Songs of the Road

by

A. Conan Doyle

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Which I know they didn't ought to, an' it's
very wrong of course,
But the colt wot never capers makes a
mighty useless 'orse.

The lad was never vicious, but 'e made the
money go,
For 'e was ready with 'is "yes," and back-
ward with 'is "no."
And so 'e turned to drink which is the
avenoo to 'ell,
An' 'ow 'e came to stop 'imself is wot' I
'ave to tell.

Four days on end 'e never knew 'ow 'e 'ad
got to bed,
Until one mornin' fifty clocks was tickin'
in 'is 'ead,

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But the father answers, chaffing,
"Africans but British too."
And the children echo, laughing,
"Half of mother — half of you."

It may seem a crude example,
In an isolated case,
But the story is a sample
Of the welding of the race.

So from bloodshed and from sorrow,
From the pains of yesterday,
Comes the nation of to-morrow
Broadly based and built to stay.

Loyal spirits strong in union,
Joined by kindred faith and blood;
Brothers in the wide communion
Of our sea-girt brotherhood.

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1

God's own best will bide the test,
And God's own worst will fall;
But, best or worst or last or first,
He ordereth it all.

2

For *all* is good, if understood,
(Ah, could we understand!)
And right and ill are tools of skill
Held in His either hand.

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There comes no word to tell us
Why this and that should be,
Why you should live with sorrow,
And joy should live with me.

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Alas the plans that came to nought!
Alas the soul that thrilled in vain!
The sunlit future that he sought
Was but a mirage of the brain.
Where now the wit? Where now the will?
The fungus is the master still.

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His thoughts are set on paltry gain —
You only tell me what I see —
I know him selfish, cold and vain;
But, oh! he's all the world to me!

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And marked the great Sun alchemist
Turn all its leaden edge to gold.
Look well, look well, oh lady mine,
The gray below, the gold above,
For so the grayest life may shine
All golden in the light of love.

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