

Enterprise

It started as a **pilgrimage**,
Exalting minds and making all
The burdens light. The second stage
Explored, but did not test the call.
The Sun beat down to match our **rage**.

We stood it very well, I thought,
Observed and put down **copious** notes
On things the peasants sold and bought,
The way of serpents and of goats,
Three cities where a **sage** had taught.

But when the differences arose
On how to cross a desert patch,
We lost a friend whose stylish prose
Was quite the best of all our batch.
A shadow falls on us and grows.

Another phase was reached when we
Were twice attacked, and lost our way.
A section claimed its **liberty**
To leave the group. I tried to pray.
Our leader said he smelt the sea.

We noticed nothing as we went,
A **straggling** crowd of little hope,
Ignoring what the thunder meant,
Deprived of common needs like soap.
Some were broken, some merely bent.

When, finally, we reached the place,
We hardly knew why we were there.
The trip had darkened every face,
Our deeds were neither great nor rare.
Home is where we have to gather grace.