

THE GUIDES

WHERE have you been the long day through,
Little brothers of mine?
Soon the world shall belong to you,
Yours to mar or to build anew:
Have you been to learn what the world shall do,
Little brothers going home?

*We have been to learn through the livelong day
Where the great looms echo and crash and sway,
The world has willed it, and we obey,
Elder brother.*

What did you learn till set of sun,
Little brothers of mine?
Down where the great looms wove and spun,
You who are many where we are one
(We whose day is so nearly done),
Little brothers pacing home?

*We have learned the things that the mill-folk said,
That Man is cruel and God is dead.
And how to weave with an even thread,
Elder brother.*

What did you win with the thing they taught,
Little brothers of mine,
You whose sons shall have strength you brought,
Fashion their lives of the faith you bought,
Follow afar the ways you sought,
Little brothers toiling home?

*Shattered body and stunted brain,
Hearts made hard with the need of gain,
These we won and must give again,
Elder brother.*

How shall the world fare in your hand,
Little brothers of mine?
When you shall stand where now we stand—
Shall you lift a light in the darkened land,
Or fire its ways with a burning brand;
Little brothers stealing home?

*What of the way the world shall fare?
What the world has given the world must bear.
We are tired—ah, tired—and we cannot care,
Elder brother!*

MARGARET WIDDEMER.