

Some Other Heaven

Am I a fool? I often wonder to myself
When my beating heart's eye perceives
The bullets that fizz and spark around me
Are but flowers tossed from the meadow
By a zephyr's ever playful whim;
Even the screams of the fire are muted
Into sweet and melodic Spring birdsong.
The incessant barking of enemy guns
Are no more than than a covey of crows
Arguing ever noisily with each other
As they hop angrily upon the grass.
The dull, heavy booms of the mortars
Muted mournfully into the call of loons
As they telegraph lonesome missives
Up and down the valley of the Boyne.
These Hellish fields of mud and wire
Will always be the rolling green lands
And the gentle whimpers of a fallen man
Are but whistles of an amorous ploughboy.
This is all that my aching heart will allow
Witnessing Hell's latest incarnation;
As my mind plays host to visions of home.

Francis Ledwidge was not a classic war poet in the sense that he rarely wrote about the subject directly, in his poems. Who knows, had he survived, he may well have reflected on his experiences and written after the conflict had ended, like David Jones, amongst many others.

John Llewellyn James