

## VERSE

### MOUNTAIN PILGRIMS

Mountains infringe upon each other,  
Fold upon crumpled fold.

At the sharp-walled bottom of the deep valley  
The torrent shines as a cold  
Nicked narrowness that runs away  
While, on the ridge between  
Savage crests, a line of human  
Creatures can be seen  
Whitely walking.

Ah, what sadness  
Blooms in the watching heart.

Would that I could out-climb self,  
Learn the hermit's art,  
But such far heights remain invisible  
Even to those  
Willing to climb them, willing to venture  
Onto their ultimate snows:  
Ultimate winds and ultimate snows  
Too fierce to understand.

Willing to climb, my hand trembles:  
This dappledly shuddering hand.

— *Translated from the Japanese  
of Hagiwara Sakutarō (1886-1942)  
by Graeme Wilson.*