

A BACKWARD SPRING

The trees are afraid to put forth buds,
And there is timidity in the grass;
The plots lie gray where gouged by spuds,
 And whether next week will pass
Free of sly sour winds is the fret of each bush
 Of barberry waiting to bloom.

Yet the snowdrop's face betrays no gloom,
And the primrose pants in its heedless push,
Though the myrtle asks if it's worth the fight
 This year with frost and rime
 To venture one more time
On delicate leaves and buttons of white
From the selfsame bough as at last year's prime,
And never to ruminare on or remember
What happened to it in mid-December.

April 1917.