  
What kind of a growl does your gut make when meal-time comes  
At night your hips can learn how soft the pavements are  
Oh let's do it the good old American way  
Sportsmanship Buddy Sportsmanship  
But dear America's a free country  
Sis you say Negroes  
Oh I don't mean NEEEGROOOES  
After all  
Isn't there a limit to everything  
You wouldn't want your daughter  
And they say there's no GOD  
And furthermore it's simply disgraceful how they're discriminating  
against the  
    Children of the rich in Soviet schools  
PROLETARIAN CHILDREN  
*Good Lord*  
Why if we divided up everything today we'd be just where we are  
inside of a year  
The strong and the weak The quick and the slow You understand  
But Lady even quivering lips can say  
PLEASE COMRADE MY FATHER WAS A CARPENTER I SWEAR SWEAR  
    HE WAS  
I WAS NEVER AGAINST THE CUMMUNISTS REALLY  
Fairplay Boys Fairplay  
America America can every boy have the chance to rise from Wall Street  
to the  
    Commintern  
America America can every boy have the chance to rise form Riverside  
Drive to  
    The General Secretaryship of the Communist Party  
100% Justice  
And Mister don't forget  
Our hand shall be on the steering wheel  
Our feet shall be on the gas  
And you shall hear the grate of our gears  
UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
The motor throbs with eager anger  
UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE

We're lurching toward the highway  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 The pavement drops into the past The future smites our face  
 America is ours  
 10 15 20 30  
 America America  
 WOORKERSWOORKERS  
 Hop on the runningboard Pile in  
 We're leaving We're Leaving  
 Leaving the tired the timid the soft  
 Leaving the pimps idlers loungers  
 Leaving empty dinner-pails wage-cuts stretch-outs  
 Leaving the tight-lipped mother and the bare meal-can  
 Leaving the shamed girl and her bastard child  
 Leaving leaving the past leaving  
 The wind filled with leaflets leaflets of freedom  
 Millions and millions of leaflets fluttering  
 Like the wings of a million birds  
 AmericaAmericaAmerica

Scaling New England's stubborn hills Spanning the Hudson  
 Waving at Manhattan Waving at New Jersey  
 Throwing a Good Bye kiss to Way Down East  
 Through mine-pirred Pennsylvania Through Maryland Our Maryland  
 Careening over the Spinning the steering wheel  
 Taking the curves with determination  
 AmericaAmerica  
 SOFT SHOULDER AHEAD  
 AmericaAmerica  
 KEEP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD  
 AmericaAmerica  
 The telegraph poles are a solid wall  
 WASHINGTON—90 MILES  
 AmericaAmerica  
 The farms are a storm of green  
 Past rivers past towns  
 50 60 70 80  
 AmericaAmerica  
 CITY LIMITS  
 Vaulting Washington's Monument  
 Leaping desks of Senators Ending all bourgeois elections

Hurdling desks of Congressmen Fascist flesh sticking to our tires  
 Skidding into the White House Leaving a trail of carbon monoxide for the  
 President  
 Roaring into the East Room Going straight through Lincoln's portrait  
 Letting  
     the light of history through  
 AmericaAmerica  
 Swinging Southward Plunging the radiator into the lynch-mob Giving no  
 warning  
 Slowing Slowing for the sharecroppers  
 Come on You Negroes Come on  
 There's room  
 Not in the back but front seat  
 We're heading for the highway of Self=Determination  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 Dim your lights you Trotskyites  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 Lenin's line is our stream line  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 Through October's windshield we see the road Looping over the green  
 hills Dipping  
     toward to-morrow

AmericaAmericaAmerica  
 Look back See the tiny thread of our tires leaving hammer and sickle  
 prints  
     upon the pavement  
 See the tree-lined horizon turning slowly in our hearts  
 See the ripe fields Fields ripe as our love  
 See the eastern sky See the white clouds of our hope  
 See the blood-red afterglow in the west Our memory of October  
 See See See the pretty cottages the bungalows the sheltered homes  
 See the packing-box cities the jungles the huts  
 See See See the skyscrapers the clubs the pent-houses  
 See the bread-lines winding winding winding long as our road  
 AmericaAmericaAmerica

Tagging Kentucky Tagging Tennessee  
 Into Ohio Into the orchards of Michigan  
 Over the rising and falling dunes of Indiana  
 Across Illinois' glad fields of dancing corn

Slowing Comrades Slowing again  
 Slowing for the heart of proletarian America  
 CHICAGO—100 miles  
 WOORKERSWOORKERS  
 Steel and rail and stock All you sons of Haymarket  
 Swing on We're going your way America is ours  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 The pressure of our tires is blood pounding in our hearts  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 The steam of our courage blows from the radiator cap  
 UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE  
 The wind screams red songs in our ears  
 60 70 80 90  
 AmericaAmericaAmerica

Listen Listen to the moans of those whose lives were laughter  
 Listen to the howls of the dogs of the dispossessed  
 Listen to bureaucratic insects spattering against the windshield  
 Listen to curses rebounding from fear-proof glass  
 Listen to the gravel of hate tingling on our fenders  
 Listen to the raindrops mumbling of yesterday  
 Listen to the wind whistling of to-morrow  
 Listen to our tires humming humming humming hymns of victory  
 AmericaAmericaAmerica

Coasting Comrades Coasting  
 Coasting on momentum of Revolution  
 Look Look at the village Like a lonesome egg in the nest of the hills  
 Soon Soon you shall fly over the hillsides Crowing the new dawn  
 Coasting Indulging in Lenin's dream

TUNE IN ON THE RADIO THE WORLD IS LAUGHING  
*Red Baseball*  
 Great Day in the Morning

*. . . the Leninites defeated the redbirds 3 to 0.  
 Batteries for the Leninites: Kenji Sumarira and  
 Boris Petrovsky. For the Redbirds: Wing Sing and  
 Eddie O'Brien. Homeruns: Hugo Schmidt and Jack  
 Ogletree. Umpires: Pierre Carpentier and Oswald Wallings . . .*

The world is laughing The world is laughing

*. . . Mike Gold's account of the revolution sells  
26 millions copies . . .  
26 million copies . . .*

The world is laughing The world is laughing

*. . . beginning May 1st the work day is limited to  
five hours . . .*

The world is laughing The world is laughing

*. . . last of the landlords liquidated  
in Texas . . .*

The world is laughing The world is laughing

Picking up speed to measure the Mississippi  
AmericaAmericaAmerica

Plowing the richness of Iowa soil Into the Wheat Empire

Making Minnesota Taking the Dakotas Carrying Nebraska

On on toward the Badlands the Rockies the deserts the Golden Gate

Slowing once again Comrades Slowing to right a wrong

Say You Red Men You Forgotten Men

Come out of your tepees

Show us Pocahontas For we love her

Bring her from her hiding place Let the sun kiss her eyes

Drape her in a shawl of red wool Tuck her in beside us

Our arms shall thaw the long cold of her shoulders

The lights flash red Comrades let's go

UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE

The future opens like an ever-widening V

UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE

We're rolling over tiles of red logic

UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE

We're speeding on wheels of revolution

AmericaAmerica

Mountain peaks are falling toward us

AmericaAmerica

Uphill and the earth rises and looms

AmericaAmerica

Downhill and the earth tilts and sways

AmericaAmerica

80 90 100

AmericaAmerica

Every factory is a fortress  
 Cities breed sovjets  
 AmericaAmerica  
 Plains sprout collective farms  
 Ten thousand Units are meeting  
 AmericaAmerica  
 Resolutions passed unanimously  
 The Red Army is on the march  
 AmericaAmerica  
*Arise, ye prisoners . . .*  
 AmericaAmerica  
 Speed Faster  
 Speed AmericaAmerica  
 Arise, ye wretched . . .  
 AmericaAmerica  
 Speed Faster  
 Ever Faster America America  
*For Justice* America America Thunders  
 AmericaAmericaAmerica

## JOAQUIN MILLER

### IN CLASSIC SHADES

ALONE and sad I sat me down  
 To rest on Rousseau s narrow isle  
 Below Geneva. Mile on mile,  
 And set with many a shining town,.  
 Tow rd Dent du Midi danced the wave  
 Beneath the moon. Winds went and came  
 And fanned the stars into a flame.  
 I heard the far lake, dark and deep,  
 Rise up and talk as in its sleep;  
 I heard the laughing waters lave  
 And lap against the further shore,  
 An idle oar, and nothing more  
 Save that the isle had voice, and save  
 That round about its base of stone  
 There plashed and flashed the foamy  
 Rhone.

A stately man, as black as tan,  
 Kept up a stern and broken round  
 Among the strangers on the ground.  
 I named that awful African  
 A second Hannibal.

My elbows on the table sat  
 With chin in upturned palm to scan  
 His face, and contemplate the scene.  
 The moon rode by a crowned queen.  
 I was alone. Lo! not a man  
 To speak my mother tongue. Ah me!  
 How more than all alone can be  
 A man in crowds! Across the isle  
 My Hannibal strode on. The while  
 Diminished Rousseau sat his throne  
 Of books, unnoticed and unknown.  
 This strange, strong man, with fact  
 austere,  
 At last drew near. He bowed; he spake  
 In unknown tongues. I could but shake;  
 My head. Then half achill with fear,  
 Arose, and sought another place.  
 Again I mused. The kings of thought  
 Came by, and on that storied spot  
 I lifted up a tearful face.  
 The star-set Alps they sang a tune  
 Unheard by any soul save mine.  
 Mont Blanc, as lone and as divine  
 And white, seemed mated to the moon.  
 The past was mine ; strong-voiced and  
 Vast

Stern Calvin, strange Voltaire, and Tell,  
 And two whose names are known too well  
 To name, in grand procession passed.

And yet again came Hannibal;

King-like he came, and drawing near,  
 I saw his brow was now severe  
 And resolute.

In tongue unknown  
 Again he spake. I was alone,  
 Was all unarmed, was worn and sad;  
 But now, at last, my spirit had  
 Its old assertion.

I arose,

As startled from a dull repose;  
 With gathered strength I raised a hand  
 And cried, "I do not understand."

His black face brightened as I spake;  
 He bowed; he wagged his woolly head;  
 He showed his shining teeth, and said,  
 "Sah, if you please, dose tables heah  
 Am consecrate to lager beer;  
 And, sah, what will you have to take?"

Not that I loved that colored cuss  
 Nay! he had awed me all too much  
 But I sprang forth, and with a clutch  
 I grasped his hand, and holding thus,  
 Cried, "Bring my country' s drink for two!

For oh! that speech of Saxon sound  
 To me was as a fountain found  
 In wastes, and thrilled me through and  
 through.

On Rousseau s isle, in Rousseau s shade,  
 Two pink and spicy drinks were made,  
 In classic shades, on classic ground,  
 We stirred two cocktails round and round.



## ISABEL FISKE CONANT

HAMPTON INSTITUTE  
(REMEMBERING GENERAL ARMSTRONG)

There is more here than you can be aware of,  
Even you who know it best, beyond the rules  
Administered that you have the wise care of;  
Something significant past other schools  
Of learning or of actual education,  
For here the movement of historic force  
Is shaping the future of a forming nation  
Into an altered but a destined course.

He builded even better than he knew  
Working for those who gave our land their song,  
Its rich, dark wine, the sunlight pouring through,  
Cadence that now to all the States belong;  
That haunting rhythm and that poignant metre  
That make life more significant and sweeter.  
*Opportunity*, Nov. 1937: 329

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Sonnet 130 is addressed to a woman, sometimes called “the dark lady.” While there has been much speculation about her identity (most recently, she has been identified as Aemilia Lanyer), there is nothing conclusive to link any woman or man with the lovers Shakespeare addresses.

My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips’ red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound.  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;

My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.  
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
 As any she belied with false compare.

## LANGSTON HUGHES

### AIR RAID OVER HARLEM (SCENARIO FOR A LITTLE BLACK MOVIE)

You're not talking 'bout Harlem, are you?  
 That's where my home is,  
 My bed is my woman is, my kids is!  
 Harlem, that's where I live!  
 Look at my streets  
 Full of black and brown and  
 Yellow and high-yellow  
 Jokers like me.  
 Lenox, Seventh, Edgecombe, 145<sup>th</sup>.  
 Listen,  
 Hear 'em talkin' and laughin'?  
 Bombs over Harlem'd kill  
 People like me—  
 Kill ME!  
 Sure, I know  
 The Ethiopian war broke out last night:  
 BOMBS OVER HARLEM  
 Cops on every corner  
 Most of 'em white  
 COPS IN HARLEM  
 Guns and billy-clubs  
 Double duty in Harlem  
 Walking in pairs  
 Under every light  
 Their faces  
 WHITE  
 In Harlem  
 And mixed in with 'em  
 A black cop or two  
 For the sake of the vote in Harlem  
 GUGSA A TRAITOR TOO

No, sir,  
 I ain't talkin' 'bout you,  
 Mister Policeman!  
 No, indeed!  
 I know we got to keep  
 ORDER OVER HARLEM  
 Where the black millions sleep  
 Shepherds over Harlem  
 Their armed watch keep  
 Lest Harlem stirs in its sleep  
 And maybe remembers  
 And remembering forgets  
 To be peaceful and quiet  
 And has sudden fits  
 Of raising a black fist  
 Out of the dark  
 And that black fist  
 Becomes a red spark  
 PLANES OVER HARLEM  
 BOMBS OVER Harlem  
 You're just making up  
 A fake funny picture, ain't you?  
 Not real, not real?  
 Did you ever taste blood  
 From an iron heel  
 Planted in your mouth  
 In the slavery-time South  
 Where to whip a nigger's  
 Easy as hell—  
 And not even a living nigger  
 Has a tale to tell  
 Lest the kick of the boot  
 Baring more blood to his mouth  
 In the slavery-time South  
 And a long billy-club  
 Split his head wide  
 And a white hand draw  
 A gun from its side  
 And send bullets splaying  
 Through the streets of Harlem  
 Where the dead're laying  
 Lest you stir in your sleep

And remember something  
 You'd best better keep  
 In the dark, in the dark  
 Where the ugly things hide  
 Under the white lights  
 With guns by their side  
 In Harlem?

*Say what are yuh tryin' to do?  
 Start a riot?  
 You keep quiet!  
 You niggers keep quiet!*

BLACK WORLD  
 Never wake up  
 Lest you knock over the cup  
 Of gold that the men who  
 Keep order guard so well  
 And then—well, then  
 There'd be hell  
 To pay  
 And bombs over Harlem

AIR RAID OVER HARLEM

Bullets through Harlem  
 And someday  
 A sleeping giant waking  
 To snatch bombs from the sky  
 And push the sun up with a loud cry  
 Off to hell with the cops on the corners at night  
 Armed to the teeth under the light  
 Lest Harlem see red  
 And suddenly sit on the edge of its bed  
 And shake the whole world with a new dream  
 As the squad cars come and the sirens scream  
 And the big black giant snatches bombs from the sky  
 And picks up the cop and lets him fly  
 Into the dust of the Jimcrow past  
 And laughs and Hollers  
 Kiss my  
 !x!&!

Hey!  
Scenario for a Little Black Movie,  
You say?  
A RED MOVIE TO MR. HEARST  
Black and white workers united as one  
In a city where  
There'll never be  
Air raids over Harlem  
FOR THE WORKERS ARE FREE  
What workers are free?  
THE BLACK AND WHITE WORKERS—  
You and me!  
Looky here, everybody!  
Look at me!  
*I'M HARLEM!*

## JAY N. HILL

### ETHIOPE IN SPAIN

(This verse was inspired by the activities of Ghvet son of Ras Imru of Ethiopia who is now fighting for the International Brigade in Spain.)

No jewel shone in this Ethiope's ear,  
No gay cloth draped his form.  
Dust bespattered his dusky limbs,  
Sweat covered his stern face,  
Determination furrowed his brow,  
As he stood, half-erect half-crouching  
On Spanish soil,  
Fighting his old enemy.

Silent man of the past, he seemed heroic,  
Through disillusion and forced exile,  
Through faded visions of Adowa,  
Of ancient streets in Addis Ababa,  
Of mountains and muddy roads in Abyssinia,  
Where barefoot men  
Trudged their way through centuries  
Of peace, and calmly roamed the hills.

Silent man of the hour is he,  
 Hurling back the ejector,  
 Loading, firing grimly;  
 Exchanging few words with his company,  
 For he spoke neither Italian  
 Nor Spanish.  
 Though little English  
 And some French,  
 For the most part he spoke Amharic.  
 And that was not necessary.  
 For language could not match  
 The eloquence of his silence.

A distant radiance shines in his eye—  
 A kindred light, that some men claim  
 Set the flame  
 At Runnymede  
 At the Bastille  
 At Boston  
 At Moscow  
 At Madrid.

Civil conflagration  
 Sweeps the hills of Guadalajara,  
 The halls at University City  
 Tell frightful tales of direst tragedy.  
 As “Frenchman’s Bridge” becomes a  
 bridge of sighs—  
 Manzares turns a sanguine hue.  
 Bilboa chants Niobe’s fateful strain—  
 As children’s feet—  
 Beat out a terrified retreat,  
 Before the roar and scream  
 Of planes that fleck the sky.

Spain writhes in pain.  
 Her gates—humanity’s gates—  
 Withhold a devastating horde,  
 A pack of ‘hireling wolves’ . . .

At one gate, in silence, fights this Ethiope,  
 Goaded by the rape  
 Of motherland, of sisterland—  
 Yesterday, a symbol of black majesty,  
 Today a victim of civilized barbarity,  
 A prince, with no bright jewel in his ear

*The Crisis*. July 1937: 202.

## RUFUS GIBSON

### THE VOICE OF ETHIOPIA

What voice this be  
 That strangely calls to me  
 From out the maze of dreams my slumbers bring?  
 Ah, no this seems no captive's cry to be;  
 For yesternight I heard its clarion ring  
 Within my thoughts dense wilderness, when sleep  
 Her somniferous breath upon my eyes  
 Had blown, bidding my soul its tryst to keep.  
 I heard it say  
 "Children arise! arise!  
 Now gather to me out of every land  
 To which the four-winds bore you long ago,  
 Come you to me again, a motley band,  
 Come children all that from my loins did grow,  
 Bring borrowed jewels from the strangers' camps  
 Yet while in sleep upon their beds they lie,  
 Bring to your Motherland oil for her lamps  
 To light the path on which your brethren ply  
 Through centuries of deep and dark content.  
 O come I but not as prodigals to me,  
 Or wayward children seeking to repent  
 Your sins; for from all guilt are you made free.  
 Gird well your loins, take up both sword and shield  
 And forthwith march. As warriors, meet the foe  
 As did your sires who ne'er to tyrants yield;  
 But by their righteous might gave blow for blow  
 Until the foes of peace were driven back

Beyond the hills from whence sweet waters flow.  
 O! sons of mine of regal bronze and black—My queenly daughters, hither  
 come I pray!  
 Long since have ravenous hordes despoiled our land,  
 Long centuries did they our trust betray.  
 Now Ethiopia must stretch forth her hand  
 First unto God for refuge and for strength,  
 That we may now our Native land reclaim  
 And drive usurpers from its breadth and length.  
 O sons and daughters mine, let not in shame  
 Men rise to speak of Ethiopia's name.”  
*Crisis*, January 1936: 13

## J. HARVEY L. BAXTER

### SONNETS (ETHIOPIAN)

#### THE WORLD

The world's a mummery of groggy lies,  
 And we are victims of its undertow.  
 We turn our backs to Heaven, close our eyes  
 To probity. Ah! Lord, we've fallen low.  
 Bed-fellows with the filth of gutter trash,  
 Maggots of slime that know not foot or head;  
 Bewildered leaders, wary of a crash,  
 Base minions of the slough of fear and dead.

No more the parliaments of justice work!  
 Their flaccid pivots ape the maniac;  
 Man's bounded duty, now's to dodge and shirk  
 And eat his words, postpone each noble act  
 Great God! this fog, this chaff, must pass away  
 Ere Thy poor mortals flounder in decay.

#### AFRICA

For you, long raped and baited, trammeled down,  
 Black harried Victim of the heels of woe



I forge this thunder-bolt to blast around  
 Each chain and pillory that bows you low.  
 I come a singer, yet a champion  
 Of the undone, benighted folk, forgot;  
 Of fleshy foot-stool, bleeding stepping-stone,  
 Whom men beguiled in their despotic lot.

Oh, natal Mother, how your heart bewails!  
 Bereft of vineyards and of freedom too;  
 Kissed and betrayed, rifled, rent of sails  
 By Godless thugs that care not what they do.  
 Brood no despair, this hell is not your doom,  
 God is not *dead*, nor guarded in a *tomb!*

#### WELL MAY I SING OF THE PROUD ETHIOPE

Well may I sing of the proud Ethiope  
 Who ruled before the will of Rome was born;  
 And did with Israel and Egypt cope  
 Ere pyramid or temple scanned the morn.  
 Well may I sing of his primeval speech,  
 And of his arts and obfuscated past,  
 Of priests who rose to prophesy and preach  
 That God Was Soul, Almighty, First and Last.

Of how his blood seeped in the Arab-vein,  
 And Negrofied the skin of India.  
 Then leaped from Bosphorus and colored Spain,  
 And mongreled up old Greece and Italia.  
 These men who wear the night upon their faces,  
 FOUGHT OFT WITH JEW AND NOMAD  
 BIBLE RACES.

#### TO ETHIOPIA

If you must go the way of fallen states  
 Outnumbered and outbullied by your foes,  
 If you must quaff the drugs of vengeful fates  
 Forced by the heavy fist of Fascist blows;  
 If peace doth cower, and forsake your plight,  
 And war must break, as likely war's to be,  
 Up like the Greeks, a bloody Marathon fight

Or die as Spartans at Thermopylae.

Know well the battle-dice are loaded, cast,  
 And cheating hands, the toss in blood may win;  
 Yet to the bloody end, war to the last,  
 Be not debased, nor serve as chattel-men;  
 Oh, Ethiopia, Now's the Great Command,  
 God bids you as of old to stretch your hand.

#### ITALY TO ETHIOPIA

Salute my flag, make me Protector, Lord,  
 Or I will smite your kingdom, house by house;  
 No Nero's heart, no Caesar's will as hard  
 As this great hand, ordained to rule all d o u s t .  
 Negate the vested power I maintain,—  
 And I will bait you foul, speak you base  
 Crush each sphere and realm of your domain  
 And swear you hit me first within the face.

Come forth and close embrace me Ethiope  
 And make me heir of your inviting clime;  
 Can such as you, outlandish mortals hope  
 To keep that which for long was counted mine?  
 Like wolfish hordes along a mountain way  
 Rome goads itself to fall upon its prey.

#### ETHIOPIA TO ITALY

Long have I watched world-empires rise and fall,  
 Defeated foe and foemen at my gate,  
 Uprooted odds, and triumphed over all  
 The petty states, and those renowned and great.  
 I felled the arms of Egypt and the Greek,  
 I thwarted the order and the might of Rome,  
 The wanted spoil and wealth they came to seek,  
 Became no alien's loot to carry home.

Age on age I dealt them blow for blow,  
 Age on age I gave them Hell for Hell,  
 Not then I bowed to ancient spear and bow,  
 Not now I yield to modern shot and shell.

Be moved these hills and mountains in retreat  
Ere I salute your flag, or kiss your feet.

#### IL DUCE'S CHALLENGE

Away to savage bounds of Ethiope,  
Oh, legions, I challenge you to war;  
Revenge our noble dead of Audowa!  
My every rhythm war; my heart I stoke  
With fiery slogans of our people's hope.  
Now, on to Africa, to make or mar  
The rising power of the Fascist STAR;  
To glory, or to death, for King and Pope!

Imperial realm, great of ancient fame,  
Our Caesars ruled as gods of many states,  
And kings and monarchs trembled at their name  
Ere Vandals felled our mighty doors and gates.  
Ah! such did Rome into her whirl and spin  
Swallow up a Carthage now and then.

#### THE EMPEROR'S VOICE

His Thor-like voice shook chancelleries  
And rocked each mighty forum, awed each  
    throne,  
With flash of lightning, and of thunder's tone.  
It marshalled allies, stirred auxiliaries  
Against the iron-clad yoke of tyrannies;  
Its moving tremors shook dry land and foam  
And broke volcano-like on hostile Rome,  
It rumbled to and fro through Italy's skies.

The Lion's roar did echo round the earth,  
It rang with pity in Geneva's ears;  
This ancient speech, made modern willed new  
    birth  
To epochs on the horizon of years.  
Today I raise my head, to God rejoice,  
I've heard the thunder of the NEGUS-VOICE.

## DIE FREE

Your king's behest, my countrymen, die free!  
 Die with the spirit that your fathers kept,  
 While pagan Europe and godless Egypt slept.  
 Your sires were lords of lands as well as sea,  
 Ere Sheba rose to guide their destiny.  
 Over this mountain fastness they have swept  
 As peer to any foes in war adept.  
 Arise and strike! This is our God's decree!

We shall not wear this curse of alien chains!  
 We bid for freedom, otherwise for death;  
 For it we'll cash our blood, will drain our veins  
 And die as men; fight to the fatal breath;  
 Let him who will the scourge of nations spread  
 Proclaim him *Conqueror, when we are dead!*

## FRANCE, ENGLAND

Oh, I am startled, stripped of all belief,  
 As France and England's tardy hand and pulse  
 Feed Haile gall, and mad II Duce mulse.  
 The eyes of peace are loaded with a grief  
 As sad and sere as any autumn leaf;  
 Now, crafty Romans will the League *divulse*—  
 Refrigerate its blood, and RIGHT repulse,  
 Ah! now I know the victim pays the fief.

My hate is one indignant world of fire,  
 My anger all the madness of a tide;  
 Yet, over might and its cohorts of war,  
 I cling to RIGHT, though on the weaker side.  
 O, God, is Justice only soot and ash,  
 And all Thy people filthy rags and trash?

## TO THE ASKARIS

How could I fight, if I were you, my brother?  
 I'd rather dodge, be yellow, dally, shirk;

And let the cannon's breath, the Romans smother,  
And put their healthy vitals out of work.  
I would be dumb to every Fascist trumpet  
And swell at each old epithet of race;  
I'd swing a carcass; die no motley puppet  
Bearing the Stigma of the World's disgrace.

I'd play the role of traitor, of the traitors,  
And fight as friend of my old hated foe,  
My soul would be a thorn to foreign baiters,  
A grim defiance grained from head to toe.  
Now, such would be my way if I were you,  
Though I were servant, slave and soldier too.

#### GOD SEND US RAINS

God send us rains, draft every sky and cloud,  
And bid them into torrents rise and spill  
And plunge below to drown the foemen's will;  
Parade the elements, all heaven crowd,  
With raging blast in storm and whirlwind loud,  
God send us rain, flood every vale and hill,  
And turn each parching glade into a rill;  
Drop wanton seas and make Thy people proud.

For rains will snuff the breath of barking guns,  
And form a Purgatory of the roads;  
For rains will shield us from the greedy Huns  
And foil the coming of their bloody hordes.  
O, Father, God, have pity, send us rains,  
Grant us great bounties from Thy high domains!

#### HAILE SELASSIE

Call up the dead from mute, immortal shade  
Name L 'Ouverture, Cromwell, Washington;  
Great men who led and flashed the bloody blade,  
And left their deathless glory in the sun.  
Point out in archives of the musty times  
Arch-god or spear-god of the olden days,  
Whose ancient prowess into epic chimes

Into old Homer, or old Virgil's lays.

Yet ere you shelve your volumes of the great  
 Of Israel, of Gentiles of renown,  
 Name Haile of the Ethiopes and rate  
 Him King and man; above those whom you  
 crown.

This man to Jove or unto Arthur's Rings,  
 Would too have been a master, King of Kings.

#### FOR A KING AT THE SEPULCHRE

Alas, O, God, the fallen look to Thee!  
 A kingdom sacked of freedom and her crown;  
 Alone she prays, as in Gethsemane,  
 And treads a ruthless Calvary baited down.  
 Here is the Cross, and there the place of Skull;  
 Hark! she can hear the pounding hammers ring,  
 And taste the gall, and see the flow of love  
 From gory sides of earth's Messiah spring.

This royal group invades the Sepulchre,  
 The rocks of holy Zion, and the Birth;  
 They seek a Saviour, ask a Comforter,  
 Who reigned, and still must reign upon the  
 earth.

Before Thy face and at Thy tomb of old,  
 God, hear their prayers, tragic stories told.

#### OH, HANG YOUR HEADS, A VOICE ACCUSING CRIES (A King of Kings before the League)

Oh, hang your heads, a voice accusing cries,  
 And points a finger shaking in your face.  
 Bewails of sickly treachery and lies,  
 Of noble oaths that welter in disgrace.  
 Don the ashy sackcloth, raid the hair  
 And rid your ghastly togas of the stain;  
 Albeit that your proffered words were fair,  
 Time has revealed your pompous speech was vain.

I did not ask for bounties of your blood,  
Demand your sons for sacrifice supreme,  
Yet I was led, believing that you would  
Be succor and a shield to the extreme.  
Bereft of friends, by evil foes beset,—  
“God will remember, time will not forget.”

**P. J. WHITE, JR.**

VESTIS VIRUMQUE CANO  
*A Sonnet on American Officials Greeting  
An Ethiopian Potentate*

I SEE you bow in state humility,  
Welcoming, with the dignity and grace  
Due noble sons of distinguished race,  
These swarthy men from Afric's sun-baked lea.  
And the Imperial son-in-law I see  
Acknowledging your greeting, as his face  
Glow with a Pleasure nothing can efface,—  
A man of color—and authority.

Ah, Potentate! How greatly do I fear  
(Knowing my Nordic brother and his way)  
That, should that beard remove from off thy chin,  
Thy rich dress change to occidental gear,  
Some of those with thee might be heard to say,  
“Now, who the hell let these damned niggers in?”  
*Opportunity*, January, 1936: 10