

THE CLOCK OF THE YEARS

"A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up."

And the Spirit said,

"I can make the clock of the years go backward,

But am loth to stop it where you will."

And I cried, "Agreed

To that. Proceed:

It's better than dead!"

He answered, "Peace";

And called her up--as last before me;

Then younger, younger she freshed, to the year

I first had known

Her woman-grown,

And I cried, "Cease! -

"Thus far is good -

It is enough--let her stay thus always!"

But alas for me. He shook his head:

No stop was there;

And she waned child-fair,

And to babyhood.

Still less in mien
To my great sorrow became she slowly,
And smalled till she was nought at all
In his checkless griff;
And it was as if
She had never been.

"Better," I plained,
"She were dead as before! The memory of her
Had lived in me; but it cannot now!"
And coldly his voice:
"It was your choice
To mar the ordained."

1916.