

Zeitschrift: Der Kreis : eine Monatsschrift = Le Cercle : revue mensuelle
Band: 21 (1953)
Heft: 3

Artikel: Not understood
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-568174>

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Not understood

Not understood! We move along asunder,
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep
Along the years; we marvel and we wonder
Why Life is Life? and then we fall asleep —
Not understood.

Not understood! We gather false impressions
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions;
And thus men rise and fall, and live and die,
Not understood.

Not understood! Poor souls with stunted vision,
Oft measure giants by their narrow gauge.
The poisoned shafts of falsehood and derision
Are oft impelled 'gainst those who mould the age
Not understood.

Not understood! The secret springs of action,
Which lie beneath the surface and the show,
Are disregarded; with self-satisfaction
We judge our neighbors, and they often go,
Not understood.

Not understood! How trifles often change us!
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight
Destroy long years of friendship and estrange us,
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight.
Not understood.

Not understood! How many hearts are aching
For lack of sympathy? Ah! day by day,
How many cheerless, lonely hearts are breaking!
How many noble spirits pass away.
Not understood.

Oh, God! that men could see a little clearer
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see;
Oh, God! that men would draw a little nearer
To each other, they'd be nearer Thee
And understood.

Thomas Bracken.