



БЕЛАРУСКАЯ ЛІТАРАТУРА ў АНГЛІЙСКІХ ПЕРАКЛАДАХ

ALES BACHYLA

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When, if but once, with praise like thunder,
Life lifts you on its pedestal,
Don't count it as some kind of wonder,
But hush the noisy choir's call.

Then stop the fount of words prophetic –
Without them cares we do not lack.
And know:

 praise to your face emphatic
Is spat in spite behind your back.

And so much dirty mire they're slinging,
When first in life a miss you make,
That even truth, like seedlets springing,
Will find the mud-clots hard to break.

Don't haste to drive away indifference,
Nor folk who take you sharp to task.
And learn to know

 the mask of innocence,
And the good man who needs no mask.

And know, that on foundations shallow
Deceit constructs its pedestal.
Better accept truth's bitter aloe,
Than endless praises, bound to pall.

1965

Translated by W. May