

## **The Country Poet's Answer**

My cabbages this year won second prize  
At Saimaa Show. My cossetted beans and peas  
Are flowering; my turnips swell before my eyes,  
My roses throw their scent upon the breeze

You're shocked? You think a scholar can't be pleased  
To cultivate his garden, tell his tale,  
When cities offer everything that frees  
The human spirit; what can else avail!

Where is Balkh, pearl of cities? Which ships sail  
To Troy, Malacca, Ostia? Who market cries  
In Uriconium, Hormuz, Ys or Kail?  
In Babylon, Tikal, Xiangdu whose pennon flies?

When every city's dead, each empire passed,  
Baldur will find my trowel in the grass.