

Reasons to be Cheerful

Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Happy Thought'. From Stevenson's A Child's Garden of Verses (1885)

*The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.*

An Epilogue

I have seen flowers come in stony places
And kind things done by men with ugly faces,
And the Gold Cup won by the worst horse at the races,
So I trust too.

John Masefield

Song from 'Pippa Passes'

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew pearl'd;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven -
All's right with the world!

Robert Browning

Swineherd

'When all this is over,' said the swineherd,
'I mean to retire, where
Nobody will have heard of my special skills
And conversation is mainly about the weather.

I intend to learn how to make coffee, at least as well
As the Portuguese lay sister in the kitchen
And polish the brass fenders every day.
I want to lie awake at night
Listening to cream crawling to the top of the jug
And the water lying soft in the cistern.

I want to see an orchard where the trees grow in straight
lines
And the yellow fox finds shelter between navy blue trunks,
Where it gets dark early in summer
And the apple blossom is allowed to wither on the bough.'