

Wroe Alderson  
Haverford Meeting, October 9, 1960.

**W**e have just had a week of golden October days beside the Chesapeake, with Heaven waiting in every sunset.

**T**he hoarse cry of the wild goose is like a brute reaction to beauty too bright to be borne. A world in flames, over land and water, re-enacts the ancient and tragic mystery of Death-in-Life and Life-in-Death.

**T**he dogwood leaves are dying in a burst of battle red. Oak and maple strew the lane with the vivid hues of passion and the soft shades of memory. And soaring there on a high stark limb is the scarlet banner of ivy.

**O**n the water, where life first found its home, life is still harvesting life: a fisherman out in the chilly dawn; the sails of the oystermen at noon; a belated woman crabber poling her skiff through the ripples along the shore. Underneath the surface the living still feeds on the living – or faces death in the stab of the heron or the swoop of the osprey.

**A** philosopher speaking for the pantheism of the East has said that life is perpetual perishing. What we see now shall never be seen again. What we love most, even now is slipping away. We weep for beauty vanishing but beauty is its heir. The flower fading on its stalk will cast its seed for flowers to scent tomorrow.

**A** poet once prayed to be released from too much love of living. Let us rather pay to love life freely and to spend it freely. Time is our sovereign currency but let us not grasp it with a miser's hand.

**A**nd let no puny man fancy himself an Atlas, bearing the world on his shoulders. The world will not fall apart without us because God holds it together. Individually we are held and jointly we endure within the magnificent fabric of his grand design. The notes are transient – the symphony eternal. Our faith in a loving and eternal God is faith in the abundance of life.