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Summer Voices / Life

Aaron Baker

Francis Maud Sadler

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Summer Voices

By Aaron A. Baker

*The heat of summer rolls with the dawn,
A puff of brown wrens
Sweeps the Cheyenne sky.
A halo hovers over newly mowed fields,
And the stars which bloom
At night for youthful dreamers
Pale with the white rays of the rising sun,
A sputter of wild flowers
Bows to the flutes of the orioles,
And black cattle graze in the drowsy lanes.
Lord, help me to listen
Again for whispers of love.*

*Dreamers speak softly when long rays of the sun
Filter through rustling
Leaves of gaunt cottonwoods
Where starlings swoop to roost on the gnarled limbs,
But where do the bluebirds go?
Cardinals must hide in sumac brush
When the hot-plate sun reddens hikers' cheeks.
August is a whole season
For young lovers who laugh—
And are unmindful of the briefness at hand.
Well, let their voices stand,
For even the mourning dove can
Least understand when warblers fall into the
Ageless burning sand. **

Life

By Francis Maud Sadler

*Life is only what we make it—
Be it good or be it bad.
As we travel over life's highway,
Many temptations all have had.
If we choose to do the right thing
In each task we undertake,
As we overcome temptations,
It will us much better make.
For we are here such a short while,
So let's choose the narrow way,
And when this old life is over,
"Well done" we'll hear God say.*

(written in 1938; submitted by the poet's son, Carl K. Sadler)

(FRANCIS MAUD SADLER was from the Lowes, a pioneer family that settled in the Cowboy Flats area north of Guthrie in the early 1890's. Her son refers to her as a "learned self-taught individual who literally revered education and everything about it all her life.")