

JEFFREY S. CRAMER

## *Mountaineer*

A friend of mine who taught me how to climb,  
“Attain the unattained,” instructed me  
That during one’s ascent “earth’s gravity  
Will make you hug the earth, which gives you time  
To rest, assess the situation, find  
The places best to hold — or seem the best  
At such a time — then climb again, possessed  
By goals which reached are sooner left behind.”

The thing he never taught to me, perhaps  
Because he did not know himself, the schemes  
For safely getting down, since trails, like streams,  
Flow best in one direction, and the gaps  
One uses for a foothold on the rise,  
Once past, are chasms threatening demise.