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## THE PLOUGHMAN

Under the long fell's stony eaves  
The ploughman, going up and down,  
Ridge after ridge man's tide-mark leaves,  
And turn the hard gray soil to brown.

Striding, he measures out the earth  
In lines of life, to rain and sun;  
And every year that comes to birth  
Sees him still striding on and on.

The seasons change, and then return;  
Yet still, in blind unsparing ways,  
However I may shrink or yearn,  
The ploughman measures out my days.

His acre brought forth roots last year;  
This year it bears the gleamy grain;  
Next spring shall seedling grass appear:  
Then roots and corn and grass again.

Five times the young corn's pallid green  
I have seen spread and change and thrill;  
Five times the reapers I have seen  
Go creeping up the far-off hill:

And, as the unknowing ploughman climbs  
Slowly and inveterately,  
I wonder long how many times  
The corn will spring again for me.

*Gordon Bottomley*