

Alexander Search

## CONVENTION

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Mother of slaves and fools, Thou who dost hold  
Within Thine iron chains enslaved mankind,  
Old in Thy yoke and in their slavery blind,  
Harden'd to grief and woo, corrupt and cold,

But in the craven following, as of old,  
Of those old ways, unwise, unfirm, unkind,  
Bound ever in the animal bonds that bind  
Fish, bird and beast in flock and herd and fold.

The light hath fallen of many a cherished name,  
And many a land of love hath been the nurse,  
But man's worn heart is evermore the same —

Unwilling ever to shake off the curse,  
Once self-inflicted, and the time-grown shame  
That loads the weary, lightless universe.

11-1905

**Poesia Inglesa.** Fernando Pessoa. (Organização e tradução de Luísa Freire. Prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes.) Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995: 56.

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