

Time

Square World

THE batsman pats the crease and seems intense.
The bowler lays a painstaking leg trap.
Red-corks his groin before he can commence;
Hands a trilbied citizen his cap –
Then turns his back and walks unhurried hence!
None but the brave would dare to call it crap:
Unprompted, Englishmen all thought
The ritual some kind of sport.

The rites unfold from Bath to the Bahamas,
And batsmen, wishing to survive them all
(And fearing things could rather lose their charm as
They wait and hope to try to drive a ball),
Parade the same hats in slow-motion calm as
Fangio driving at Ferrari's call.
And bowlers let success, instead.
Fly to someone else's head.

(When driven mad, spectator notes
There's help from men in long white coats).
