

The Final Answer

This is the word I bring you, from jungle and from town,
From city street where weary feet are seeking vague renown,
From cotton fields to northern snows, or where the west winds cry,
This is the word I bring you: "Keep strong, or else you die."

They speak of battle's finish—they talk of peace to come.
They cheer for songs supplanting the bugle and the drum.
They think of dreams in clover, beneath a cloudless sky,
Remember what I tell you: "Keep strong, or else you die."

Peace on this war-torn planet? I want it understood
I like a cheerful neighbor—but give me hardihood.
Give me the fiber needed to face what lies ahead,
To make good for the living, to make up for the dead.

The easy road is over, for in this swarming hive
Those who can take a beating are those who will survive.
We've ripped a pleasant planet, it's too late now to sigh.
Remember what I've told you: "Keep strong, or else you die."

Grantland Rice (1880–1954)