

Alexander Search

PERSEVERANCE

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Say not that work is e'er ill-spent,
Say not that effort fails or seems;
Say not that he o'er labour bent
Is one in the world's many dreams.

For not in vain with patient shocks,
With timely rush and quick'ning roar,
The ocean crashes on the rocks
And bounds on to the sounding shore.

They check, 'tis true, his rolling rush,
His sturdy beat they seem to scorn,
His surging waves with force they crush
And turn in spray his billows torn.

But days and weeks and months and years
He strikes and strikes and strikes amain.
And dent on dent in them appears
That shows his weary, patient gain.

And years may pass or ages go,
Those eaten rocks will smaller stand;
Still he, with measured aim and slow
Shall bend his surging to the land.

Sure as the sun, and unperceived
As is the growing of a tree,
He works and works, nor is deceived
By sturdy from that men can see.

And when his object full he gains
With last and sounding, rending crash,
His mighty power he still sustains
And onward still his waters dash.

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Poesia Inglesa. Fernando Pessoa. (Organização e tradução de Luísa Freire. Prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes.) Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995: 36.