

## BEGA

From the clouded belfry calling,  
Hear my soft ascending swells;  
Hear my notes like swallows falling;  
I am Bega, least of bells.  
When great Turkeful rolls and rings  
All the storm-touched turret swings,  
Echoing battle, loud and long.  
When great Tatwin wakening roars  
To the far-off shining shores,  
All the seamen know his song.  
I am Bega, least of bells:  
In my throat my message swells.  
I with all the winds a-thrill,  
Murmuring softly, murmuring still,  
    "God around me, God above me,  
    God to guard me, God to love me."

I am Bega, least of bells,  
Weaving wonder, wind-born spells.  
High above the morning mist,  
Wreathed in rose and amethyst,  
Still the dreams of music float  
Silver from my silver throat,  
Whispering beauty, whispering peace.  
When great Tatwin's gold voice  
Bids the listening land rejoice,  
When great Turkeful rings and rolls  
Thunder down to trembling souls,  
Then my notes like curlews flying,  
Lifting, falling, sinking, sighing,  
Softly answer, softly cease.  
I with all the airs at play  
Murmuring sweetly, murmuring say,  
    "God around me, God above me,  
    God to guard me, God to love me."

Mary L. C. Pickthall  
from *The Drift of Pinions* – 1913

duration: c. 6:15

Mary L. C. Pickthall's poetry has been a wonderful discovery. Born in England in 1883, she emigrated with her family to Canada when she was seven, and was educated in Toronto. She died at 38 in 1922, in Vancouver.