

# Tribute to Grass

"Next in importance to the divine profusion of water, light, and air, those three physical facts which render existence possible, may be reckoned the universal beneficence of grass. Lying in the sunshine among the buttercups and dandelions of May, scarcely higher in intelligence than those minute tenants of the mimic wilderness, our earliest recollections are of grass, and when the fitful fever is ended, and the foolish wrangle of the market and the forum is closed, grass heals over the scar which our descent into the bottom of the earth has made, and the carpet of the infant becomes the blanket of the dead.

"Grass is the forgiveness of nature — her constant benediction. Fields trampled with battle, saturated with blood, torn with the ruts of cannon, grow green again with grass, and carnage is forgotten. Streets abandoned by traffic become grass grown, like rural lanes, and are obliterated. Forests decay, harvests perish, flowers vanish, but grass is immortal. Beleaguered by the sullen hosts of winter it withdraws into the impregnable fortress of its subterranean vitality and emerges upon the solicitation of spring. Sown by winds, by wandering birds, propagated by the subtle horticulture of the elements which are its ministers and servants, it softens the rude outlines of the world. It invades the solitude of deserts, climbs the inaccessible slopes and pinnacles of mountains, and modifies the history, character, and destiny of nations. Unobtrusive and patient, it has immortal vigor and aggression. Banished from the thoroughfares and fields, it bides its time to return, and when the vigilance is relaxed or the dynasty has perished it silently resumes the throne from which it has been expelled but which it never abdicates. It bears no blazonry of bloom to charm the senses with fragrance or splendor, but its homely hue is more enchanting than the lily or the rose. It yields no fruit in earth or air, yet should its harvest fail for a single year, famine would depopulate the world."

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