

# HÉLAS!

*Oscar Wilde*

To drift with every passion till my soul  
Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play,  
Is it for this that I have given away  
Mine ancient wisdom, and austere control?  
Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll  
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday  
With idle songs for pipe and virelay,  
Which do but mar the secret of the whole.  
Surely there was a time I might have trod  
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance  
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God:  
Is that time dead? lo! with a little rod  
I did but touch the honey of romance—  
And must I lose a soul's inheritance?