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Progress

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Progress

The leakless jar five thousand years perfecting,
And kept unchanged ten thousand more among
The potters' cult, their ritual protecting
The essence of the jar. Mankind, still young,
Progresses on his face. Grown cleverer,
He crawls now; walks soon; sooner runs,
Up the spiral, faster, as the purr
Of the turbine scales in a shriek to Silence. Spun
On the butt of an engine's shaft, the jar's fabric spreads,
Weakens: down cross, down sword, down phallus; up
nipple and womb;
Wink, shrug, laugh at all; copulate on the altars.
The jar shatters into earth, the burning motor falters:
Return taboo, fetish and totem; the rooms
Of the mind are shuttered; the potter gropes for the
dead.

JAMES DOUGHERTY