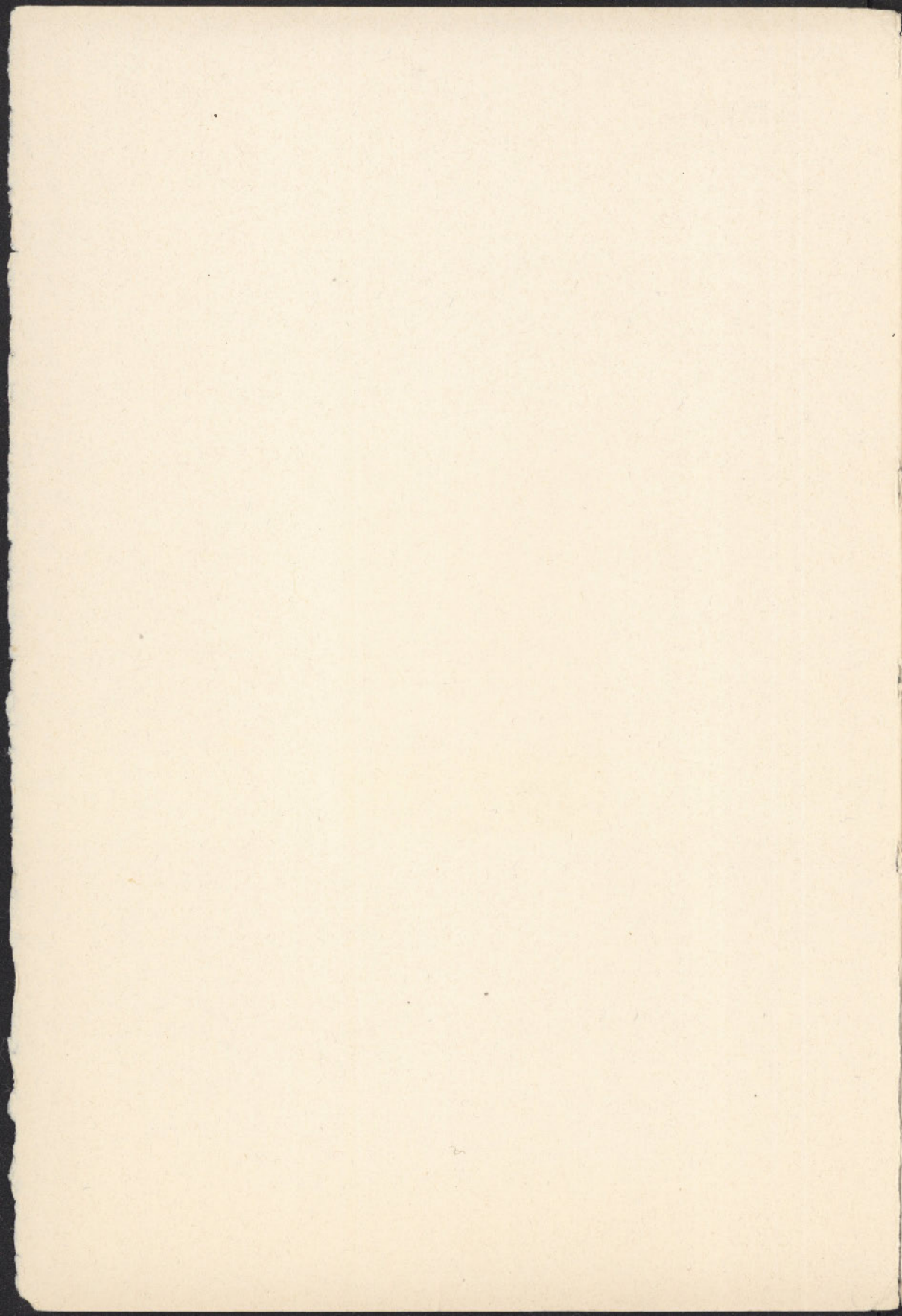


In the Offing

*A Tribute to
Bliss Carman*

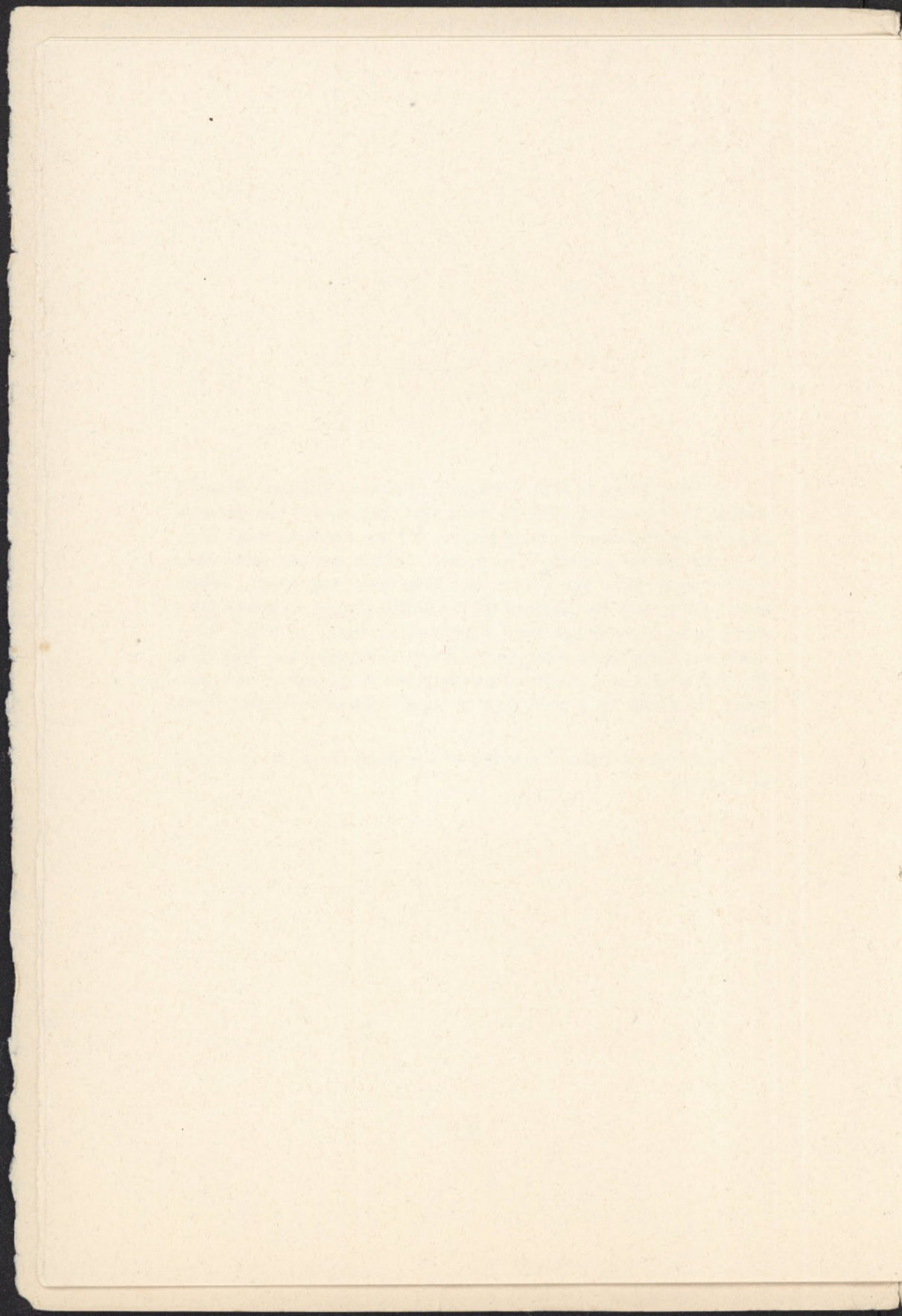






In *The Offing* is Bliss Carman's picture of Richard Hovey's death. In November, 1928, Carman sent the poem to the sponsors of the *Song Fishermen's Song Sheet*. "I am enclosing some lines that may do for a catch," he wrote. "They are not new, were written some years ago in fact, but have never appeared. They were called forth by Richard Hovey's *Sea Gypsy*, a lovely lyric which is in *More Songs from Vagabondia*,—many of which were written in Nova Scotia when he and I were in Windsor and Wolfville. For this reason, and because it's a sea poem, it may serve your purpose. It might be a good plan to reprint *The Sea Gypsy* along with this."

This, the thirteenth number of the *Song Sheet*, is dedicated to Carman.



THE SEA GYPSY

I am fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again tomorrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the sea.

—*Richard Hovey.*

IN THE OFFING

I walked upon the headland
With my friend one summer day,
When an unknown foreign schooner
Came stealing up the bay.

Her sails were light as moonshine
Her hull was dark as night,
And silence fell between us
For wonder at the sight.

No name upon her quarter,
No flag at peak nor fore,
To tell her port or errand,—
No friendly look she wore.

All day she tacked before us
Or lay to on the tide,
As if awaiting orders
From one who should decide.

And never a ship's bell sounded,
Never a voice rang out,
As she heeled before the wind-flaws
Or stood up to come about.

"Why, it is passing strange," I said.
"Aye, passing strange," said he.
And I could see that in his face
I did not like to see.

She did not come to anchor
Nor cross the restless bar,
But when the harbor twilight
Flashed out its evening star

Without a hail at parting
Or any colors shown,
My friend had gone aboard her—
For the Isles of the Unknown.

—*Bliss Carman.*

REINFORCEMENT FOR THE CITY
UNDER THE STAR

Down the grave years he heard a chorus growing;
His only dream to read the immortal score,
Sing it again to deadlier hearts, unknowing
The scarlet note his own prevision bore.

A voice spoke; clear as the summer morning.
He listened, pensive, and the spirit heard.
Nothing of joy or fear, no note of warning
Lived in the ringing word.

But the voice echoed with an elfin thunder
Of aching need behind the city's gates—
A need of dusty grace, of lyric wonder,
A need of singing clay: "Shamballah waits."

—*Charles Bruce.*

FLOOD TIDE

“The sun goes down, and over all”
The long dark shadows on the grass
A deeper shadow falls; the call
Of bird is hushed. . . . O did he pass
With quiet footstep o'er the grass?

The enfolding shadow wraps the earth
In darkness and in quietness;
Each leaf is quiv'ring with a dearth
Of sound, content with mute caress
To grieve in trembling quietness.

“Was it a year or lives ago,”
We heard the music of his song,
A golden tide in ebb and flow,
A silver tide, voice hushed and low,
Or borne on wings of seraph song?

Put grief away; the soft Spring rain
Shall fall upon each fern and flower;
All loveliness shall live again,
Though brief the beauty of the hour,
And every bud shall bloom, and flower.

And in the silences of God,
Beyond the shine of loveliest star,
Far from earth's dust, earth's clinging sod,
The awakened soul hears from afar
The hushed, sweet music of a star.

—*Ethel H. Butler.*

GO, LANK ROVER

Go, lank rover, get you home,
Where the red-streaked orchards roam.
Rust-red road, and sea, and stone,
Call and claim you for their own,
Tempting you with honey-mist,
Apple-wine and amethyst.

There the hills were patient long
For your footfall and your song,
Lilac-breathing elves of air
Wait their turn to kiss your hair.
Now your wild heart shall go free,
Free in loved lost Acadie.

Beauty-saddened you shall bide
Where remembering willows bide.
Beauty-burdened you shall dream
Where the wine-filled marshes dream.
Beauty-shaken you shall cry
Down the dusk when curlews cry.

—*Kenneth Leslie.*

WHAT NEW WONDERS

What new wonders now are his,
In the ample fields of Dis!
What new raiment, what new song,
Rightfully to him belong!

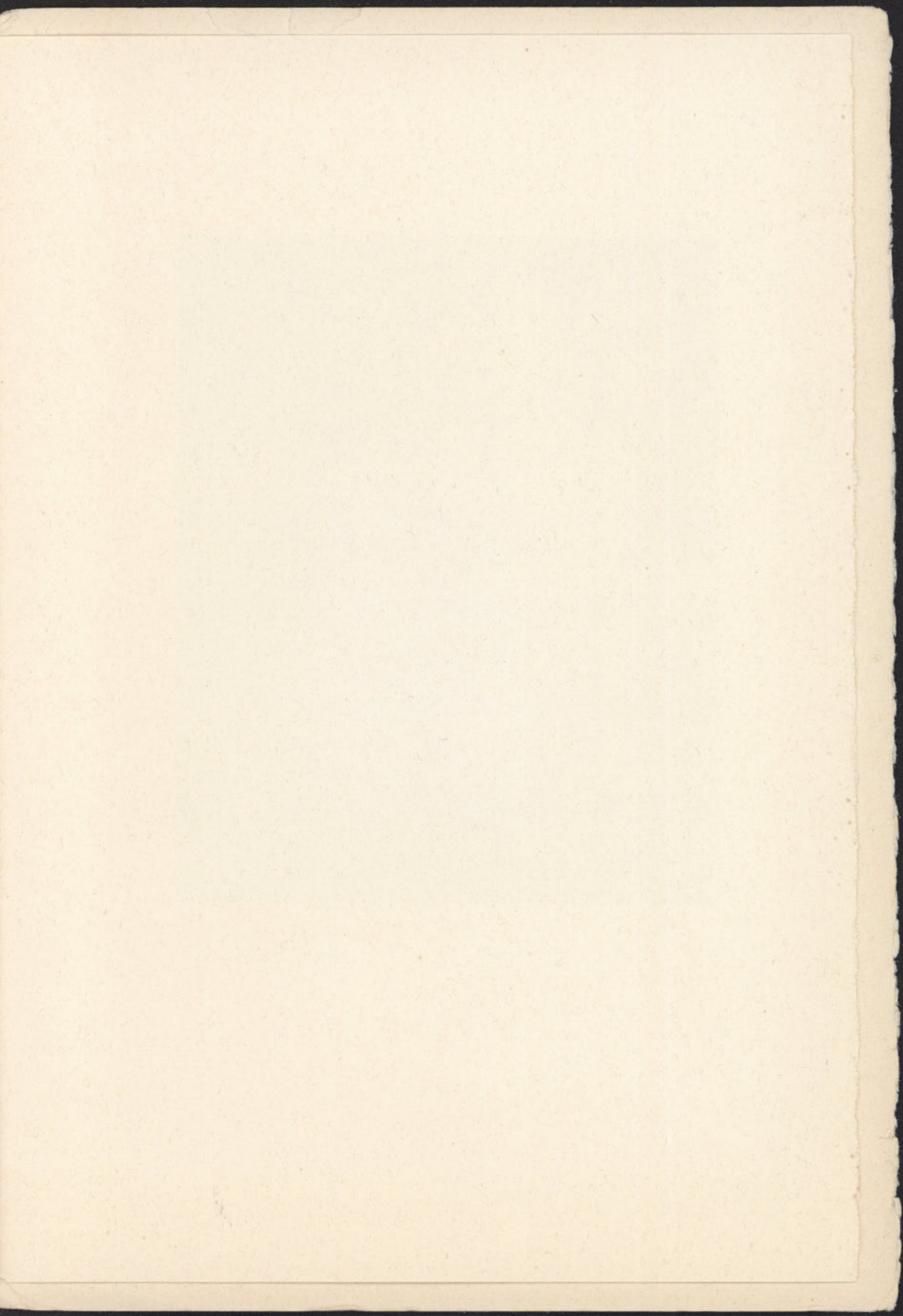
He has valleys, he has hills,
He has rivers, as he wills,
Marshes wide and arching main,
All within his new domain.

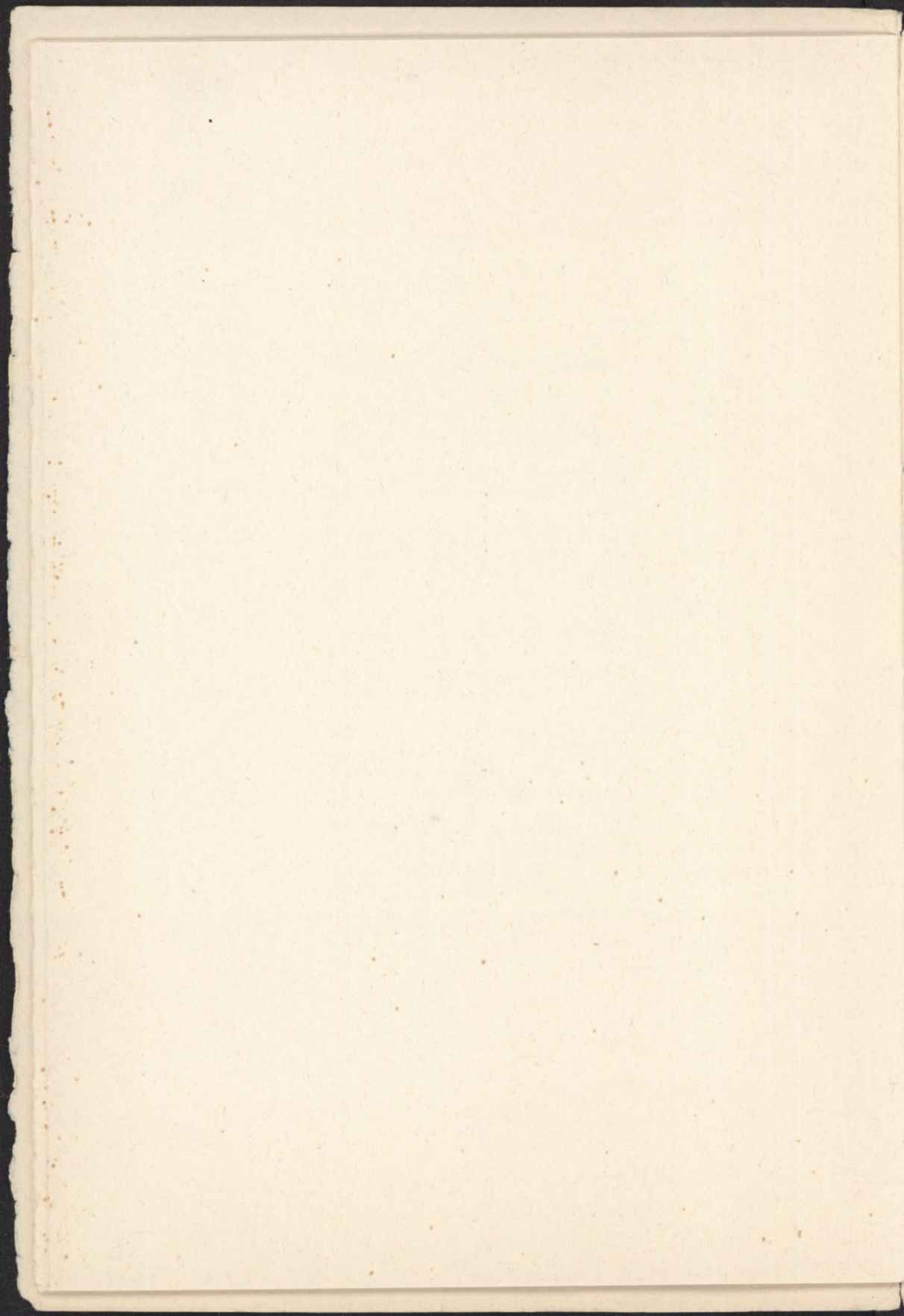
For his rapture stars are spread
And the night is garlanded.
Dawn on dawn new glamors bring
To his joyous wayfaring.

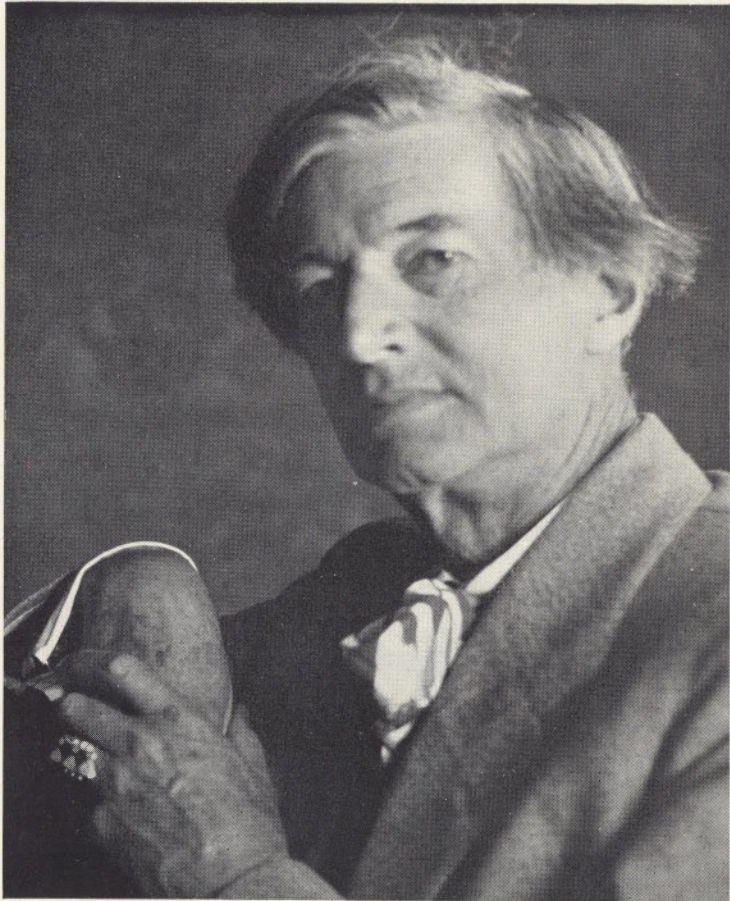
Love and comradeship abound
In the life that he has found:
At the tavern of his choice
All he would with him rejoice.

Nothing lacks he of delight
Now that he has come to might,
In the kingdom that is his
By the ample fields of Dis.

—*Andrew Merkel.*







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109. Bliss Carman.

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