

# The Blast Furnace

## Prize Poem



BUILDING, lofty, brick-encircled, iron-bound,  
Rusted and scaled without, by heat and cooling spray,  
Encompassed by the mighty blast-main's roaring sound  
Which holds the red-hot whirlwind to its ordered way;  
Below the gate, a sand field sloping down,  
Whose empty moulds the falling rusts embrown.



WITHIN this iron's birth-tower long has raged the fire  
Blast-fed, that seeks to change the ore, an inert mass  
Of brittle, useless rock, the metals stubborn sire,  
To such a state as may to diverse uses pass;  
Now lie the metal and the slag at last  
In molten order, ready to be cast.



THE charge is down. The workers swing their massive bars  
To pierce the gates of clay that hold the ardent tide;  
Breaking midst roar and flame and storms of burning stars,  
They free the glowing brook the grimy toilers guide.  
Adown the ditches pours the halting stream  
To moulds and slag-pits, through a cloud of steam.

THOS. WOOD STEVENS.