

Compassion

THERE are expressive words in every language,
But our tongue holds the loveliest one, I
know:

The sweetly-syllabled, the chaste, white word
“Compassion,”

That sheds a light like a circling halo’s glow
About the one who moves among the lowly,
The afflicted and oppressed, with gentle tread,
Whose ministering hands hold cups of water
To parched lips, and who gives the starving, bread.

“Compassion,” all the tenderness and mercy
And all the kindness shown since time began
Is held within that one brief word, depicting
The ever onward, upward climb of man
Toward God, toward the virtues yet unpriced
In the exquisite compassion of the Christ.

