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# OLYMPIA

Prologue to Festival Performance at the National Theatre  
on the 23rd February, 1952, at Oslo.

*War was constantly waged in the past 'twixt the cities of Hellas,  
Peace was a flower that blossom'd but*

*once in four years of bloodshed.*

*In the heat of the battle bitter feuds were forgotten*

*Always a month to the day 'ere the start*

*of the Games at Olympia.*

*This was a sign from the gods that*

*Achaians should meet as brothers,*

*Woe to the man who broke the truce,*

*for now the Greeks were at play!*

*There in Olympia they met, as members of one great nation —*

*Not as men of Thebes or Pergamon, Corinth or Sparta,*

*But as fellow Grecians, heirs to a common culture.*

*Every dispute was forgotten; all were united,*

*Paying their homage to Zeus the Mighty, and on this occasion*



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*There are too many bombs falling,  
not enough tops spinning round.  
We play too little.  
The world is too serious, and that is the reason it suffers.*

*Evil has all the ponderous gravity of a truncheon,  
Goodness is merry and unfeigned as a baseball-bat.  
Evil is a maze of intricate rules,  
Strict as a clause in the Highway Code;  
Goodness is like a hop-sotch pitch,  
Chalked by a child on the pavement.  
While Evil goes dressed in a uniform,  
Goodness makes do with a play-suit.  
To-day in the world of foreign relations  
There's not enough give and take;  
Too many venomous notes are exchanged between nations.  
What a difference a hand-shake would make.  
All important diplomats  
Wear stiff and pompous hats.  
If they were taken off and hurled,  
In sheer delight, far far away,  
We'd all be living in a happier world,  
And peace would come to stay.*

This is the Olympic flame.

*Friends of the Top, the Bat and of Hop-Scotch!  
All too long we have betrayed the sand-boxes of  
our nursery days,  
That is why Peace dwells no longer on earth.  
Let us establish once more the dignity of games,  
Let the skipping rope drive out,  
The whip and the knout.  
Sportsmen of the world, unite!*