# Menagerie

The rejected word is peace
At the beginning of the insulted era;
A lamp in the depths of the cave
And the air of mountain lands is ether;
Ether that we failed to breathe,
That we did not wish to breathe.
With goat-like voices, once more,
The shaggy pipes are playing.
While lambs and oxen grazed
On rich pastures
And friendly eagles would alight
On the shoulders of sleeping cliffs,
The German reared the eagle,
And the lion yielded to the Briton,
And the Gallic comb appeared
From the rooster's crest.
But now the barbarian has seized
The sacred club of Heracles,
And the black earth has run dry,
Ungrateful as of old.
I will take a dry stick,
I will strike fire from it,
Let the beasts I have startled flee
Into the dark night!
Rooster and lion, broad-browed,
Eagle and gentle bear,
We will build a cage for war,
We will warm the beasts' hides.
And I sing the wine of ages,
The source of the Italian tongue,
And in the pre-Aryan cradle
Slavic and German flax!
Italy, are you not too weary
To disturb the chariots of Rome,
With the clucking of barnyard fowl
After flying over the wattle fence?

And you, neighbor, do not take offense —
The eagle bristles up and rages:
What if the heavy stone will not do
For your sling?
Once we have locked the beasts in the menagerie,
We will settle down for a long while,
And the Volga will run fuller,
And the Rhine's stream run clearer,
And the worldly-wise man
Will honor the stranger without meaning to,
Like a demigod, through the frenzy of dance
On the banks of great rivers.