

Idle Thoughts

Boxing Day, 1995

THE world with oxygen is rife:
It is the very stuff of life.
There's plenty of it, in the main —
But not enough to find my brain,
A smallish target, it is true,
But even so, if just a few
Small molecules could turn their faces
On a more consistent basis
To getting up there, life would be
Far more convenient for me.

Meanwhile, I've learned to recognise
Total wipe-out, mem'ry-wise,
'til normal service is restored
And I may gratefully applaud.

But here's a disconcerting thing:
The brain's not all remembering.
It also sees I get my share
Of what is left of God's clean air.
If *that* bit misses its supply
Of oxygen, it's fun to try
To breathe without it, in that you
Will tend to turn profoundly blue
And fall unconscious in a trice —
Which, on the whole, is not too nice.

It's at this point I ought to say
I passed out cold on Boxing Day.
Seconds later, choking fit!
Cough and splutter as I sit!

Anxious loved ones thump my back —

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And lo! At last, the lad is back!
In hospital, the A & E
Takes a thoughtful look at me:
Wires my heart and sounds my chest,
Checks my eyes, takes blood for test,
Thumps my knees, with every clout
Aimed, of course, at finding out —
B.p. proving excellent —
Just why my crisis came and went.
Carotid artery declined
To indicate itself fur-lined —
So no surprise as, bit by bit,
The doctor found me fighting fit.

I'm just unlucky, doctor said,
That bits keep floating to my head
And blocking off the vital flow.
It's the old scenario:
I have heard it all before,
Done all the tests and, what is more,
Proved too healthy to be true
So many times, I promise you
That I shall be, please do not fear,
The fittest corpse in Worcestershire.
