**London Marathon poem**

Chasing out the winter blues
Lacing up two shining shoes,
Embarking on a road so long
In training for The Marathon.
Fuelled not by isotonic ‘-ades’
(Although they energise in spades!)
But by our humble friends, bananas
(and porridge oats topped with sultanas).
Calves and hamstrings twang and groan
O’er miles of London paving stone;
You puff and pant thrice round the park
Not long until the Cutty Sark!
You’ve seen new slopes of Hampstead Heath
That leave soles muddy underneath.
You’ve Regents-Parked from every side
And sweated into Blackfriars’ tide.
But fifteen-milers, point-to-point,
Can put the spine right out of joint.
So now to yoga, menthol balm,
Ignore impending date, keep calm!
With dripping brow and pounding heart
You’ll witness springtime’s running start;
Solitary jogging hours
Brightened by the season’s flowers.
Canal towpath: running track!
Limehouse, Walthamstow, and back;
Freezing parks at 8am
You can’t but feel a warmth for them.
Everything to schedule:
Early rise, more oats for fuel.
Buzzing trains of thought will mark
That journey down to Greenwich Park.
The staging of this vast event
Cannot but cause astonishment:
Seventy-two thousand soles,
Each with its rehearsed goals.
Spirits high upon depart,
And off the elite pros will dart.
Ten to ten: the masses’ turn
To let our carbohydrates burn.
Encouragement from twinkling eyes
‘Neath great expansive London skies
As Deptford bathes in Sunday sun
They’ll will we many runners on.
Delirium on finishing,
As well as strength diminishing
Might all emotions over-ride
And lead you to well up inside.
A hundred thousand hearty cheers
Will echo in your head for years;
Collective trust in human good
Again in triumph will have stood.