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A Winter Evening

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A WINTER EVENING

Near Alviso, California

The earth for miles is massed with wet:
Small tree and bush and hedge of briar
Have sunk from shape with help nor let
As rank confusion gathers higher.

Each little house beside the road,
In weedy field, with rotting fence,
Groans and subsides, a broken load
Dropped there by thwarted diligence.

And by a swollen ditch, a dog,
Mud-soaked and happy, in a daze
Works into rain as dark as fog,
And moves down coldly solvent ways.

A TESTAMENT

To One Now a Child

One wills and moves: the gain
Is paid for by our pain;
The very strength we choose,
By what we lose.

God is revealed in this:
That some go not amiss,
But through hard labor teach
What we may reach.