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Chester Wittell Poetry

TMI

Right or wrong, not long ago,
 Three Mile Island seemed to snow
 Some of nature's secrets are
 Things that man should never know.

Meaning, as you figure, "Nuke—"
 The thing that triggers our rebuke
 And anger, too, which if not hot
 At least is warm and more than luke.

How nice it would be if we could
 Energize by coal and wood,
 And go to bed assured that we
 Would live till morning, as we should!

Which brings us to the query: who
 Knows where to turn or what to do,
 Except the experts who, it seems,
 Are stumped the same as I and you.

A monument to "Ed" and "Met,"
 There the towers stand, marked "stet."
 Big business says they're going to stay.
 Anybody want to bet?

—Chester Wittell

ODETTE TO MAN

Aggressive man of sharpened ken,
 Who, stumbling, falls to rise again—
 Reprove him not; his wist was bent
 By trial and experiment
 When star-fire swept with searching light
 The plenum of the infinite.

Long before creation's dawn,
 Ere night's curtain was withdrawn,
 Or the saurian, huge and dread,
 Copulated, fought and fed;
 Nature seemed to know that man
 To the sky would raise his scan.

Therefore, though his tenure be
 Flanked by insecurity
 Let us praise and wish him well;
 Trusting heaven; doubting hell;
 Seeing how his back is bent
 To the toil of betterment.

Tough condign the fate we call
 His due portion at the fall,
 Somewhere, somehow there must live
 Justice minded to forgive.
 If not hen why fire or leaven,
 Stoked in hell; bestowed in heaven?

—Chester Wittell

NUMBERS

From "THE GARDEN SPOT"

(House)
 The number painted on the door
 Shows I'm the one you're looking for.

(Telephone)
 Unlisted oft, as you expected;
 Sometimes dead or disconnected.

(Zip Code)
 A letter must be numbered, too,
 To get a note from me to you.

(Social Security)
 This one tells me I'm secure,
 But doesn't say that it's for sure.

(Lottery)
 The lottery—let's not forget—
 Must have one, too, to hook the bet.

(Customer)
 Are you a customer? Then weep;
 For you'll be tagged like other sheep.

(Prophecy)
 Perhaps ere long there'll come a day
 Who those who frame our statutes may
 Give us a number like there is on
 Shirts of those we send to prison;
 Or babies we may live to see
 Povided, thus, prenatally
 With something parturition lacks;
 Namely: numbers on their backs.

—Chester Wittell

HOW BLEST THE WORM!

Nature, it seems, likes to experiment,
 With proof of which earth's sepultures are rife;
 Showing how she with curious intent
 Once gat and canceled many forms of life.
 What proof have we that we are here to stay?
 Shall man in time evolve to higher man,
 Or be discarded, too (Ah! who can say?)
 As a temporary fixture in her plan?
 The lowly lumbric squirming at my feet
 May have the answer, and if you should ask
 It might say: Be not scornful of my task.
 In Eden's garden did I drink and eat.
 I saw the sunrise in life's early dawn
 And still shall tenant earth when you are gone."

—Chester Wittell

It might say: "Be not scornful of my task.

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*The codfish lays ten thousand eggs,
 The lonely hen but one.
 The codfish never cackles when her laying's done.
 And so we scorn the codfish,
 The humble hen we prize.
 Which only goes to prove, my friend,
 It Pays To Advertise!*