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A
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PREFACE

IN EXPANDING AND REVISING this book the editors have adhered to their original plan, recognizing, first, that literature is a fine art, second, that literature has had an historical development both in its forms and in its material, corresponding to changing social conditions and intellectual interests and attitudes, and, third, that it is an expression of the personalities in whom creative force was incarnate. Accordingly, literature may be approached from three points of view, not, of course, to be sharply separated — the aesthetic, the historical and social, and the personal. From the first point of view the effort has been made to select excellent examples of literary genius from *Beowulf* to the close of the nineteenth century. Arranged in chronological order, these will, it is believed, enable the student to gain for himself a consecutive view of the development of literature in accordance with the tastes, interests, and needs of changing generations. As a matter of convenience the conventional division into periods has been adopted, with the warning that these are not to be emphasized as hard-and-fast distinctions. The introductory notes to the several periods are intended to point out general characteristics of their literary production as affected by political and social movements. The introductions to individual authors have been prepared with the aim of *identifying* the writer, of giving a succinct account of his experience in life as a key to his work, and of suggesting the qualities of his mind and art. As it is hoped that the student will draw in his mind an outline of the historical development of English literature, so it is hoped that he will see and enjoy for himself the qualities which make its exponents memorable. The editors have tried to refrain from forcing opinions and conclusions, and in general to avoid doing for the student what he can reasonably be expected to do for himself.

With these principles in mind they have undertaken to select the most characteristic work of each writer, whether it is generally familiar, or comparatively unknown. They

have sought to give due representation to the various types and forms of literature, and to illustrate their progress from period to period. For those who wish to approach the field from this point of view rather than the historical, a special introduction to the study of literature according to types has been provided. A brief account of the chief forms used in English poetry has also been added.

The editors have made a special effort to choose writings which are important as expressing the social or intellectual characteristics of a period or school. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the revelation of the primitive conditions of life, and the gradual penetration of Christian ideals, in the Old English period, or to the appearance of elements of civilization in the Middle English period, with the differentiation of character which marked the growth of individualism before the Renaissance. These tendencies come to full expression in the literature of the Elizabethan Age, with its unmistakable evidence of the outburst of national spirit in the midst of a culture derived from the Renaissance and permeated by the religious energy of the Reformation. The unity of these two movements, seen in Sidney and Spenser, is broken by the conflict between Cavalier and Puritan, between worldliness and other-worldliness in the seventeenth century, evident in the contrast between the paganism of Herrick and the piety of Herbert and Vaughan. The gradual submergence of the conflict in an age of reason and common sense, which came to its fullness in Dryden and Pope, is succeeded by romanticism and transcendentalism with their reassertion of emotional and spiritual values, to be controlled in the later nineteenth century by serious reflection on the problems of a society complicated by industry and scientific discovery.

Again, in their emphasis on the personal element in literature the editors have been especially hospitable to work having the interest of autobiography and self-revelation. While such revelation is to be found, to some degree, in all art, it becomes notably prominent in the seventeenth century with the confessions of its lyric poetry, and the personal essays of Browne, Walton, Cowley, Bunyan, and the diary of Pepys. The interest is carried on into the eighteenth century with the biographical record of Boswell's Johnson, and in the nineteenth it furnishes a leading strain of romanticism in personal studies of Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, of Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria*, in the poetry of Byron, Shelley, and Keats, in the essays of Lamb, Hazlitt, and De Quincey. The later nineteenth century abounds in moving statements of personal experience such as Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Mill's *Autobiography*, Newman's *Apologia*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and Pater's *The Child in the House*.

In particular the editors have for the most part excluded fragmentary extracts, however striking or elegant or famous as purple patches, in the belief that for appreciation of a writer's point of view, form, and style, the unit in which he wrote should be considered. Particularly is this study of literature as units necessary in the case of works significant as historical documents. Thus, for example, both *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Milton's *Areopagitica* have been presented in their entirety. Where space forbade such

presentation, complete books, cantos, or chapters, or other integral portions of the work have been chosen — e-g., the first two books of *Paradise Lost*, the first voyage of *Gulliver's Travels*, the three chapters of *Sartor Resartus* which give the most vital portion of Carlyle's spiritual biography and creed. Omissions have been made only where the substance became clearly unnecessary, or unsuitable, such as the last third of Ruskin's chapter on the *Nature of Gothic*, which is too technical for reading without diagrams. Occasionally the editors have reduced to its fundamental elements a work too important to be omitted, and too long to be reproduced in its entirety, such as Mill's tractate *On Liberty*, and Macaulay's *Essay on Bacon*.

This effort to present units has forced the editors to omit the novel. They believe that the study of a novelist's work in selections is of limited value. For nearly all important novels there are editions easily accessible to be used as supplementary reading. The editors are far from claiming anything like completeness or finality for their list of selections. They hope rather that their work may be a basis for widely intelligent choice and reading in accordance with the student's own interests and tastes, and in addition to any formal academic requirement. In the description of types, references are given to the novel of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which the reader cannot fail to follow with greater understanding and interest through his general acquaintance with the characteristics of their periods as revealed in this book.

The editors have kept in mind the fact that primarily literature is to be read, not studied. They have therefore endeavored to reduce the apparatus for study to a minimum. They have sought to include in the introductions to periods, writers, and works such preliminary information as may be necessary to general understanding, and for details they have been sparing of explanatory footnotes. Absolute consistency of procedure in this matter is both impossible and undesirable. On the whole, the editors have attempted to give such explanations as are indispensable to an immediate understanding of the passage while leaving to the reader the pursuit of allusions which can be traced in generally accessible reference books, histories, encyclopaedias, or classical and biographical dictionaries. Quotations and references to literature have not, in general, been referred to their sources, except when they were obviously intended to be read in connection with the work itself, as, for example, Macaulay's references in his *Essay on Milton*. In such cases usually the author's own notes are sufficient, and these have, wherever practicable, been retained.

The new arrangement of the work in two volumes has given opportunity for considerable enlargement. Additional examples of Old English and Middle English literature have been added. A selection from *Euphues* has been included as an evidence of the social culture of the Elizabethans and of their ornamental style. Defoe, though known chiefly as a writer of fiction, is now given his due importance as a representative of the emerging middle class in the early eighteenth century. The educational interest of the nineteenth century is

more fully presented by the addition of essays by Huxley and Matthew Arnold. Several additional poets of the century have been given representation, and the selections for the major poets expanded. Above all, the additional space at their disposal has enabled the editors to give a fair representation of the historic course of the drama from its primitive source in the mystery, *The Second Shepherds' Play*, through its flowering in the Renaissance in Marlowe's *Faustus* and Jonson's *Volpone*, its modification in the Restoration period in Dryden's *All for Love*, and its revival as social comedy in Sheridan's *A School for Scandal* at the close of the eighteenth century, and in Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* at the close of the nineteenth. Modern realistic comedy is represented by Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. The introductions to periods, authors, and selections have been expanded, and more closely related, to form a fairly complete history of English literature. Together with these changes should be mentioned the improvement in typography and format which the taste and zeal of the publishers have made possible.

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BRITISH
Poetry AND Prose

REVISED EDITION

VOLUME TWO . FROM WORDSWORTH TO YEATS

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Volume "Two

FROM WORDSWORTH TO YEATS

THE *Early Nineteenth Century*

THE HISTORY of the nineteenth century is yet to be written. It was a colossal century, in which occurred throughout the world vital changes, for better or for worse, the culmination of which we have not yet seen. It was not so glamorous as the Elizabethan age, when discoveries in all fields fired the imagination and thrilled people with the feeling that there was progress. It did not have the assurance or the civility of the eighteenth century, "the age of reason." The important discoveries made during this marvelous century, especially in science and technology, aroused in many fears rather than the hopes that were held in the days of the Renaissance and the Virgin Queen. To its beginning one might apply Matthew Arnold's lines:

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

The dawn of the nineteenth century found Europe distracted by war and by doubts. The French Revolution, begun as a movement for freedom and the extension of political rights to the people, had resulted in the general struggle between France and the other powers. In Great Britain, the doctrines of the Revolution had at first been eagerly welcomed by many, as reflecting the spirit of individualism and revolt against a social corruption that had been spreading through Europe in the latter part of the eighteenth century. But the results of the Reign of Terror, in which the Revolution had culminated, disillusioned many Englishmen, especially Wordsworth. The conservative mind, which sees in established institutions—social, political, and religious—the sacred results of a kind of instinctive wisdom on the part of the race, had reacted vigorously against the subversive movement from the beginning. The chief spokesman of this view was Edmund Burke.

After the execution of Louis XVI in 1793, Great Britain declared war against France, and from that time on was the chief mover in the various coalitions against that country. Especially after Napoleon came into power, and tried to force Europe into a tariff union which threatened British trade, Great Britain was involved in a national crisis comparable to that which she had experienced under Elizabeth. Once more the country was threatened

with invasion. And as the struggle with Philip II had led to an extraordinary outburst of patriotism, so did that with Napoleon: the height of national glory reached in the repulse of the Armada was touched again in Nelson's victory at Trafalgar and Wellington's at Waterloo.

In the wars that followed the French Revolution public opinion in England was divided. There were some who still refused to give up the hopes of social reform and human betterment of which the Revolution in its beginning seemed to prophesy a fulfilment. Accordingly we find the British Government resorting to espionage and punishment to suppress opinion hostile to the war. After the fall of Napoleon, the governments of the Great Powers formed the Holy Alliance to prevent any future revolutionary movement; and, although Great Britain did not join this alliance, she held to the policy of repressing sternly all popular demands for reform of institutions or for freedom of discussion.

These demands assumed a menacing significance in consequence of a change in character of the national life — the most significant in its history since the Norman Conquest. Up to the close of the eighteenth century, Great Britain had been, in the main, an agricultural country, with trade centering in a few large towns. A delightful picture of English middle-class society, unconcerned with any problem save that of perpetuating itself, is given in Miss Austen's novels. Early in the nineteenth century, however, a series of mechanical inventions led to the great change in manufacturing which is called the Industrial Revolution. In the case of cloth, for example, the hand-loom operated by a weaver in his cottage was replaced by the power-loom installed in a factory, and these factories became the nuclei of industrial cities, from which goods were sent all over the world. Between 1770 and 1831 the population of Liverpool multiplied five times. The population of Manchester rose from 41,000, in 1774, to 170,000 in 1831. The population of the entire country between 1800 and 1850 rose from 9,000,000, to 18,000,000.

The change from handicraft to machine production threw many workers out of employment, introduced child-labor in factories and mines, and ultimately reduced wages even below the point of actual subsistence. The suffering of the workers found expression in demands for legislation to control the industrial development. The Government persisted in its attitude of repression even after 1815, and popular meetings were dispersed with bloodshed. The victory of the troops at Peter's Field, Manchester, in 1819, became famous in the contemptuous term, "Petticoat." Shelley in Italy, outraged at the news, wrote *The Masque of Anarchy*. The first step necessary to fit the government of Great Britain to changed conditions was the enlargement of the franchise, and the reapportionment of representation in the House of Commons to give recognition to the new centers of population. This reform had been proposed in the preceding century, but, postponed by the war with France, it did not become a matter of practical politics until it was taken up by the Whig Party which came into power in 1830. The Reform Bill was bitterly opposed by the landed aristocracy, which controlled most of the seats in Parliament. Although its benefits were chiefly confined to the middle class, which had grown in numbers and prosperity with the industrial progress of the country, it was valiantly supported by the workers in popular demonstrations, which in London and Bristol resulted in riots. Fear of revolution caused the Tory opposition in the House of Peers to assent to its passage in 1831. Then began the

long ascendancy of middle-class Liberalism, which controlled the politics of the country for a half century. The shortcomings in social philosophy of this political control gave rise to criticism by Carlyle, Ruskin, Tennyson, and Matthew Arnold.

The careers of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey are typical of the changing attitude of many men during the early part of the century. All three were in their twenties when the French Revolution broke out, and all enthusiastically supported it, and opposed the war with France. All suffered somewhat from the persecution, political and social, that was directed against the pro-French. Later all three rallied to the support of established institutions, accepting Burke's view that they were sanctioned by divine guidance and human experience, and opposing democratic reforms in State, Church, and social organization.

Sir Walter Scott was from his youth an advocate of aristocratic control. His martial poetry was an inspiration to his countrymen in time of war; and his novels threw a glamor about the aristocratic institutions which the country was fighting to defend. But at the same time there is, underlying his life and writings, a deep regard for the rustic and the underdog. On the other hand, a group of poets of the succeeding generation were representative of the altered feeling of the time. Byron expressed the weariness of the human spirit in bondage to conventions and institutions, and became to all Europe a voice of protest and revolt. Shelley was a more sincere revolutionist, who had a program of doing away with authority and placing the relations of men and women on a basis of mutual trust and good will. A lesser poet, Thomas Hood, expressed in a few memorable lyrics the sufferings of the exploited workers.

Along with these shifts in society and in government went changes in the character of literature. Poets at this time worked under the urge, felt increasingly since the middle of the eighteenth century, toward the enlargement of the boundaries of poetry both in subject-matter and in technical forms. Wordsworth was the most important influence in this direction. He advanced the theory that the proper subject of poetry was the actual experience of simple country-folk, and that its proper expression was in the words naturally spoken by such people. This view was in opposition to the limitations which the early eighteenth century had accepted as to subject-matter and style, and was in line with the new attitude of men toward humble life. The enlargement of the subject-matter and technique of poetry took place also in other ways, under the impulse of that spirit of individual freedom and impatience of social restraint which is the essence of Romanticism. The poets of the eighteenth century had tended, in their revival of classical tradition, to live together in London, and to seek uniformity in their habits and interests as well as in their style. Among the early nineteenth-century poets, the most powerful instinct was escape from the conventions of society. They did not congregate in London. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey settled in the English Lake country, and became known as the "Lake Poets." Wordsworth made specifically the greatest contribution to modern poetry in giving a new emphasis to men's growing interest in natural scenery. Coleridge let his imagination feed upon his own consciousness, enriched by reading about remote times and places. Scott indulged in romantic reproductions of past ages. Byron and Shelley both became exiles from their native land; and both expressed imaginatively their spirit of

revolt, the one in poetic tales of individual adventure, the other in dreams of revolutionary change. Keats seemed to escape from the tedium of conventional life into the region of art, but seldom in his poems, and scarcely ever in his letters, did he forget the social ills of the day, deciding early in his short life that for him the creating of beauty would be the best means of helping to bring about a better and happier society. And all developed rare and wonderful forms of poetry, to fit themes that could not be dealt with in the prescribed forms of heroic couplet or blank verse.

Prose literature experienced a similar expansion and development, in essay and novel. The essays of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt, lineal descendants from *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, are infinitely richer in imagination and resources of style. Lamb, compelled by circumstances to live in London, found romance in the city streets. Hazlitt, an unconventional genius, at war with society in many ways — particularly in his continued sympathy with the French Revolution — expounded brilliantly and with charm his likes and dislikes. Thomas De Quincey, like Coleridge, used his inner life as material for his most characteristic work, and his vast range of subject-matter is distinguished by its imaginative treatment.

One of the enterprises of the romantic poets was an attempt to revive the poetic drama. Wordsworth with *The Borderers*, and Coleridge with *Remorse*, were followed by Byron with a long list of plays and by Shelley with a great drama, *The Cenci*. Already, however, conditions had begun to be less favorable for the drama than for the novel, in consequence of the increasing importance of a reading public scattered throughout the whole country. This public maintained the interest in the portrayal of real life which had been so strongly manifested in the fiction of the eighteenth century. In succession to Miss Burney appeared Jane Austen, who from her residence in southern England drew lively pictures of village life among the upper middle class. Working strictly within the limits of her own experience, and with an instinctive sense of form, she wrote several masterpieces of which *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Persuasion* (1818) are memorable. John Gait in *The Ayrshire Legatees* (1820) and *Annals of the Parish* (1811) gave lifelike sketches of Scotch people, and Miss Maria Edgeworth wrote of life in Ireland and in London. The most imposing performance in fiction was the appearance of the Waverley Novels by Sir Walter Scott. In 1814 Scott turned from his career as poet to prose fiction, with the anonymous publication of *Waverley*. In his use of the local material and color of Scotland Scott was a realist; but in his love of nature, and particularly in his fascinated view of the past, he shared the chief interest of the Romantic Movement. *Waverley* and its immediate successors *Guy Mannering* (1815) and *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) dealt with nearly contemporary Scottish life; but as this vein began to show exhaustion, Scott carried his large audience to the England of Richard I in *Ivanhoe* (1810), and the France of Louis XI in *Quentin Durward* (1813). Necessarily he became more romantic in his treatment as he wrote of more remote times and places. In dealing with history, however, he gave a higher status to the novel as a work of education as well as entertainment, and he established the vogue of the historical novel throughout Europe as the leading type of prose fiction.

A literary development of great importance in the early nineteenth century was the establishment of the great critical reviews: *The Edinburgh Review* in 1801, *The Quarterly Re-*

view in 1809, *Blackivood's Magazine* in 1817. In the eighteenth century literary magazines tended to become trade journals, house organs of various publishers. The *Edinburgh* started with the definite policy of publishing anonymous articles and paying for them, thus excluding personal favoritism and "puffing." For nearly thirty years Francis Jeffrey was the editor-in-chief and directed the policy of the review. His standard of criticism was the preferences of the group of people, who, in his opinion, were best qualified by natural refinement and education to judge a work of art. This group—leaders in the Whig party—had as little faith in the infallibility of the classics as they had in the theory of the divine right of kings. Their judgments were rigid, especially in regard to the moral tendency of a work. The motto of the magazine was: "The judge is convicted when the guilty are acquitted." Jeffrey had a certain tolerance for romanticism in its popular forms as illustrated by Scott, Byron, and Campbell, but he was utterly blind to its more essential and mystical manifestations in the Lake School, which was his particular abhorrence. Jeffrey was a Whig, a man of reason, and thus was opposed to the war against Napoleon. Since his review was colored by its political attitudes, the Tones established *The Quarterly Review* in 1809, in which Scott and Southey were enlisted. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817) was also Tory in sympathy, and was distinguished by the violence of its satire directed especially against the liberal London writers, Hazlitt, Keats, and Leigh Hunt.

Opposed to the attitude of Jeffrey as a "hanging judge" was that of Coleridge, who pleaded for the right of an author to be judged by his book alone, not by his political views or moral failings. He asserted the true function of the critic to be that of an interpreter, standing between the writer and his readers. He wrote: "He who tells me that there are defects in a new work, tells me nothing which I should not have taken for granted without his information. But he who points out and elucidates the beauties of an original work does indeed give me interesting information." Coleridge believed that ultimate standards of excellence could be drawn from a science of aesthetics deduced from the nature of man. Pending such discovery, Coleridge's followers, Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, cultivated a criticism now known as impressionistic, in which the critic approaches a work of art through his own sensations, and approves or disapproves it according as his feelings are pleasant or the reverse. This attitude is obviously romantic. A field that appealed to these romantic critics was the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, and their half-forgotten contemporaries. Coleridge and Hazlitt lectured on Shakespeare. Lamb published specimens of the dramatic poetry of Marlowe, Webster, Ford, and others, with impressionistic comment, and Lamb, Hazlitt, and De Quincey show in their writings the influence of seventeenth-century prose.

The prose and poetry of the early nineteenth century does not, on the whole, however, suggest the era of industrial problems, political strife, and social tension that was beginning. Scott, Coleridge, and Wordsworth dealt with the French Revolution: Wordsworth celebrated the achievements and heroes of the Napoleonic Wars in splendid occasional verse. Shelley pictured the Golden Age returning; but of the Industrial Revolution through which Great Britain was passing the poets took little notice. Literature, although no longer extensively resident in London, was still something of an institution

apart, carried on by a special caste for a selected audience. Of the changes that were to break down this seclusion, and extend the audience from a group interested in literature as an art, to the vast mass of men and women concerned, in their reading, primarily with life and its issues, the first took place with the passage of the Reform Bill in 1831. Five years later, Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne, and the Victorian Age was officially begun.

The student will find the following works useful: *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vols. XII, XIII (1917), O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, Vols. I and II (1910); H. D. Traill, *Social England*, Vol. VI (1917); W. L. Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, Vol. VI (1910); E. Dowden, *The French Revolution and English Literature* (1897); C. H. Herford, *Age of Wordsworth* (1922), H. A. Taine, *History of English Literature*, Vol. IV (1874); A. Symons, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry* (1909), G. Saintsbury, *A History of Nineteenth Century Literature* (1896), Ernest Bernbaum, *A Guide Through the Romantic Movement* (1930)

William Wordsworth • 1770-1850

William Wordsworth belongs to the small and select group of English poets that includes Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. He wrote much that is commonplace, but his best bears the indisputable stamp of genius.

Wordsworth's life was a long one. Like his poetry, it was simple, calm, and sincere, with only here and there a flare-up of passion or vigorous action. He was born on April 7, 1770, at Cockermouth, in the Lake Country with which his name is forever linked. His mother died when he was eight, and his father five years later. After an elementary education at the village school in Hawkshead, he entered, in 1787, St. John's College, Cambridge, where he cared little for formal studies, preferring to stroll and to read what he pleased. During the year before his graduation he took a walking trip through the Alps, and in 1791, after taking his B.A., he went to France for over a year.

The results of this visit are significant in the poet's development. In France he became engaged in a romantic love affair (uncovered sympathetically by Professors Harper and Lcgouis) and had by Annette Vallon an illegitimate daughter; his faith in nature and in childhood, already strong through the teachings of Rousseau and the circumstances of his upbringing, was increased, and his natural sympathy for the poor and lowly led him, under the influence of the French Revolution, to rebel against all shams and injustice in the social order.

Returning home, without funds and somewhat disillusioned by the Reign of Terror, he decided definitely to become a poet, a determination which was helped measurably by a small legacy from a friend. He accordingly settled with his ever helpful and inspiring sister Dorothy, in Racedown, in Dorsetshire. In 1797 he became a neighbor of Coleridge's at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire. Here Wordsworth planned a monumental work, *The Recluse*, of which *The Recluse* (1800), *The Prelude* (1798-1805), and *The Excursion* (1797-1814), long as they are, are but fragments of the unfinished whole. Of these *The Prelude* (which, dedicated to Coleridge, was not published until 1850, after Wordsworth's death) is by far the

best. It is one of the great autobiographical poems in all literature, recounting, in fourteen books, Wordsworth's life from childhood on, and analyzing minutely and with insight the growth of a poet's mind.

In 1798 he and Coleridge planned a collection of poems in which, using simple language, Wordsworth was to make wonderful the familiar and ordinary, and Coleridge was to make familiar the wonderful and strange. The thin volume called *Lycinal Ballads* in a few years attained a popularity and exerted an influence that has made it a landmark in English literature.

After eight months in Germany (1798-99) where the early part of *The Prelude*, *Lucy Gray*, and the well-known "Lucy" poems were written, Wordsworth moved with his sister to Grasmere, a small village on the shore of one of the loveliest of the English Lakes, and surrounded by a splendid ring of mountains. In 1801 he married his early playmate Mary Hutchmson. Of their five children, two died in 1812. In 1814 he moved to Rydal Mount, a few miles from Grasmere, where he had among his neighbors De Quincey, Coleridge, and Southey. Like Wordsworth, they had chosen to establish themselves in a remote and primitive region, far away from the hurried life of the cities. The year 1843 brought him the laureate'ship. He died on April 23, 1850, and was buried in Grasmere churchyard. Dove Cottage, his very modest Grasmere home, is preserved as a Wordsworth museum.

Wordsworth's life breaks in the middle. During the first half, he was of the revolutionary eighteenth century, trusting his reason and his senses, with the fearlessness and hopefulness of youth. He was courageously nonconforming, with a vigorous optimism and a spontaneity almost pagan. During the latter half of his life these qualities are largely lacking. He foreshadows the "mid-Victorian." His optimism is argued. It is one's duty not to be pessimistic. He is serene, but it is not the serenity that he achieved from the struggle, as in his earlier years, but the calmness of the onlooker. He writes much, but his work is usually perfunctory, seldom inspired. *The Ode to Duty*, written in 1805, is, as Legouis points out, significant of a vital change in Wordsworth.

To Wordsworth poetry is the record and analysis of the human spirit. He strives truthfully to bring out of the chaos of life order and symmetry and all that makes for beauty. This beauty he finds most often when man is in close touch and in harmony with nature. It is for a good reason that he himself lived in the country, in daily association with the out-of-doors. From nature he derived most of his subjects, and in nature he found God manifested. Like Rousseau, he believed in primitive society, a natural state unspoiled by artificialities, where the promptings of elemental emotions, uncorrupted by systems of thought or by governments, would lead humanity directly to goodness and truth and beauty.

Wordsworth is often called a philosophic poet. This is not quite accurate, for he elaborates no great system. He has ideas, but they are the thoughts that come from intuition, what Shelley calls the visitations of the divine to man. This faculty is particularly evident in the lines on *Tintern Abbey*. His greatness lies in his ability to group details or feelings that every one recognizes into a poetic pattern which brings out the larger or the inner truth. *The Ode on Intimations of Immortality* is an excellent example. He does not argue, but arranges and composes. His simplicity and directness in description of natural scenery, his sincerity and kindliness, his meditative pathos, flash from his poems with a quiet, unexpected beauty. His genius removes what Coleridge calls "the film of familiarity," and shows us in simple things the sublime and wonderful that was hitherto hidden. He was able to do this because of his ability to use a simple vocabulary, what he called "a selection of the language really used by men"; and because he possessed an imagination

that stripped from a scene or an event all that was accidental or unessential. Wordsworth accomplished this idealization by a simple process: he stored up the emotions that arose from his experiences with nature and with people, and these emotions, "recollected in tranquility," — to use his phrase — became the material for his poems.

Wordsworth himself has supplied the reader with informing introductions to many of his poems in the notes that he dictated to Miss Isabella Fenwick about 1843. These are given below whenever they exist.

Excellent one-volume editions of the poems are the Cambridge, the Globe, and the Oxford. The best critical biographies are by Legouis, Harper, and Sir Walter Raleigh. See also the essays by Matthew Arnold, Pater, and Swinburne. For reminiscences and contemporary accounts, see Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals, De Quincey, Coleridge, Hazlitt, and Jeffrey. The best edition of *The Prelude* is by E. de Selmcourt (1916), in which is printed the original as well as the later altered versions.

Lines Written in Early Spring

"Actually composed while I was sitting by the side of the brook that runs down from the Comb, in which stands the village of Alford, through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a chosen resort of mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock so as to make a waterfall considerable for that country, and across the pool below had fallen a tree, an ash if I rightly remember, from which rose perpendicularly, boughs in search of trie light intercepted by the deep shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green that for want of sunshine had faded into almost lily-white; and from the underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended long arid beautiful tresses of ivy which waved gently in the breeze that might poetically speaking be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied of course in proportion to the power of water in ihc brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited this spot, after an interval of more than forty years, this interesting feature of the scene was gone. To the owner of the place I could not but regret that the beauty of this retired part of the grounds had not tempted him to make it more accessible by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep along without difficulty." (Wordsworth.)

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link 5
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths; 10

And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure, —
But the least motion which they made, 15
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air,
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there. 20

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?
1798.

Expostulation and Reply

"This poem is a favorite among the Quakers, as I have learnt on many occasions. It was composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in the spring of 1798." (Wordsworth.)

"Why, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books? — that light be-
queathed 5
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

" You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you, 10
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew¹ spake, 15
And thus I made reply: —

"The eye, — it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will. 20

"Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum 25
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come
But we must still be seeking?

"Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may, 30
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."
1798.

The Tables Turned

An Evening Scene on the Same Subject

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head, 5
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long, green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet, 10

¹ A friend who was somewhat unreasonably attached to modern books of moral philosophy. (Wordsworth.)

How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things, 15
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless, —
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings; 25
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things, —
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves; 30
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.
1798.

Lines

Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour July 13, 1798

"No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the *Lyrical Ballads*." (Wordsworth.)

Five years have past; five summers, with the length

Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs

With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, 5

That on a wild, secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-
 tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose them-
 selves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little
 lines 15
 Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral
 farms,
 Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye: 24
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration: — feelings too 30
 Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts 34
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood
 In which the burden of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world, 40
 Is lightened: — that serene and blessed mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us on, —
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep 45
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this
 Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft — 50

In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, 55
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the
 woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!
 And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
 thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60
 The picture of the mind revives again:
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing
 thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope, 65
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was
 when first

I came among these hills; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led: more like a man 70
 Flying from something that he dreads, than
 one

Who sought the thing he loved. For nature
 then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all. — I cannot paint 75
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy
 wood,

Their colors and their forms, were then to me
 An appetite; a feeling and a love, 80
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, nor any interest
 Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is
 past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this 85
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
 Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompense. For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour 89
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample
 power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime 95
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
 A motion and a spirit, that impels 100
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am
 I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty
 world 105
 Of eye, and ear, — both what they half
 create,

And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance, m
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
 For thou art with me here upon the banks
 Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend;¹ and in thy voice I
 catch 116

The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once, 120
 My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform 125
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil
 tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life, 131
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk; 135
 And let the misty mountain-winds be free

¹ His sister, Dorothy.

To blow against thee: and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh!
 then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing
 thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me, 145
 And these my exhortations! Nor, per-
 chance —

If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these
 gleams

Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together; and that I, so long 151
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came
 Unwearied in that service: rather say
 With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years 156
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy
 sake!

1798.

Lucy

Who Lucy was is not known. The only information that Wordsworth has given in regard to the five poems is that they were composed in Germany in 1799 — "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower" in the Hartz Forest.

I

Strange fits of passion have I known:

And I will dare to tell,
 But in the Lover's ear alone,
 What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day 5
 Fresh as a rose in June,
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 All over the wide lea;

With quickening pace my horse drew nigh Those paths so dear to me.		And she I cherished turned her wheel Beside an English fire.	
And now we reached the orchard-plot; And, as we climbed the hill, The sinking moon to Lucy's cot Came near, and nearer still.	15	Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed The bowers where Lucy played; And thine too is the last green field That Lucy's eyes surveyed.	55
In one of those sweet dreams I slept, Kind Nature's gentlest boon! And all the while my eyes I kept On the descending moon.	20	4 Three years she grew in sun and shower; Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower On earth was never sown: This Child I to myself will take; She shall be mine, and I will make A lady of my own.	60
My horse moved on; hoof after hoof He raised, and never stopped: When down behind the cottage roof, At once, the bright moon dropped.		"Myself will to my darling be Both law and impulse: and with me The girl, in rock and plain, In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, Shall feel an overseeing power To kindle or restrain.	65
What fond and wayward thoughts will slide Into a Lover's head! "O mercy!" to myself I cried, "If Lucy should be dead!"	26	2 She dwelt among the untrodden ways Beside the springs of Dove, A maid whom there were none to praise, And very few to love.	70
A violet by a mossy stone Half-hidden from the eye! — Fair as a star, when only one Is shining in the sky.	35	Or up the mountain springs, And hers shall be the breathing balm, And hers the silence and the calm Of mute insensate things.	
She lived unknown, and few could know When Lucy ceased to be; But she is in her grave, and, oh, The difference to me!	40	"The floating clouds their state shall lend To her, for her the willow bend; Nor shall she fail to see Ev'n in the motions of the storm Grace that shall mold the maiden's form By silent sympathy.	80
3 I travelled among unknown men In lands beyond the sea; Nor, England! did I know till then What love I bore to thee.		"The stars of midnight shall be dear To her, and she shall lean her ear In many a secret place Where rivulets dance their wayward round, And beauty born of murmuring sound Shall pass into her face.	85
'Tis past, that melancholy dream! Nor will I quit thy shore A second time; for still I seem To love thee more and more.	45	"And vital feelings of delight Shall rear her form to stately height, Her virgin bosom swell, Such thoughts to Lucy I will give While she and I together live Here in this happy dell."	90
Among thy mountains did I feel The joy of my desire;	50		

- Thus Nature spake — The work was done —
 How soon my Lucy's race was run!
 She died, and left to me 95
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.
- 5
 A slumber did my spirit seal;
 I had no human fears: 100
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.
- No motion has she now, no force;
 She neither hears nor sees;
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course 105
 With rocks, and stones, and trees.
 '799-
- But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen.
- "To-night will be a stormy night, —
 You to the town must go;
 And take a lantern, Child, to light 15
 Your mother through the snow."
- "That, Father! will I gladly do:
 'Tis scarcely afternoon, —
 The minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the moon!" 2'
- At this the father raised his hook,
 And snapped a fagot-band;
 He plied his work; — and Lucy took
 The lantern in her hand.
- Not blither is the mountain roe: 25
 With many a wanton stroke
 Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
 That rises up like smoke.
- The storm came on before its time:
 She wandered up and down; 30
 And many a hill did Lucy climb:
 But never reached the town.
- The wretched parents all that night
 Went shouting far and wide,
 But there was neither sound nor sight 35
 To serve them for a guide.
- At daybreak on the hill they stood
 That overlooked the moor;
 And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
 A furlong from their door. 40
- They wept, — and, turning homeward, cried,
 "In heaven we all shall meet!" —
 When in the snow the mother spied
 The print of Lucy's feet.
- Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
 They tracked the footmarks small; 46
 And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
 And by the long stone wall;
- You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green; 10
 And then an open field they crossed:
 The marks were still the same; 50

Lucy Gray

Or, *Solitude*

"Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment." (Wordsworth.)

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
 And, when I crossed the wild,
 I chanced to see, at break of day,
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew; 5
 She dwelt on a wide moor, —
 The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green; 10

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
 They tracked the footmarks small; 46
 And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
 And by the long stone wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
 The marks were still the same; 50

They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank; 55
And further there were none!

— Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild. 60

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.
1799-

The Simplan Pass

— Brook and road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
And with them did we journey several hours
At a slow step. The immeasurable height
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed, 5
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear blue
sky,
The rocks that muttered close upon our
ears, 10
Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-
side
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
The unfettered clouds and region of the
heavens,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the
light — is
Were all like workings of one mind, the
features
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
Characters of the great Apocalypse,
The types and symbols of Eternity,
Of first, and last, and midst, and without
end. 20
1799-

Michael

A Pastoral Potm

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as *Tlie Brothers*. The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north." (Wordsworth.)

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll,

You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to
face. 5

But, courage! for around that boisterous
brook

The mountains have all opened out them-
selves,

And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone 10
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and
kites

That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude; 13

Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!
And to that simple object appertains

A story — unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved; not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and
hills 25

Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30
For passions that were not my own, and
think

(At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35
 For the delight of a few natural hearts;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his
 name;

An old man, stout of heart, and strong of
 limb.

His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen.
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45
 And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence had he learned the meaning of all
 winds,

Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, he heard the South
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise 51
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.

The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 "The winds are now devising work for me!"

And, truly, at all times, the storm, that
 drives 56

The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
 Up to the mountains: he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the
 heights. 60

So lived he till his eightieth year was past;
 And grossly that man errs, who should sup-
 pose

That the green valleys, and the streams and
 rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
 thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
 breathed 65

The common air; hills, which with vigorous
 step

He had so often climbed; which had im-
 pressed

So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70

Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honorable gain;
 Those fields, those hills — what could they
 less? — had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him 75
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old,
 Though younger than himself full twenty
 years. 80

She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house: two wheels
 she had

Of antique form; this large, for spinning
 wool;

That small, for flax; and if one wheel had
 rest,

It was because the other was at work. 85
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's
 phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a
 storm, 91

The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say,
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone,
 And from their occupations out of doors 96
 The Son and Father were come home, even
 then,

Their labor did not cease; unless when all
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed
 milk, 100

Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet
 when the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
 And his old Father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ 105
 Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's
 edge, no

That in our ancient uncouth country style
 With huge and black projection overbrowed
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim, the Housewife hung a lamp;
 An aged utensil, which had performed 115
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn — and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had
 found,
 And left, the couple neither gay perhaps 120
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with
 hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.

And now, when Luke had reached his eight-
 teenth year,

There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
 Father and Son, while far into the night 125
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.

This light was famous in its neighborhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life 130
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it
 chanced,

Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and
 south,

High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake,
 And from this constant light, so regular 136
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Doth old and young, was named Tiru EVEN-
 ING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of
 years, no
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate, but to Michael's
 heart

This son of his old age was yet more dear —
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood
 of all — 145

Than that a child, more than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking
 thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,

His heart and his heart's joy! For often-
 times

Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime and delight, as is the use 155
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind, 161
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's
 stool

Sat with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of
 shade, 166

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The CLIPPING TREE/ a name which yet it
 bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the
 shade, 170

With others round them, earnest all and
 blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the
 shears. 176

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy
 grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old,
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut 180
 With his own hand a sapling, which he
 hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equip
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed 185
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
 And, to his office prematurely called,
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
 Something between a hindrance and a help;
 And for this cause not always, I believe, 190
 Receiving from his Father hire or praise;

¹ Clipping is the word used in the North of England
 for shearing. (Wordsworth.)

Though nought was left undone which staff,
or voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand

Against the mountain blasts; and to the heights, 195

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there came 200

Feelings and emanations — things which were

Light to the sun and music to the wind;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up:
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year, 205

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less 216
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost. 220
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields. 224
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love 229
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think

That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
And I have lived to be a fool at last 235
To my own family. An evil man

That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him; — but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

"When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.

Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free; 245
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,

Another kinsman, — he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade, — and Luke to him shall go, 250

And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where every one is poor,
What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind 256
Was busy, looking back into past times.

There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,

He was a parish-boy; — at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings,
pence 260

And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbors bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy 265
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor, 268
— And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floored
With marble which he sent from foreign lands.
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was glai

And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel! this scheme
 These two days, has been meat and drink to me. 275
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
 — We have enough; — I wish indeed that I
 Were younger;—but this hope is a good hope.
 — Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best 279
 Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
 — If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
 With a light heart. The Housewife for five days 284
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
 Things needful for the journey of her son.
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
 By Michael's side, she through the last two nights 290
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
 And when they rose at morning she could see
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves 294
 Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
 We have no other Child but thee to lose,
 None to remember; — do not go away,
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice;
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears, 300
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.
 With daylight Isabel resumed her work;
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length 306
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,
 With kind assurances that he would do
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
 To which, requests were added, that forth-
 with 310
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
 The letter was read over; Isabel
 Went forth to show it to the neighbors round;
 Nor was there at that time on English land

A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
 Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
⁴¹ "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
 The Housewife answered, talking much of things
 Which, if at such short notice he should go,
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length 320
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.
 Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead
 Ghyll,
 In that deep valley, Michael had designed
 To build a Sheepfold; and, before he heard
 The tidings of his melancholy loss, 325
 For this same purpose he had gathered up
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's
 edge
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he
 walked:
 And soon as they had reached the place he
 stopped, 330
 And thus the old Man spake to him: — "My
 Son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full
 heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life has been my daily joy. 335
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories, 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should touch
 On things thou canst not know of.—After
 thou 339
 First cam'st into the world — as oft befalls
 To new-born infants — thou didst sleep away
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's
 tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds 345
 Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune;
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-
 lowed month, 349
 And in the open fields my life was passed
 And on the mountains, else I think that thou
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's
 knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke: among these
 hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and
young 354

Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."

Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his
hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see
That these are things of which I need not
speak. 360

— Even to the utmost I have been to thee

A kind and a good Father: and herein

I but repay a gift which I myself

Received at others' hands; for, though now
old

Beyond the common life of man, I still 365

Remember them who loved me in my youth.

Both of them sleep together: here they lived,

As all their Forefathers had done; and when

At length their time was come, they were not
loth

To give their bodies to the family mold. 370

I wished that thou should'st live the life they
lived:

But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,

And see so little gain from threescore years.

These fields were burthene4 when they came
to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more 375

Than half of my inheritance was mine.

I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my
work,

And till these three weeks past the land was
free.

— It looks as if it never could endure 379

Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,

If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good

That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;

Then, pointing to the stones near which they
stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed: 384

"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,

It is a work for me. But, lay one stone,—

Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own
hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both may
live

To see a better day. At eighty-four

I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy
part; 390

I will do mine. — I will begin again

With many tasks that were resigned to thee:

Up to the heights, and in among the storms,

Will I without thee go again, and do

All works which I was wont to do alone, 395

Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless thee,
Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beating
fast

With many hopes; it should be so; — yes —
yes —

I knew that thou could'st never have a wish

To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to
me 400

Only by links of love: when thou art gone,

What will be left to us! — But, I forget

My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,

As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,

When thou art gone away, should evil men

Be thy companions, think of me, my Son, 406

And of this moment; hither turn thy thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear

And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou

May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers
lived, 410

Who, being innocent, did for that cause

Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee
well;

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt
see

A work which is not here: a covenant

'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate 415

Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,

And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke stooped
down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid

The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the sight

The old Man's grief broke from him; to his
heart 421

He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept;

And to the house together they returned.

— Hushed was that House in peace, or seem-
ing peace,

Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn
the Boy 425

Began his journey, and when he had reached

The public way, he put on a bold face;

And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell
prayers, 429

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were
throughout 434

"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."

Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on: and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and
now 439

Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke
began

To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame 445
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing enduring, which else 449
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have conversed with more than one who
well

Remember the old Man, and what he was
Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks 455
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
And listened to the wind, and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance. 459
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man — and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone. 466

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he
seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to
time, 470

He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate

Was sold and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the EVENING
STAR 476

Is gone, — the ploughshare has been through
the ground

On which it stood, great changes have been
wrought

In all the neighborhood: — yet the oak is
left

That grew beside their door; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen 481
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll.

1800.

FROM The Prelude

The poem is dedicated to "a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius," — Coleridge.

In this long poem Wordsworth meant to embody his views on "man, nature, and society," to quote his own words. It is his poetic autobiography and confession of faith, in which are found his reactions to the events in his life, and the development of his philosophy, especially his belief that love of nature leads to love of man, that knowledge comes not so much from thinking as from deep feeling, and that this lofty feeling arises most often when one is in communion with nature.

FROM BOOK I

Childhood and School-Time

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe!¹ 401
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me 406
The passions that build up our human soul;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
But with high objects, with enduring
things —

With life and nature — purifying thus 410
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear, until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me 415

¹ This famous passage, through line 463, was praised highly by Coleridge. "It was written in Germany as a separate poem, and first published in *The Friend*."

With stinted kindness. In November days,
 When vapors rolling down the valley made
 A lonely scene more lonesome, among woods,
 At noon and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
 When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
 Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I went
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine; 422
 Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
 And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and visible for many a mile 426
 The cottage windows blazed through twilight
 gloom,
 I heeded not their summons: happy time
 It was indeed for all of us — for me
 It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
 The village clock tolled six, — I wheeled
 about, 431

Proud and exulting like an untired horse
 That cares not for his home. All shod with
 steel,

We hissed along the polished ice in games
 Confederate, imitative of the chase 435
 And woodland pleasures, — the resounding
 horn,

The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle; with the din
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud; 440
 The leafless trees and every icy crag
 Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the
 west 445

The orange sky of evening died away.
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous
 throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star 450
 That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spin-
 ning still 455

The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs

Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had
 rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round! 460
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
 And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!
 And Souls of lonely places! can I think 466
 A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed
 Such ministry, when ye, through many a year
 Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,
 On caves and trees, upon the woods and hills,
 Impressed, upon all forms, the characters 471
 Of danger or desire; and thus did make
 The surface of the universal earth,
 With triumph and delight, with hope and
 fear,

Work like a sea?
 Not uselessly employed,
 Might I pursue this theme through every
 change 476

Of exercise and play, to which the year
 Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew; the sun in heaven
 Beheld not vales more beautiful than ours;
 Nor saw a band in happiness and joy 481
 Richer, or worthier of the ground they trod.
 I could record with no reluctant voice
 The woods of autumn, and their hazel bowers
 With milk-white clusters hung; the rod and
 line, 485
 True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose
 strong

And unproved enchantment led us on
 By rocks and pools shut out from every star,
 All the green summer, to forlorn cascades
 Among the windings hid of mountain brooks.
 — Unfading recollections! at this hour 491
 The heart is almost mine with which I felt,
 From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,
 The paper kite high among fleecy clouds
 Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser; 495
 Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,
 Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly
 Dashed headlong, and rejected by the storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,
 A ministration of your own was yours; 500

Can I forget you, being as you were
 So beautiful among the pleasant fields
 In which ye stood? or can I here forget
 The plain and seemly countenance with which
 Ye dealt out your plain comforts? Yet had ye
 Delights and exultations of your own. 506
 Eager and never weary we pursued
 Our home-amusements by the warm peat-fire
 At evening, when with pencil, and smooth
 slate

In square divisions parceled out and all 510
 With crosses and with cyphers scribbled o'er,
 We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to
 head

In strife too humble to be named in verse:
 Or round the naked table, snow-white deal,
 Cherry or maple, sate in close array, 515
 And to the combat, Loo' or Whist, led on
 A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world,
 Neglected and ungratefully thrown by
 Even for the very service they had wrought,
 But husbanded through many a long cam-
 paign. 520

Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few
 Had changed their functions: some, plebeian
 cards

Which Fate, beyond the promise of their
 birth,

Had dignified, and called to represent
 The persons of departed potentates. 525
 Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell!
 Ironic diamonds, — clubs, hearts, diamonds,
 spades,

A congregation piteously akin!
 Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,
 Those sooty knaves, precipitated down 530
 With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of
heaven:

The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,
 Queens gleaming through their splendor's
last decay,

And monarchs surly at the wrongs sustained
 By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad 535
 Incessant rain was falling, or the frost
 Raged bitterly, with keen and silent tooth;
 And, interrupting oft that eager game,
 From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of ice
 The pent-up air, struggling to free itself, 540
 Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a loud

**Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves
 Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main.¹**

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace
 How Nature by extrinsic passion first 545
 Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,
 And made me love them, may I here omit
 How other pleasures have been mine, and joys
 Of subtler origin, how I have felt, 549
 Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,
 Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense
 Which seem, in their simplicity, to own
 An intellectual charm; that calm delight
 Which, if I err not, surely must belong
 To those first-born affinities that fit 555
 Our new existence to existing things,
 And, in our dawn of being, constitute
 The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth,
 And twice five summers on my mind had
 stamped 560
 The faces of the moving year, even then
 I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
 Old as creation, drinking in a pure
 Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
 Of curling mist, or from the level plain 565
 Of waters colored by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks and
 bays
 Of Cumbria's rocky limits,² they can tell
 How, when the Sea threw off his evening
 shade,
 And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills 570
 Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,
 How I have stood, to fancies such as these
 A stranger, linking with the spectacle
 No conscious memory of a kindred sight,
 And bringing with me no peculiar sense 575
 Of quietness or peace; yet have I stood,
 Even while mine eye hath moved o'er many
 a league
 Of shining water, gathering as it seemed,
 Through every hair-breadth in that field of
 light,
 New pleasure like a bee among the flowers.

¹ The Gulf of Bothnia, the northern part of the Baltic Sea.

² The Cumbrian Mountains in Westmoreland County.

¹ a card game.

^a Eastwaite Lake near Hawkshead.

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy 581
Which, through all seasons, on a child's
pursuits

Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss
Which, like a tempest, works along the blood
And is forgotten, even then I felt 585
Gleams like the flashing of a shield; — the
earth

And common face of Nature spake to me
Rememberable things; sometimes, 'tis true,
By chance collisions and quaint accidents
(Like those ill-sorted unions, work supposed
Of evil-minded fairies), yet not vain 591

Nor profitless, if haply they impressed
Collateral objects and appearances,
Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep
Until maturer seasons called them forth 595
To impregnate and to elevate the mind.

— And if the vulgar joy by its own weight
Wearied itself out of the memory,
The scenes which were a witness of that joy
Remained in their substantial lineaments 600
Depicted on the brain, and to the eye

Were visible, a daily sight, and thus
By the impressive discipline of fear,
By pleasure and repeated happiness,
So frequently repeated, and by force 605
Of obscure feelings representative
Of things forgotten, these same scenes so
bright,

So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,
Though yet the day was distant, did become
Habitually dear, and all their forms 610
And changeful colors by invisible links
Were fastened to the affections.

FROM BOOK iv

Summer Vacation

'Mid a throng
Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons
staid, 310

A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gayety, and mirth,
With dm of instruments and shuffling feet,
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
And unaimed prattle flying up and down, 315
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
Slight shocks of young love-liking inter-
persed,

Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,

And tingled through the veins. Ere we re-
tired,

The cock had crowed, and now the eastern
sky 320

Was kindling, not unseen, from humble copse
And open field, through which the pathway
wound,

And homeward led my steps. Magnificent
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as e'er I had beheld — in front, 325
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the
clouds,

Grain-tinctured,¹ drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn —
Dews, vapors, and the melody of birds, 331
And laborers going forth to till the fields.

Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim
My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning
greatly, 336

A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

FROM BOOK viii

Retrospect

A rambling schoolboy, thus,
I felt his presence in his own domain,
As of a lord and master, or a power,
Or genius, under Nature, under God,
Presiding, and severest solitude 260
Had more commanding looks when he was
there.

When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,
In size a giant, stalking through thick fog, 266
His sheep like Greenland bears; or, as he
stepped

Beyond the boundary line of some hill-
shadow,

His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
By the deep radiance of the setting sun: 270
Or him have I descried in distant sky,
A solitary object and sublime,
Above all height! like an aerial cross

¹ crimson.

Stationed alone upon a spiry rock
Of the Chartreuse,¹ for worship. Thus was
man 275

Ennobled outwardly before my sight,
And thus my heart was early introduced
To an unconscious love and reverence
Of human nature, hence the human form
To me became an index of delight, 280
Of grace and honor, power and worthiness.
Meanwhile this creature — spiritual almost
As those of books, but more exalted far,
Far more of an imaginative form 284
Than the gay Corin of the groves, who lives
For his own fancies, or to dance by the hour,
In coronal,² with Phyllis in the midst —
Was, for the purposes of kind, a man
With the most common, husband, father;
learned, 289
Could teach, admonish; suffered with the rest
From vice and folly, wretchedness and fear;
Of this I little saw, cared less for it,
But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances —
Which I beheld of shepherds in my youth,
This sanctity of Nature given to man — 295
A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore
On the dead letter, miss the spirit of things,
Whose truth is not a motion or a shape
Instinct with vital functions, but a block
Or waxen image which yourselves have made,
And ye adore! But blessed be the God 301
Of Nature and of Man that this was so,
That men before my inexperienced eyes
Did first present themselves thus purified,
Removed, and to a distance that was fit: 305
And so we all of us in some degree
Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,
And howsoever, were it otherwise,
And we found evil fast as we find good
In our first years, or think that it is found,
How could the innocent heart bear up and
live! 311

But doubly fortunate my Jot; not here
Alone, that something of a better life
Perhaps was round me than it is the privilege
Of most to move in, but that first I looked
At Man through objects that were great or
fair; 316

First communed with him by their help.
And thus

Was founded a sure safeguard and defense
Against the weight of meanness, selfish cares,
Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that beat
in 320

On all sides from the ordinary world
In which we traffic. Starting from this point
I had my face turned toward the truth, bcbap
With an advantage furnished by that kind
Of prepossession, without which the soul
Receives no knowledge that can bring forth
good, 326

No genuine insight ever comes to her.
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,
Happy, and now most thankful that my
walk 330

Was guarded from too early intercourse
With the deformities of crowded life,
And those ensuing laughters and contempts,
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to
think 334

With a due reverence on earth's rightful lord,
Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,
Will not permit us, but pursue the mind,
That to devotion willingly would rise,
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

FROM BOOK ix

Residence in France

A band of military Officers, 125
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates: some of these wore swords
That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
Were men well-born, the chivalry of France.
In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart, alike 131
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done:
This was their rest and only hope, therewith
No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come; nor would have
stirred, 136
Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to
stir,
In anything, save only as the act
Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by
years,
Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile

¹ Mountains near Grenoble, where the chief house of
the Carthusian order is situated.
headband.

He had sat lord in many tender hearts; 141
Though heedless of such honors now, and
changed:

His temper was quite mastered by the times,
And they had blighted him, had eaten away
The beauty of his person, doing wrong 145
Alike to body and to mind: his port,
Which once had been erect and open, now
Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,
As much as any that was ever seen, 151
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,
That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man, 156
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow
cheek

Into a thousand colors; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his
touch

Continually, like an uneasy place 160
In his own body. 'Twas m truth an hour
Of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated, and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds. 165

The soil of common life was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
And not then only, "What a mockery this
Of history, the past and that to come!
Now do I feel how all men are deceived, 170
Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;
Oh! laughter for the page that would reflect
To future times the face of what now is!"

The land all swarmed with passion, like a
plain 175

Devoured by locusts, — Carra, Gorsas, — add
A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more, yet, they were
powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by day,
And felt through every nook of town and
field. 180

.

Meantime, day by day, the roads
Were crowded with the bravest youth of
France,

And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
In gallant soldiership, and posting on 265
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.

Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep —
I wept not then, — but tears have dimmed
my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time, 270
Domestic severings, female fortitude
At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence; 274
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,
And for a moment, men from far with sound
Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,
Entering the city, here and there a face,
Or person, singled out among the rest,
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such; 280
Even by these passing spectacles my heart
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the
cause

Good, pure, which no one could stand up
against, 284

Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,
Mean, miserable, willfully depraved,
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,¹
Already hinted at, of other mold —
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest, 290
And with an oriental loathing spurned,
As of a different caste. A meeker man
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries 294
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature then
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,
When foot hath crushed them. He through
the events

Of that great change wandered in perfect
faith, 299

As through a book, an old romance or tale
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought
Behind' the summer clouds. By birth he
ranked

With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound,
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed 305
To a religious order. Man he loved

¹ Michel de Beaupuy (1755-1796).

As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,
 And all the homely in their homely works,
 Transferred a courtesy which had no air
 Of condescension, but did rather seem 310
 A passion and a gallantry, like that
 Which he, a soldier, in his idler day
 Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,
 Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,
 But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy 315
 Diffused around him, while he was intent
 On works of love or freedom, or revolved
 Complacently the progress of a cause,
 Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek
 And placid, and took nothing from the man
 That was delightful. Oft in solitude 321
 With him did I discourse about the end
 Of civil government, and its wisest forms;
 Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,
 Custom and habit, novelty and change; 325
 Of self-respect, and virtue in the few
 For patrimonial honor set apart,
 And ignorance in the laboring multitude.
 For he, to all intolerance indisposed, 329
 Balanced these contemplations in his mind;
 And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped
 Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment
 Than later days allowed; carried about me,
 With less alloy to its integrity, 334
 The experience of past ages, as, through help
 Of books and common life, it makes sure way
 To youthful minds, by objects over near
 Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled
 By struggling with the crowd for present ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find
 Error without excuse upon the side 341
 Of them who strove against us, more delight
 We took, and let this freely be confessed,
 In painting to ourselves the miseries
 Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life 345
 Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul
 The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,
 True personal dignity, abideth not;
 A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off 349
 From the natural inlets of just sentiment,
 From lowly sympathy and chastening truth;
 Where good and evil interchange their names,
 And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired
 With vice at home. We added dearest
 Themes —
 Man and his noble nature, as it is 355

The gift which God has placed within his
 power,
 His blind desires and steady faculties
 Capable of clear truth, the one to break
 Bondage, the other to build liberty
 On firm foundations, making social life, 360
 Through knowledge spreading and imperish-
 able,
 As just in regulation, and as pure
 As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honorable deeds
 Of ancient Story, thought of each bright
 spot,
 That would be found in all recorded time, 366
 Of truth preserved and error passed away;
 Of single spirits that catch the flame from
 Heaven,
 And how the multitudes of men will feed
 And fan each other; thought of sects, how
 keen 370
 They arc to put the appropriate nature on,
 Triumphant over every obstacle
 Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,
 And what they do and suffer for their creed;
 How far they travel, and how long endure,
 How quickly mighty Nations have been
 formed, 376
 From least beginnings, how, together locked
 By new opinions, scattered tribes have made
 One body, spreading wide as clouds in heaven.
 To aspirations then of our own minds 380
 Did we appeal, and, finally, beheld
 A living confirmation of the whole
 Before us, in a people from the depth
 Of shameful imbecility uprisen, 384
 Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
 Upon their virtues, saw, in rudest men,
 Self-sacrifice the firmest, generous love,
 And continence of mind, and sense of right,
 Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

And when we chanced
 One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl, 510
 Who crept along fitting her languid gait
 Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord
 Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the
 lane
 Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid
 hands

Was busy knitting in a heartless mood 515
 Of solitude, and at the sight my friend
 In agitation said, " 'Tis against *that*
 That we are fighting," I with him believed
 That a benignant spirit was abroad
 Which might not be withstood, that poverty
 Abject as this would in a little time 521
 Be found no more, that we should see the
 earth

Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
 The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,
 All institutes for ever blotted out 525
 That legalized exclusion, empty pomp
 Abolished, sensual state and cruel power
 Whether by edict of the one or few;
 And finally, as sum and crown of all, 529
 Should see the people having a strong hand
 In framing their own laws, whence better days
 To all mankind. But, these things set apart,
 Was not this single confidence enough
 To animate the mind that ever turned
 A thought to human welfare? That hence-
 forth 535

Captivity by mandate without law
 Should cease, and open accusation lead
 To sentence in the hearing of the world,
 And open punishment, if not the air
 Be free to breathe in, and the heart of man 540
 Dread nothing. From this height I shall not
 stoop

To humbler matter that detained us off
 In thought or conversation, public acts,
 And public persons, and emotions wrought
 Within the breast, as ever-varying winds 545
 Of record or report swept over us;
 But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,
 Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,
 That prove to what low depth had struck
 the roots,
 How widely spread the boughs, of that old
 tree 550

Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul
 And black dishonor, France was weary of.

FROM BOOK X

Residence in France

For myself, I own
 That this particular strife had wanted power
 To rivet my affections; nor did now 255
 Its unsuccessful issue much excite

My sorrow; for I brought with me the faith
 That, if France prospered, good men would
 not long

Pay fruitless worship to humanity, 259
 And this most rotten branch of human shame,
 Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains
 Would fall together with its parent tree.
 What, then, were my emotions, when in arms
 Britain put forth her free-born strength in
 league,

Oh, pity and shame! with those confederate
 Powers! 265

Not in my single self alone I found,
 But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,
 Change and subversion from that hour. No
 shock

Given to my moral nature had I known 269
 Down to that very moment; neither lapse
 Nor turn of sentiment that might be named
 A revolution, save at this one time;
 All else was progress on the self-same path
 On which, with a diversity of pace,
 I had been travelling: this a stride at once 275
 Into another region. As a light
 And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze
 On some grey rock — its birth-place — so
 had I

Wantoned, fast rooted on the ancient tower
 Of my beloved country, wishing not 280
 A happier fortune than to wither there:
 Now was I from that pleasant station torn
 And tossed about in whirlwind. I rejoiced,
 Yea, afterwards — truth most painful to
 record! —

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul, 285
 When Englishmen by thousands were o'er-
 thrown,

Left without glory on the field, or driven,
 Brave hearts! to shameful flight. It was a
 grief, —

Grief call it not, 'twas anything but that, —
 A conflict of sensations without name, 290
 Of which *he* only, who may love the sight
 Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,
 When, in the congregation bending all
 To their great Father, prayers were offered up,
 Or praises for our country's victories; 295
 And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance
 I only, like an uninvited guest
 Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall I add,
 Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh! much have they to account for, who
 could tear, 300
 By violence, at one decisive rent,
 From the best youth in England their dear
 pride,
 Their joy, in England; this, too, at a time
 In which worst losses easily might wean
 The best of names, when patriotic love 305
 Did of itself in modesty give way,
 Like the Precursor when the Deity
 Is come Whose harbinger he was, a time
 In which apostasy from ancient faith
 Seemed but conversion to a higher creed; 310
 Withal a season dangerous and wild,
 A time when sage Experience would have
 snatched
 Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose
 A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

When the proud fleet that bears the red-
 cross flag¹ 315
 In that unworthy service was prepared
 To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,
 A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;
 I saw them in their rest, a sojourner
 Through a whole month of calm and glassy
 days 320
 In that delightful island which protects
 Their place of convocation — there I heard,
 Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,
 A monitory sound that never failed, —
 The sunset cannon. While the orb went down
 In the tranquillity of nature, came 325
 That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard by me
 Without a spirit overcast by dark
 Imaginations, sense of woes to come, 329
 Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

FROM BOOK xi

France (concluded)

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!² 105
 For mighty were the auxihars which then
 stood
 Upon our side, us who were strong in love!
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
 But to be young was very heaven! — O times,

¹ British ensign.

² These lines were originally published in Coleridge's magazine, *The Friend*, with the title, *French Revolutw' as it Appeared to Enthusiasts at its Commencement*.

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
 Of custom, law, and statute took at once m
 The attraction of a country in romance'
 When Reason seemed the most to assert her
 rights,
 When most intent on making of herself 114
 A prime enchantress — to assist the work,
 Which then was going forward in her name!
 Not favored spots alone, but the whole earth
 The beauty wore of promise — that which
 sets
 (As at some moments might not be unfelt
 Among the bowers of Paradise itself) 120
 The budding rose above the rose full-blown.
 What temper at the prospect did not wake
 To happiness unthought of? The inert
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
 They who had fed their childhood upon
 dreams, 125
 The playfellows of fancy, — who had made
 All powers of swiftness, subtil ty, and strength
 Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had
 stirred
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there
 As if they had within some lurking right 131
 To wield it,— they, too, who of gentle mood
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
 more mild,
 And in the region of their peaceful selves, —
 Now was it that both found, the meek and
 lofty 136
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields, 140
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
 But in the very world, which is the world
 Of all of us, — the place where, in the end,
 We find our happiness, or not at all!

.

Enough, 'tis true — could such a plea ex-
 cuse
 Those aberrations—had the clamorous friends
 Of ancient Institutions said and done 261
 To bring disgrace upon their very names;
 Disgrace, of which, custom and written law,
 And sundry moral sentiments as props
 Or emanations of those institutes, 265

Too justly bore a part. A veil had been
Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in sooth,
'Twas even so; and sorrow for the man
Who either had not eyes wherewith to see,
Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong shock 270
Was given to old opinions, all men's minds
Had felt its power, and mine was both let
loose,

Let loose and goaded. After what hath been
Already said of patriotic love,
Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat stern
In temperament, withal a happy man, r/6
And therefore bold to look on painful things,
Free likewise of the world, and thence more
bold,

I summoned my best skill, and toiled, intent
To anatomize the frame of social life; 280
Yea, the whole body of society
Searched to its heart. Share with me, Friend!
the wish

That some dramatic tale, endued with shapes
Livelier, and flinging out less guarded wordb
Than suit the work we fashion, might set
forth 285

What then I learned, or think I learned, of
truth,

And the errors into which I fell, betrayed
By present objects, and by reasonings false
From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn
Out of a heart that had been turned aside 290
From Nature's way by outward accidents,
And which was thus confounded, more and
more

Misguided, and misguiding. So I fared,
Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims,
creeds,

Like culprits to the bar, calling the mind, ws
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
Her titles and her honors, now believing,
Now disbelieving, endlessly perplexed
With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the
ground

Of obligation, what the rule and whence 300
The sanction, till, demanding formal *proof*,
And seeking it in every thing, I lost
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
Sick, wearied out with contrarities,
Yielded up moral questions in despair. 305

This was the crisis of that strong disease,
This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I drooped,

Deeming our blessed reason of least use
Where wanted most: "The lordly attributes
Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed, 310
"What arc they but a mockery of a Being
Who hath in no concerns of his a test
Of good and evil, knows not what to fear
Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;
And who, if those could be discerned, would
yet 315

Be little profited, would see, and ask
Where is the obligation to enforce?
And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,
As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;
The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime." 320

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not
walk

With scoffers, seeking ¹ight and gay revenge
From indiscriminate 1/ughter, nor sate down
In reconciliation with an utter waste
Of intellect, such sloth I could not brook, 325
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear
reward)

But turned to abstract science, and there
sought

Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
Where the disturbances of space and time - 330
Whether in matters various, properties
Inherent, or from human will and power
Derived — find no admission. Then it was —
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good! —
That the beloved Sister in whose sight 33s
Those days were passed, now speaking in a
voice

Of sudden admonition - like a brook
That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a
league — 340

Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self, for, though bedimmed and
changed

Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
Than as a clouded and a waning moon:
She whispered still that brightness would
return, 345

She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth;
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,

If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,
 By all varieties of human love 351
 Assisted, led me back through opening day
 To those sweet counsels between head and
 heart
 Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught
 with peace,
 Which, through the later sinkings of this
 cause, 355
 Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now.

FROM BOOK xii

Imagination and Taste

There are in our existence spots of time,¹
 That with distinct pre-eminence retain
 A renovating virtue, whence — depressed 210
 By false opinion and contentious thought,
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
 In trivial occupations, and the round
 Of ordinary intercourse — our minds
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired; 215
 A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
 That penetrates, enables us to mount,
 When high, more high, and lifts us up when
 fallen.

This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
 Among those passages of life that give 220
 Profoundest knowledge to what point, and
 how,
 The mind is lord and master — outward
 sense
 The obedient servant of her will. Such mo-
 ments 223

Are scattered everywhere, taking their dare
 From our first childhood. I remember well,
 That once, while yet my inexperienced hand
 Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud hopes
 I mounted, and we journeyed towards the
 hills:

An ancient servant of my father's house
 Was with me, my encourager and guide: 230
 We had not travelled long, ere some mischance
 Disjoined me from my comrade; and, through
 fear
 Dismounting, down the rough and stony
 moor

I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length
 Came to a bottom, where in former times

¹ In his famous theory here outlined Wordsworth
 had implicit faith.

A murderer had been hung in iron chains. 236
 The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the
 bones
 And iron case were gone; but on the turf,
 Hard by, soon after that fell deed was
 wrought,
 Some unknown hand had carved the murder-
 er's name. 240
 The monumental letters were inscribed
 In times long past, but still, from year to
 year

By superstition of the neighborhood,
 The grass is cleared away, and to this hour
 The characters are fresh and visible: 245
 A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road!
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
 The beacon on the summit, and, more near,
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head, 251
 And seemed with difficult steps to force her
 way
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,
 An ordinary sight; but I should need
 Colors and words that are unknown to man,
 To paint the visionary dreariness 256
 Which, while I looked all round for my lost
 guide,

Invested moorland waste and naked pool,
 The beacon crowning the lone eminence,
 The female and her garments vexed and tossed
 By the strong wind. When, in the blessed
 hours 261

Of early love, the loved one at my side,
 I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,
 Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
 And on the melancholy beacon, fell 265
 A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam;
 And think ye not with radiance more sub-
 lime

For these remembrances, and for the power
 They had left behind? So feeling comes in aid
 Of feeling, and diversity of strength 270
 Attends us, if but once we have been strong.
 Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth
 Proceed thy honors. I am lost, but see
 In simple childhood something of the base
 On which thy greatness stands, but this I
 feel, 275
 That from thyself it comes, that thou must
 give.

Else never canst receive. The days gone by
 Return upon me almost from the dawn
 Of life: the hiding-places of man's power 279
 Open, I would approach them, but they close.
 I see by glimpses now, when age comes on,
 May scarcely see at all, and I would give,
 While yet we may, as far as words can give,
 Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,
 Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past 285
 For future restoration — Yet another
 Of these memorials: —

One Christmas-time,¹

On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
 Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth
 Into the fields, impatient for the sight 290
 Of those led palfreys that should bear us
 home,
 My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,
 That, from the meeting-point of two high-
 ways
 Ascending, overlooked them both, far
 stretched;

Thither, uncertain on which road to fix 295
 My expectation, thither I repaired,
 Scout-like, and gained the -summit; 'twas a
 day

Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the
 grass

I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall; 299
 Upon my right hand couched a single sheep,
 Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood;
 With those companions at my side, I watched,
 Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
 Gave intermitting prospect of the copse
 And plain beneath. Ere we to school re-
 turned, — 305

That dreary time, — ere we had been ten
 days

Sojourners in my father's house, he died;
 And I and my three brothers, orphans then,
 Followed his body to the grave. The event,
 With all the sorrow that it brought, ap-
 peared 310

A chastisement, and when I called to mind
 That day so lately past, when from the crag
 I looked in such anxiety of hope;
 With trite reflections of morality,
 Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low 315
 To God, Who thus corrected my desires,
 And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,

¹In 1783.

And all the business of the elements,
 The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
 And the bleak music from that old stone
 wall, 320

The noise of wood and water, and the mist
 That on the line of each of those two roads
 Advanced in such indisputable shapes;
 All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
 To which I oft repaired, and thence would
 drink, 325

As at a fountain; and on winter nights,
 Down to this very time, when storm and rain
 Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
 While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
 Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
 In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
 Some inward agitations thence are brought,
 Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
 Thoughts over busy in the course they took
 Or animate an hour of vacant ease. 335

FROM BOOK xii

Imagination and Taste

— Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I feel
 How we mislead each other; above all,
 How books mislead us, seeking their reward
 From judgments of the wealthy Few, who see
 By artificial lights, how they debase 210
 The Many for the pleasure of those Few;
 Effeminately level down the truth
 To certain general notions, for the sake
 Of being understood at once, or else
 Through want of better knowledge in the
 heads 215
 That framed them; flattering self-conceit with
 words,
 That, while they most ambitiously set forth
 Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
 Whereby society has parted man
 From man, neglect the universal heart. 220

Here, calling up to mind what then I saw,
 A youthful traveller, and see daily now
 In the familiar circuit of my home,
 Here might I pause, and bend in reverence
 To Nature, and the power of human minds, 225
 To men as they are men within themselves.
 How oft high service is performed within,
 When all the external man is rude in show, —
 Not like a temple rich with porap and gold,

But a mere mountain chapel, that protects 230
 Its simple worshippers from sun and shower.
 Of these, said I, shall be my song, of these,
 If future years mature me for the task,
 Will I record the praises, making verse
 Deal boldly with substantial things; in
 truth 235

And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
 That justice may be done, obeisance paid
 Where it is due: thus haply shall I teach,
 Inspire; through unadulterated ears
 Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope, — my
 theme 240

No other than the very heart of man,
 As found among the best of those who live —
 Not unexalted by religious faith,
 Nor uninformed by books, good books,
 though few —

In Nature's presence: thence may I select 215
 Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight;
 And miserable love, that is not pain
 To hear of, for the glory that redounds
 Therefrom to human kind, and what we
 are.

Be mine to follow with no timid step 250
 Where knowledge leads me: it shall be my
 pride

That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
 Speaking no dream, but things oracular;
 Matter not lightly to be heard by those
 Who to the letter of the outward promise 255
 Do read the invisible soul, by men adroit
 In speech, and for communion with the world
 Accomplished, minds whose faculties are
 then

Most active when they are most eloquent,
 And elevated most when most admired. 260
 Men may be found of other mold than these,
 Who are their own upholders, to them-
 selves

Encouragement, and energy, and will,
 Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
 As native passion dictates. Others, too, 265
 There are among the walks of homely life
 Still higher, men for contemplation framed,
 Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;
 Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would
 sink

Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse:
 Theirs is the language of the heavens, the
 power, 271

The thought, the image, and the silent joy:
 Words are but under-agents in their souls,
 When they are grasping with their greatest
 strength,

They do not breathe among them: this I
 speak 275

In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts
 For His own service, knoweth, loveth us,
 When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive
 Convictions still more strong than heretofore,
 Not only that the inner frame is good, 281
 And graciously composed, but that, no less,
 Nature for all conditions wants not power
 To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,
 The outside of her creatures, and to breathe
 Grandeur upon the very humblest face 286
 Of human life. I felt that the array
 Of act and circumstance, and visible form,
 Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind
 What passion makes them, that meanwhile
 the forms 290

Of Nature have a passion in themselves,
 That intermingles with those works of man
 To which she summons him, although the
 works

Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own;
 And that the Genius of the Poet hence 295
 May boldly take his way among mankind
 Wherever Nature leads, that he hath stood
 By Nature's side among the men of old,
 And so shall stand for ever.

My Heart Leaps Up

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere." (Words-
 worth.)

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began,

So is it now I am a man,

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man:

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802.

¹ i.e., reverence for God as He appears manifested in
 nature.

To the Cuckoo

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere." (Wordsworth.)

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass 5
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From lull to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers, 10
Thou binnest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing, 15
A voice, a mystery,

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways,
In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet; 25
Can he upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be 30
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for thee!

1804.

Resolution and Independence

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old Man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over

Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's, at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell." (Wordsworth.)

There was a roaring in the wind all night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
The birds are singing in the distant woods;
Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove 5
broods; 5
The jay makes answer as the magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on the 10
moors 10

The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth
run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor; 15
I saw the hare that raced about with joy,
I heard the woods and distant waters roar,
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart employ: 19
My old remembrances went from me wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low; 25
To me that morning did it happen so;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts, I knew not,
nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky;
And I bethought me of the playful hare: 30
Even such a happy child of earth am I,
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;
Far from the world I walk, and all from care;
But there may come another day to me, —
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.
My whole life I have lived in pleasant
thought, 36

As if life's business were a summer mood;
 As if all needful things would come unsought
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
 But how can he-expect that others should 40
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed
 at all?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
 The sleepless soul that perished in his pride;
 Of him¹ who walked in glory and in joy, 45
 Following his plough, along the mountain-
 side:

By our own spirits we are deified:
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
 But thereof come in the end despondency and
 madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had
 striven,

Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven,
 I saw a man before me unawares: 55
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray
 hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
 Wonder to all who do the same espy,
 By what means it could thither come, and 60
 whence:

So that it seems a thing endued with sense; —
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
 Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself;—

Such seemed this man, not all alive nor dead,
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age: 65
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage;
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame
 had cast. 70

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
 Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood:
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood
¹ Burns.

Motionless as a cloud the old man stood, 75
 That heareth not the loud winds when they
 call,
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
 Upon that muddy water, which he conned,
 As if he had been reading in a book: 81
 And now a stranger's privilege I took;
 And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
 "This morning gives us promise of a glorious
 day."

A gentle answer did the old man make, 85
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly
 drew;

And him with further words I thus bespake:
 "What occupation do you there pursue?
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise 90
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid
 eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
 But each in solemn order followed each,
 With something of a lofty utterance drest, —
 Choice word and measured phrase, above the
 reach 95

Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
 Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and man
 their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come
 To gather leeches, being old and poor: 100
 Employment hazardous and wearisome!
 And he had many hardships to endure:
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to
 moor,

Housing, with God's good help, by choice or
 chance;
 And in this way he gained an honest mainte-
 nance. 105

The old man still stood talking by my side;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I
 divide;
 And the whole body of the man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream;

Or like a man from some far region sent, III
To give me human strength, by apt admonish-
ment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear that
kills
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills; 115
And mighty poets in their misery dead.
— Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
"How is it that you live, and what is it you
do?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat; 120
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the pools where they abide.
"Once I could meet with them on every side;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I
may." 126

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape, and speech, — all
troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually, 130
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse
renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind, 135
But stately in the main; and when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn, to find
In that decrepit man so firm a mind.
"God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely
moor!" 140
1802.

Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802.

"Written on the roof of a coach, on my way to
France." (Wordsworth.)

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare, 5
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky, —
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill; 10
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep I
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!
1802.

Composed by the Seaside Near Calais, August, 1802

Fair Star of evening, Splendor of the west,
Star of my Country! — on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to
sink

On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest 5
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and
should'st wink,

Bright Star! with laughter on her banners,
drest

In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.
1802.

It is a Beauteous Evening Calm and Free

"This was composed on the beach near Calais,
in the autumn of 1802." (Wordsworth.)

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the
Sea: 5
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,

And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
Dear Child!¹ dear Girl! that walkest with me
here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine: n
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.
1802

On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic²

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West, the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free; 5
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse³ the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength de-
cay, — 10
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the
shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.
1802.

To Toussaint L'Ouverture⁴

Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless
den; —
O miserable Chieftain! where and when 5

¹ Wordsworth's French daughter, Caroline.

² By Napoleon, in 1797.

³ Referring to the annual ceremony when the Doge of Venice married the Adriatic by tossing a ring into its waters.

The Haitian general, son of African slaves, who abolished slavery on the island of Santo Domingo. After a successful resistance to the French, he was captured in iBoi and imprisoned in Paris, where he died the following year, shortly after Wordsworth's sonnet was written.

Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left
 behind
Powers that will work for thee, air, earth,
 and skies; 10
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.
1802

Near Dover, September, 1801

Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood,
And saw, while sea was calm and air was
clear,
The coast of France — the coast of France
how near!
Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood 5
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters, yet what power is there!
What mightiness for evil and for good!
Even so doth God protect us if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters
roll, 10
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free

Written in London, 1801

"This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap as it is called, so late as

two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was /may be found in my Tract on the Convention of Gintra, as well as in these Sonnets." (Wordsworth.)

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,
cook,
Or groom! — We must run glittering like a
brook s
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best.
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore: 10
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

London, 1802.

Milton¹ thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower 5
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
Oh! raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the
sea, 10
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness, and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

To the Daisy

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere." (Wordsworth.)

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy! again I talk to thee
For thou art worthy,

Thou unassuming Common-place 5
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit and play with similes, 10
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising:
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame
As is the humor of the game, 15
While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport 20
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest,
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye 25
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next — and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish, and behold!
A silver shield with boss of gold 30
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar —
And then thou art a pretty star,
Not quite so fair as many are 35
In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; —
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee! 40

Sweet Flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent Creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air, 45
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!
1802.

When I Have Borne in Memory

When I have borne in memory what has
tamed
Great nations; how ennobling thoughts de-
part
When men change swords for ledgers, and
desert
The student's bower for gold, — some fears
unnamed
I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed? 5
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou
art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men; 10
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!
1802.

At the Grave of Burns, 1803

"For illustration, see my Sister's Journal."
(Wordsworth.)

Seven Years After His Death

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold:
As vapors breathed from dungeons cold,
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mold 5
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain; 10
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! — away
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to
stay;
With chastened feelings would I pay 15
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted"¹ forth, 20
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow, 25
The struggling heart, where be they now?
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave. 30

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne 35
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends, —
Huge CrirTel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw² seen, — 49
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined, 45
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"³ 50
At this dread moment — even so —
Might we together
Have sat and talked where gowans⁴ blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach; of knowledge graced 56
By fancy what a rich repeat!
But why go on? —
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown. 60

¹ See Burns' *To a Mountain Daisy*.

² A mountain in Cumberland, not far from Scotland.

» See Burns' *A Bard's Epitaph*. < daisies.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
 (Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight!
 Yet one to which is not denied 65
 Some sad delight:

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
 Hath early found among the dead,
 Harbored where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distressed; 70
 And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,
 May He who halloweth the place 75
 Where Man is laid
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear, 80
 Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
 Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.
 1803.

The Solitary Reaper

This and the preceding poem were written in Scotland during the tour that Wordsworth made with his sister and Coleridge.

Behold her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass!
 Reaping and singing by herself;
 Stop here, or gently pass!
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
 And sings a melancholy strain;
 O listen! for the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands 10
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands:
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago: ao
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again f

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang 25
 As if her song could have no ending;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending; —
 I listened, motionless and still;
 And, as I mounted up the hill, 30
 The music in my heart I bore
 Long after it was heard no more.
 1803.

She Was a Phantom of Delight

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verse on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious." (Wordsworth.)

She¹ was a phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;
 A lovely apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament;
 Her eyes as stars of twilight fair; 5
 Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
 A dancing shape, an image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit yet a Woman too!
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin-liberty;
 A countenance in which did meet 15
 Sweet records, promises as sweet;
 A creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food,
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

¹ Wordsworth's wife, Mary Hutchinson.

And now I see with eye serene 21
The very pulse of the machine,
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will, 25
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light. 30
1804.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves." (Wordsworth.)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay: 10
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay, 15
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood, 20
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Elegiac Stanzas

Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle in a Storm, Painted by Sir George Beaumont

"Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs. Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it; but Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it." (Wordsworth.)

I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee;
I saw thee every day, and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air! 5
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there,
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm' it seemed no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or
 brings: 10
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw; and add the
gleam,

The light that never was, on sea or land, 15
The consecration, and the Poet's dream.

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

Thou shouldst have seem'd a treasure-house
divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine,
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease, 25
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have
made: 30

And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control;
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul. 36

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind
serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, friend! who would have
been the friend,
If he had lived, of him¹ whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend,
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

Oh, 'tis a passionate work! — yet wise and
well, 45
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time, 51
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling
waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known, 55
Is to be pitied, for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn. 60
1805.

Ode to Duty

"This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode to Fortune. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten

¹ Wordsworth's brother John, a sea-captain, who was lost with his ship in 1805.

this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been, from hour to hour, from day to day: I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us.

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed nisi recte facere non possim." (Wordsworth.)

[I am inclined to be good not through wisdom but by habit, so that I not merely act right, but cannot act unless it is right.]

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law 5
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail human-
ity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth 10
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced 15
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power!
around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security. 20
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their
need.

I, loving freedom, and untried, 25
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if
I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,
 I supplicate for thy control, 35
 But in the quietness of thought:
 Me this unchartered freedom tires;
 I feel the weight of chance-desires:
 My hopes no more must change their name;
 I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
 The Godhead's most benignant grace;
 Nor know we anything so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face:
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds, 45
 And fragrance in thy footing treads;
 Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
 And the most ancient Heavens, through
 Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
 I call thee: I myself commend 50
 Unto thy guidance from this hour;
 O let my weakness have an end!
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,
 The spirit of self-sacrifice;
 The confidence of reason give; 55
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me
 live.
 1805.

To a Skylark

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
 For thy song, Lark, is strong;
 Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
 Singing, singing,
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing, 5
 Lift me, guide me till I find
 That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
 And to-day my heart is weary;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine;
 Lift me, guide me high and high
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky. 15

Joyous as morning,
 Thou art laughing and scorning;

Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark! thou wouldst be loth 20
 To be such a traveller as I.
 Happy, happy liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both! 25

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must
 wind;
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's day
 is done.
 1805.

Character of the Happy Warrior

"The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honor of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His mess-mates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that, the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound." (Wordsworth.)

In the lines quoted above Wordsworth has given his account of the genesis of the poem. His happy warrior, however, is not a military man in the narrow sense of the word. He is not a Nelson or a Wellington, but rather Wordsworth himself or his brother John. Note in the poem the recurrence of some of Wordsworth's favorite themes: the glories of childhood; nature and intuition as sources of wisdom; the insistence upon duty, especially in keeping to a trust or to a "law in calmness made"; and the emphasis upon moral goodness, simplicity, gentleness, and faith.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
— It is the generous spirit, who, when
brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish
thought: 5

Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always
bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to
learn; 9

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care,
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!

Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power 15
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, be-
reaves

Of their bad influence, and their good re-
ceives:

By objects, which might force the soul to
abate

Her feeling, rendered more compassionate; 20
Is placable, — because occasions rise
So often that demands such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more
pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress; 25
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness:

— 'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30
And what in quality or act is best

Doth seldom on a right foundation rest;
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:

— Who, if he rise to station of command, 35
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the
same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim; 40
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in
wait

For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow, on whose head
must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common
strife, 45

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has
joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the
law

In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed, 55
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
— He who, though thus endued as with a
sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be, 61
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to
love:—

'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high, 65
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity, —
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70
Where what he most doth value must be
won:

Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;

Who, not content that former worth stand
fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last, 75
From well to better, daily self-surpass:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the
earth
Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name, 80
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering,
draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's ap-
pause, —
This is the happy Warrior; this is he
That every man in arms should wish to be. 85
1806.

Ode on Intimations of Immortality

Recollections of Early Childhood

"This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *expediences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere —

'A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death!' —

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite char-

acter, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines —

'Obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;' etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendor which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here: but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favor. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations; and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the 'Immortality of the Soul,' I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.

'The Child is Father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.'" (Wordsworth.)

There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,

The earth, and every common sight

To me did seem

Apparell'd in celestial light,

The glory and the freshness of a dream. 5

It is not now as it hath been of yore; —•

Turn wheresoe'er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can see
no more.

The rainbow comes and goes, 10

And lovely is the rose;

The moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are
bare;

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair; 15

The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the
 earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound 20
 As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief:
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the
 steep; — 25

No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
 I hear the echoes through the mountains
 throng,

The winds come to me from the fields of
 sleep,

And all the earth is gay;
 Land and sea 30

Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every beast keep holiday; —
 Thou child of joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
 happy 35
 Shepherd-boy!

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival, 40
 My head hath its coronal,

The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it
 all.

Oh evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning
 This sweet May-morning; 45
 And the children are culling
 On every side

In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines
 warm,

And the babe leaps up on his mother's
 arm: — 50

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 — But there's a tree, of many, one,

A single field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The pansy at my feet 55
 Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, 60
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come 65
 From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,

But he beholds the light, and whence it
 flows, 70

He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid 75

Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her
 own;

Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a mother's
 mind 80

And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
 Forget the glories he hath
 known,

And that imperial palace whence he came. 85
 Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size!

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes!

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, 91
 Some fragment from his dream of human
 life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral; 95

And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long 100

Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little actor cons another part;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous
 stage"
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age, 105
 That life brings with her in her equipage;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity; no
 Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal
 deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind, —
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find, 117
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave, 120
 A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's
 height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou pro-
 voke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke, 125
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly
 freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers 130
 Is something that doth live,
 That Nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!
 The thought of our past years in me doth
 breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed 135
 For that which is most worthy to be blest,
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
 breast:—
 — Not for these I raise 140
 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questions

Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a creature 145
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts, before which our mortal
 nature
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain-light of all our day, 152
 Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to
 make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake, 156
 To perish never;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
 Nor man nor boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy, 160
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!
 Hence, in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither; 165
 Can in a moment travel thither —
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young lambs bound 170
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We, in thought, will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May! 175
 What though the radiance which was once
 so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the
 hour
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the
 flower; 179
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains be-
 hind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever
 be;
 In the soothing thoughts that
 spring

Out of human suffering; 185
 In the faith that looks through
 death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and
 Groves,

Forbode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquished one delight 191
 To live beneath your more habitual sway:
 I love the brooks which down their channels
 fret

Even more than when I tripped lightly as
 they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born day
 Is lovely yet; 195

The clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are
 won. 199

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.
 1802-06.

The World is Too Much With Us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our
 powers:

Little we see in Nature that is ours;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid
 boon!

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon; 5
 The winds that will be howling at all hours
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping
 flowers;

For this, for every thing, we are out of tune;
 It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn; 10
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less for-
 lorn;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.
 1806.

Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle

*Upon the Restoration¹ of Lord Clifford,²
 the She'pherd, to the Estates and
 Honors of His Ancestors*

"This poem was composed at Coleorton while
 I was walking to and fro along the path that led
 from Sir George Beaumont's Farmhouse, where
 we resided, to the Hall which was building at that
 time." (Wordsworth.)

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
 And Emont's³ murmur mingled with the
 Song. —

The words of ancient time I thus translate,
 A festal strain that hath been silent long: —
 "From town to town, from tower to tower, 5
 The red rose⁴ is a gladsummer flower.

Her thirty years of winter past,
 The red rose is revived at last;
 She lifts her head for endless spring,
 For everlasting blossoming; 10

Both roses flourish, red and white:⁵
 In love and sisterly delight.

The two that were at strife are blended,⁶
 And all old troubles now are ended. — 15

Joy! joy to both! but most to her
 Who is the flower of Lancaster!

Behold her how She smiles to-day
 On this great throng, this bright array!
 Fair greeting doth she send to all 20

From every corner of the hall;
 But chiefly from above the board
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
 A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield,
 And it was proved in Bosworth-field.⁷ 25

Not long the Avenger was withstood, —
 Earth helped him with the cry of blood:

St. George was for us, and the might
 Of blessed Angels crowned the right.

Loud voice the Land has uttered forth, 30

¹ When Henry VII became king.

² He was forced to (lee by the Yorkists during the War of the Roses, and for twenty-four years lived, deprived of his estates, as a shepherd.

³ The river at Brougham Castle.

⁴ The symbol or badge of the house of Lancaster.

⁵ i.e., the house of York.

⁶ By the marriage of Henry VII (Lancaster) to Elizabeth of York.

⁷ Scene of the last battle in the War of the Roses, where Richard III was overthrown in 1485.

We loudest in the faithful North:
 Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
 Our streams proclaim a welcoming;
 Our strong-abodes and castles see
 The glory of their loyalty. 35

How glad is Skipton¹ at this hour —
 Though lonely, a deserted Tower;
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom:
 We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
 How glad Pendragon¹ — though the sleep 40
 Of years be on her! — She shall reap
 A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
 As in a dream her own renewing.
 Rejoiced is Brough,¹ right glad I deem
 Beside her little humble stream;² 45
 And she³ that keepeth watch and ward
 Her statelier Eden's course to guard,
 They both are happy at this hour,
 Though each is but a lonely Tower: —
 But here is perfect joy and pride 50
 For one fair House by Emont's side,
 This day, distinguished without peer
 To see her Master and to cheer —
 Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

Oh! it was a time forlorn 55
 When the fatherless was born —
 Give her wings that she may fly,
 Or she sees her infant die!
 Swords that are with slaughter wild
 Hunt the Mother and the Child. 60
 Who will take them from the light?
 — Yonder is a man in sight —
 Yonder is a house — but where?
 No, they must not enter there.
 To the caves, and to the brooks, 65
 To the clouds of heaven she looks,
 She is speechless, but her eyes
 Pray in ghostly agonies.
 Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
 Maid and Mother undefilcd, 70
 Save a Mother and her Child!

Now who is he that bounds with joy
 On Carrock's⁴ side, a Shepherd-boy?
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
 Light as the wind along the grass. 75
 Can this be He who hither came
 In secret, like a smothered flame?

¹ Castle of the Clifffords.

² The Hillbec k, a tributary of the Eden in Cumberland.

³ This hill and the places mentioned below are in Cumberland, not far from Keswick.

O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
 For shelter, and a poor man's bread!
 God loves the Child; and God hath willed 80
 That those dear words should be fulfilled,
 The Lady's words, when forced away,
 The last she to her Babe did say:
 'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
 I may not be; but rest thee, rest, 85
 For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong
 No life is good, no pleasure long.
 The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
 And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, 90
 And quit the flowers that summer brings
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.
 — Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld¹ praise! 95
 Hear it, good man, old in days!
 Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young Bird that is distress;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play, 100
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear!
 I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long, 105
 A weak and cowardly untruth!
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.
 — Again he wanders forth at will, 110
 And tends a flock from hill to hill:
 His garb is humble; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien,
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state! 111
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.
 To his side the fallow-deer
 Came, and rested without fear;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120
 Stooped down to pay him fealty;
 And both the undying fish² that swim
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;

¹ He hid the young Lord Clifford on his estate in Cumberland.

² It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal fish, inhabitants of the Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld. (Wordsworth.)

The pair were servants of his eye
 In their immortality; 125
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
 Upon the mountains visitant;
 He hath kenned them taking wing: 130
 And into caves where Faeries sing
 He hath entered; and been told
 By Voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 The face of thing that is to be, 135
 And, if that men report him right,
 His tongue could whisper words of might.
 — Now another day is come,
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140
 And hath buried deep his book;
 Armor rusting in his hulls
 On the blood of Clifford calls:¹ —
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance —
 Bear me to the heart of France, 145
 Is the longing of the Shield —
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;
 Field of death, where'er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory!
 Happy day, and mighty hour, 150
 When our Shepherd, in his power,
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
 To His ancestors restored
 Like a re-appearing Star,
 Like a glory from afar, 155
 First shall head the flock of war!"

Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not know
 How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart
 was framed,
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and
 tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
 His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
 The silence that is in the starry sky,
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

¹ The martial character of the Chffoids is well known to the readers of English history, but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken all died in the Field. (Wordsworth.)

In him the savage virtue of the Race, 165
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were
 dead:
 Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.
 Glad were the vales, and every cottage
 hearth;
 The Shepherd-lord was honored more and
 more; 170
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,
 "The good Lord Clifford" was the name he
 bore.
 1807.

Laodamia

"Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written." (Wordsworth.)

Laodamia, whose husband, Protesilaus, died on the sands of Troy, is speaking.

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
 Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
 And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades for-
 lorn
 Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I re-
 quired:
 Celestial pity I again implore; — 5
 Restore him to my sight — great Jove,
 restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
 With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts
 her hands;
 While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
 Her countenance brightens — and her eye
 expands, 10
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature
 grows;
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? — O joy!
 What doth she look on? — whom doth she
 behold?
 Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy? i«?
 His vital presence? his corporeal mold?

It is — if sense deceive her not — 'tis He!
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her with
his wand
That calms all fear: "Such grace hath
crowned thy prayer, 20
Laodamia! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'
space;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her
Lord to clasp; 25
Again that consummation she essayed;
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight. 30

"Protesilaus, lo! thy guide is gone!
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:
This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will
rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed 35
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40
And something also did my worth obtain;
For fearless virtue brmgeth boundless gam.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan
strand
Should die, but me the threat could not with-
hold: 45
A generous cause a victim did demand;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best!
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50
Which then, when tens of thousands were
deprest
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;

Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here
thou art —
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed, 55
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath
decreed
Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave:
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian
air. 60

"No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow
this,
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial
kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcas¹
threw 65
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if
the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys 70
Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains:
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul; 75
A fervent, not ungovernable, love
Thy transports moderate, and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn —"

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the
tomb 80
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal
bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And yEson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they 85
Yet further may relent: for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
¹ Fates.

Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favorite seat be feeble
woman's breast. 90

"But if thou goest, I follow —" "Peace!" he
said; —
She looked upon him and was calmed and
cheered,
The ghastly color from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace, 95
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic acts in graver mood 101
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air, 105
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the bright-
est day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath
earned
That privilege by virtue. — "111," said he, no
"The end of man's existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain de-
light,
While tears were thy best pastime, day and
night;

"And while my youthful peers before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent) n6
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I then
revolved 121
The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be

The foremost prow in pressing to the strand, —
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan
sand. 126

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life, —
The paths which we had trod — these foun-
tains, flowers, — 131
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,
⁴ Behold they tremble! — haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die?" 135
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty
thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all
too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow; 140
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympa-
thized;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized. 144

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend —
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven —
That self might be annulled: her bondage
prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to
love." — 150

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!
Round the dear Shade she would have clung,
— 'tis vain:
The hours are past — too brief had they been
years;
And him no mortal effort can detain:
Swift, toward the realms that know not
earthly day, 155
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,

By the just Gods, whom no weak pity
 moved, 160
 Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
 Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
 Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due; 164
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
 Arc mourned by man, and not by man alone,
 As fondly he believes. — Upon the side
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
 From out the tomb of him for whom she
 died; 170
 And ever, when such stature they had gained
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
 The trees' tall summits withered at the sight;
 A constant interchange of growth and blight.¹
 1814.

Composed Upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendor and Beauty

"Felt and in a great measure composed upon
 the little mount in front of our abode at Ryd.il."
 (Wordsworth.)

I
 Had this effulgence disappeared
 With flying haste, I might have sent,
 Among the speechless clouds, a look
 Of blank astonishment;
 But 'tis endued with power to stay, 5
 And sanctify one closing day,
 That frail Mortality may see —
 What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!
 Time was when field and watery cove
 With modulated echoes rang, 10
 While choirs of fervent Angels sang
 Their vespers in the grove;
 Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign
 height,
 Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
 Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite, 15

¹ For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,
 "—His Laodamia,
 It comes——" (Wordsworth.)

Methmks, if audibly repeated now
 From hill or valley, could not move
 Sublimar transport, purer love,
 Than doth this silent spectacle — the gleam —
 The shadow — and the peace supreme! 20

2
 No sound is uttered, — but a deep
 And solemn harmony pervades
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,
 And penetrates the glades.
 Far-distant images draw nigh, 25
 Called forth by wondrous potency
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues!
 In vision exquisitely clear,
 Herds range along the mountain side; 30
 And glistening antlers are descried,
 And gilded flocks appear.
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve!
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe 35
 That this magnificence is wholly thine!
 — From worlds not quickened by the sun
 A portion of the gift is won;
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
 On ground which British shepherds tread! 40

3
 And, if there be whom broken ties
 Afflict, or injuries assail,
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
 Present a glorious scale,
 Climbing suffused with sunny air, 45
 To stop — no record hath told where!
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,
 And with immortal Spirits blend!
 — Wings at my shoulders seem to play,
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50
 On those bright steps that heavenward raise
 Their practicable way.
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look
 abroad,
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound!
 And if some traveller, weary of his road, 55
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy
 ground
 Ye Genii! to his covert speed;
 And wake him with such gentle heed
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour! 60

4

Such hues from their celestial Urn
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,
 Where'er it wandered in the morn
 Of blissful infancy.
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed? 65
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
 For, if a vestige of those gleams
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
 Dread Power! whom peace and calmness serve
 No less than Nature's threatening voice, 70
 If aught unworthy be my choice,
 From THEE if I would swerve,
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored; 76
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,
 Rejoices in a second birth!
 — 'Tis past, the visionary splendor fades;
 And night approaches with her shades. 80
 1818.

Mutability¹

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not with
 crime, 5
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not, but her outward forms that
 bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime.
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more, drop like the tower sublime
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear II
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.
 1821.

 Inside of King's College
 Chapel, Cambridge¹

Tax not the royal Saint² with vain expense,
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who
 planned

¹ From *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*.³ Henry VI.

(Albeit laboring for a scanty band
 Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense
 And glorious work of fine intelligence! 5
 — Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects
 the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more: —
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the
 sense
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching
 roof
 Self-poised," and scooped into ten thousand
 cells 10
 Where light and shade repose, where music
 dwells
 Lingering — and wandering on as loth to die;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth
 proof
 That they were born for immortality.
 1821.

The Trosachs

"As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first
 seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company.
 The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was
 natural to the season in which I saw again this
 beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets
 that follow were colored by the remembrance of
 my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melan-
 choly errand on which he was going." (Words-
 worth.)

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass,
 But were an apt confessional for One
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn
 gone,
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art which
 chase 5
 That thought away, turn, and with watch-
 ful eyes
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear
 than glass
 Untouched, unbreathed upon: — Thrice happy
 quest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray 10
 (October's workmanship to rival May),
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!
 1831.

Preface to Lyrical Ballads

1800

The discussion aroused by *Lyrical Ballads* on its first publication led Wordsworth to add a preface to the second edition in 1800, which he continued to revise until it received its final form in 1845. In it he attacks the false and artificial conventions to which poetry had been submitted, and expounds his own theories of poetic art. These theories are discussed with critical insight by Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria*, Chapters- 14, 17, and 18. Standing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as forerunner of the new poetry, the preface is one of the most important documents in English criticism.

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavor to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an appro-

bation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be some impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader, but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will

be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonorable accusations which can be brought against an Author, namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavoring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect, and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature¹ chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appears to be its real defects, from all lasting

and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.¹

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpost*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a

¹ It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and even to this day. (Wordsworth.)

man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these Particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavor to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it

to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. — When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavor made in these volumes to counteract it, and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonorable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their style, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men, and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a

family language which Writers in metre seem to Jay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise, I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction, as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it, this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men, and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavored to look steadily at my subject, consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense, but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would

establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys elpire:
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings lo happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear.
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to poetry, and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there

neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters; but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing in degree; Poetry¹ sheds no tears "such as angels weep," but natural and human tears, she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed orna-

¹ I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis; because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable. (Wordsworth.)

ments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendor of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labor is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever may be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him? — He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own pas-

sions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves; — whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement

But, whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon

this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion, he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him, and endeavors occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, that of the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an

astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood, but wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by ~ii overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in

which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting qualities of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labor and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and inalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favorite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge — it is as immortal as the heart of man. If t'e, labors of

Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. — It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavor to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What I have thus far said applies to Poetry in general, but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are colored by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction

of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description which I have before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these, with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of

such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what I have already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me — to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he

can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colors of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a more naked and simple style than I have aimed at, which poems have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished chiefly to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness

of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be en-
 5 dured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion;
 10 and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful
 15 parts of *Clarissa Harlowe* or *The Gamester*, while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure — an effect which, in a much greater degree than might
 20 at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement. — On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen),
 25 if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of
 30 pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre,
 35 there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence
 40 of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle
 45 which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection, namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the
 50 great spring of the activity of our minds, and

their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity, the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on, but the emotion of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely — all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the pain-

ful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavored to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest, and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings

are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the Reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:

I put my hat upon my head
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand.

Immediately under these lines I will place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of "Babes in the Wood."

These pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and down;
But never more they saw the Man
Approaching from the Town.

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "The Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair

parallelism, is not to say, this is a had kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting, the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous¹. This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide independently by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to re-view what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have al-

ready said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavored to recommend: for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited, and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them; we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less

worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a pe-

rusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge • 1771-1834

Samuel Taylor Coleridge is, among the writers of his time, a remarkable combination of the philosopher and poet in one. Coleridge the philosopher and critic could work hard and delve deeply, Coleridge the poet had to wait for inspiration. Unlike his friend Wordsworth, he seldom wrote verse except under strong compulsion. The result was that he produced little poetry during the second half of his life, when his intellect was uncommonly active and the "visitations of the divine" or the return of "emotions recollected in tranquillity" were rare.

He was born on October 21, 1771, the youngest son of the rector of Ottery St. Mary's in Devonshire. Left dependent by the death of his father, he was sent by relatives to Christ's Hospital in London, where his forlorn state is described by Charles Lamb (who was a fellow-student, three years younger) in his essay *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*. In 1791 he entered Jesus College, Cambridge, as a sizar, that is, an indigent student. Awarded a scholarship in 1793, he left college for some unknown reason and joined a regiment of dragoons in London. His brothers secured his release, and he returned to Cambridge. In full sympathy with the radical ideas of the time, which found expression in the French Revolution, he left college in 1794. With Robert Southey, a young Oxford student who held similar views, he devised an ideal, communistic state called "pantisocracy," which they planned to carry out in America on the banks of the Susquehanna. Together they wrote a play, *The Fall of Robespierre*, published in 1794, and in the same year he and Southey married sisters, Sara and Edith Fricker. With increasing responsibilities now, they gradually dropped their Utopian scheme.

In 1796 Coleridge published a volume, *Poems*; started a newspaper, which soon failed; preached now and then as a Unitarian; and fell a victim to the use of opium, which in the first instance had been prescribed for him by a physician. Coming to Nether Stowey, a village in southern England, in 1797, he met Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, who had a house in near-by Alfoxden. The association of the three resulted in the volume *Lyrical Ballads* to which Coleridge contributed his most famous poem, *The Ancient Mariner*. During this year he composed, also, *Kubla Khan* and the first part of *Christabel*, which were not, however, published until 1816. In 1798, while serving as Unitarian minister at Shrewsbury, he met young William Hazlitt, whose father was a dissenting clergyman in the near-by village of Wem. Hazlitt has described their meeting in *First Acquaintance with Poets*.

During the next year, Coleridge, with an annuity from the Wedgwoods, of pottery fame, was enabled to go to Germany with the Wordsworths. Here he became acquainted with

German literature and philosophy. On his return he settled his family at Keswick, in the Lake Country, to be near the Wordsworths at Grasmere. In 1800 he published a translation of two of the three parts of Schiller's play, *Wallenstein*. Most of the time he spent in London, where he was engaged in journalism and lecturing. In 1809 he undertook to publish a magazine of philosophy and politics, called *The Friend*. In 1813, his play *Remorse* was acted at Drury Lane. Leaving his family in the care of Southey, Coleridge lived now with various friends, coming in 1816 to a final haven in the home of James Gillman, a physician, in Highgate, a suburb of London, where he spent the long evening of his life. He died there in 1834.

Coleridge was the scholar among the romantic poets. He took all knowledge as his province, and expounded his ideas, with great fervor, to his contemporaries, whether the subject was religion, or politics, or the arts. He brought German philosophy and literature to England. Under the influence of Goethe and especially of Lessing, he developed a philosophy of literary criticism which produced the stimulating lectures on Shakespeare and the magnificent *Biographia Literaria* (1817) — a masterpiece of literary criticism, chaotic though it is in execution.

Coleridge's actual achievement, in both prose and verse, did not measure up to his capabilities. Yet what he did is great enough to place him in the front rank. His prose, always weighted with thought, is vigorous and stately. As a poet, he was the apostle of beauty, which he attained through his subtle supernaturalism and the haunting music of his lines. He made credible the marvelous, as in *Christabel* and *The Ancient Manner*; and in the latter poem he revived, and used with great effect, the stanza of the old popular ballads. He wrote only when the Muse called him; unfortunately she called him too seldom, probably because Coleridge had become immersed in abstruse speculation.

The great influence of Coleridge upon his own times, however, came from his personality and from his conversation. He continued to be a strong influence on young men, upholding his philosophic view of a spiritual as opposed to a material or mechanistic universe. What his informal talk was like may be gathered from the following description set down in 1817: "Standing in front of the chimney upon which he leaned back, with head erect and arms crossed, his dreamy eyes lost in abstractions, transported by the inspirations of his own genius, he seemed to be addressing not the auditors, but replying to his own thoughts.... Surrounded by a circle who enkindled the enthusiasm which was transmitted in full power in return, he went on with an erudite and masterly analysis of the dramatic poets of Greece.... Reaching Leibnitz, he followed that great philosopher over the bridge of communication which he extended from earth to heaven. Leibnitz led to Spinoza. We heard him with the ardent glow of genius refute the impalpable pantheism of Spinoza, who gave a soul to the universe without individuality, and motion to matter without a mover. In the mazes of these metaphysical speculations, the poetic genius of Coleridge would flow on, or disport in circles like the harmonious and luminous ocean. From the refutation of Spinoza... he proceeded in beautiful and sublime strains to illustrate the tenets and principles of religion, till, reached to the summit, where he could advance no farther or higher, he bowed himself in humility and reverence to the earth." (Chasles.)

The standard edition of Coleridge's works is that of W. G. T. Shedd (1884). The *Biographia Literaria* is edited by J. Shawcross (1907). A convenient edition is that in Everyman's Library. There are biographies by J. D. Campbell (1894), and H. D. Traill in the English Men of Letters series. A more recent study of Coleridge by Hugh I'Anson Fausset (1916) is especially recommended.

Kubla Khan; or, a Vision in a Dream

A Fragment

"The following fragment is here published at the request of a poet of great and deserved celebrity," and, as far as the Author's own opinions are concerned, rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed poetic merits.

"In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchases Pilgrimage*.—"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken — all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes —
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.

¹ Presumably, Byron.

² From Coleridge's *The Picture; or, The Lover's Resolution*.

"Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. *Ἀλλ' ἔτιον ἔστιν ἔσσω* but the to-morrow is yet to come...." (Coleridge.)

For remarkable word-music and imagery this poem stands in the very first rank.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan¹

A stately pleasure-dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran

Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea. 5

So twice five miles of fertile ground

With walls and towers were girdled round:

And here were gardens bright with sinuous
nils,

Where blossomed many an incense-bearing
tree,

And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which
slanted

Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!

A savage place! as holy and enchanted

As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted

By woman wailing for her demon-lover! 16

And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,

As if this earth in fast thick pants were
breathing,

A mighty fountain momentarily was forced;

Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20

Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,

Or chaffy gram beneath the thrasher's flail:

And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and
ever

It flung up momentarily the sacred river. 24

Five miles meandering with a mazy motion

Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,

Then reached the caverns measureless to man,

And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:

And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war! 30

The shadow of the dome of pleasure

Floated midway on the waves;

Where was heard the mingled measure

From the fountain and the caves.

¹ Grandson of Genghis Khan. He founded the Mongol dynasty in China in the thirteenth century.

It was a miracle of rare device, 35
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
 A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw.
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played, 40
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me,
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
 That with music loud and long, 45
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
 And all who heard should see them there,
 And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair! 50
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.
 1797. Pub. 1816.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

In Seven Parts

The Ancient Manner is Coleridge's masterpiece, a skillfully constructed, unified poem, all the more striking when viewed against the background of his splendid poetic fragments. It is a vivid story, told with such concealment of art that we are amazed at the startling effects which he has produced, to all appearances so simply. Note the use of the ballad stanza, the direct and concrete manner in which the complex, psychological story is unfolded, the realistic use of supernatural elements, and the technical devices that Coleridge employs to produce emotional and musical effects. The running commentary in the margin is, as Pater points out, a guide to the philosophy of the poem, yet a unit by itself.

For a detailed account of the genesis of the poem, see J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (1927).

ARGUMENT

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell: and in what manner the Ancient Mariner came back to his own Country.

PART I

It is an ancient Manner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 "By thy long gray beard and
 glittering eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

An ancient Mariner nittletiti ihiee (allmUs)hiddin to a wedding feast, and de-taind^h one

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide, «;
 And I am next of km,
 The guests are met, the feast is set:
 May'st hear the merry dm."

He holds him with his skinny hand;
 "There was a ship," quoth he. 10
 "Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
 Eftsoons¹ his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child. 15
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a
 stone:
 He cannot choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient
 man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner. 20

The wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man and thus strained to hear his tale.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the light-house top.

"The sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he!
 And he shone bright, and on the
 right
 Went down into the sea. 27

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward, with a good wind and for wearied, till it reached the line

"Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon —" 30
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the
 hall,
 Red as a rose is she;
 Nodding their heads before her goes
 The merry minstrelsy. 35

The Wedding Guest hears the bridal music, but the Mariner continues his tale

¹ immediately.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner. 40

"And now the Storm-blast came, The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole
and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled. 50

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald. 54

"And through the drifts the The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.
snowy cliffs
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around: 60
It cracked and growled, and roared and
howled,
Like noises in a swound!

"At length did cross an Alba- Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality
tross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name. 66

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through it 70

"And a good south wind sprung
up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo 1 And lo! the Albatross proved a bird of good omen, and followed the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

"In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,¹ 75
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke
white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

"God save thee, ancient Mar- The ancient Mariner inhospitably killed the pious bird: a good omen.
iner!
From the fiends, that plague thee
thus! — so
Why look'st thou so?" — "With my crossbow
I shot the Albatross!

PART n

"The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left 85
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo! 90

"And I had done a hellish thing." His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird
And it would work em woe:
And it would work em woe: For all averred, ~~that~~ ^{they} had killed the A-
bird

That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay, 95
That made the breeze to blow!

"Nor dim nor red, like God's own ^{But when the fog cleared off they justified the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.}
head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the
bird

That brought the fog and mist. 100
Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

"The fair breeze blew, the white ^{The fair breeze continues, the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reissues the same}
foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea. 106

"Down dropt the breeze, the ^{The ship hath been suddenly be- calmed.}
sails aropt down,
Twas sad as sad could be;
¹ rope running to the masthead.

And we did speak only to break
The silence of the seal no

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day, 115
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

"Water, water, everywhere, And the Albatross
beliefs to be
avenged. 121
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs 125
Upon the slimy sea.

"About, about, in reel and rout A spirit had fol-
lowed them, one
of the invisible
inhabitants of this
planet, neither de-
parted souls nor
anvils ronctring
whom the learned
Jew, Josephus, and
the Historic Con-
stantinopolitan,
Michael Isidus,
may be consulted.
They are very
there is no climate
or element with-
out one or more.
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

"And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had follow-
ed us 134
From the land of mist and snow.

⁴¹And every tongue, through ut- The shipmates, in
their dire distress,
would turn their
whole guilt
on the ancitor
whereof they hing
the devil-sea-bird
round his neck.
ter drought, would
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than 11

We had been choked with soot.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young! 140
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART in

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye. 145
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,

When looking westward, I beheld The ancient Man-
ner beholdeth
a sign in the
element afar off.
A something in the sky.

"At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist; 150
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.¹

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it ncared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite, 155
It plunged and tacked and veered.

"With throats unslaked, with Attits near-ap-
proach, it seemeth
him to be a ship,
and a den-
ransom he freeth
big speech from
the bonds of thirist.
black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb
we stood!

I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, 160
And cried, A sail! a sail!

"With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath A nahho/joy, 165
drew in,
As they were drinking all.

"See! see! (1 cried) she tacks no And horror fol-
lows, for ran
it be a ship that
comes onward
whereon we ride?
more!
Hither to work us weal, —
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel! 170

"The western wave was all aflame,
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly 175
Betwixt us and the Sun.

"And straight the Sun was flecked It seemeth him
but, the shadow
of a ship
with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face. 180

"Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!

¹ywis, certainly.

Arc those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres? 184

"Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?" And its ribs are
the face of the
setting Sun.
The Spectre-
Woman and her
Deathmate, and
no other on board
the skeleton-ship.

"Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-m-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold. 194

"The naked hulk alongside Death and Life-
came, in-Death have
diced for the ship's
crew, and she
(the latter) win-
neth the ancient
Manner.
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won!
I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.¹

"The Sun's rim dips: the stars No twilight within
the courts of the
Sun
rush out: 200
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

"We listened and looked side-At the rising of
ways up! the Moon,
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip' 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;
From the sails the dew did drip —
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star 210
Within the nether tip.

"One after one, by the star-one after another,
dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye. 215

"Fourtimesfiftylivingmen, **dropdowndead**
(and a ncarra not sign nor groan)
drop down dead

¹ A popular number in the old ballads and in folk-
tales.

With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

"The souls did from their bodies But Life-m-omb
begins her work
on the ancient
Manner
fly.
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!" 221

PART iv

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner! The Wedd-
ing-Guest
dreadeth
that a specter
is talking to him,
I tear thy skinny hand
And thou art long, and lank, and
brown, 226
As is the ribbed sea-sand.¹

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown." — 229
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wed-nut-the ancient
ding-Guest! Manner assureth
him of his bodily
life, and promises
him relief from his
horrible penance.
This body dropt not down.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony. 235

"The many men, so beautiful' He despiseth the
creatures of the
And they all dead did he:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I. 239

"I looked upon the rotting sea, And envied that
they should live,
and
dead
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray,
But or ever a prayer had gusht, 245
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat,
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky 250
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

¹ For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted
to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from
Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister,
in the Autumn of 1797, that this Poem was planned,
and in part composed. (Coleridge.)

"The cold sweat melted from ^{But the curse}
^{their limbs,} ^{take off the dead}

Nor rot nor reek did they:
 The look with which they looked on me 255
 Had never passed away.

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
 A spirit from on high;
 But oh! more horrible than that
 Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw
 that curse, the blue ^{In his loneliness and fixtude he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward, and everywhere long to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter}
 And yet 1 could not die. 266

"The moving Moon went up the ^{lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at the.}
 sky,
 And nowhere did abide:
 Softly she was going up,
 And a star or two beside — 266

"Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
 Like April hoar-frost spread,
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
 The charmed water burnt away 270
 A still and awful red.

"Beyond the shadow of the ship, ^{By the light of the Moon, he beheld the God's creatures of the great calm}
 I watched the water-snakes:
 They moved in tracks of shining
 white,
 And when they reared, the elfish light 275
 Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship
 I watched their rich attire:
 Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
 They coiled and swam, and every track 280
 Was a flash of golden fire.

"O happy living things! no ^{They're happy and their happiness}
 tongue
 Their beauty might declare:
 A spring of love gushed from my heart,
 And I blessed them unaware: ^{He blessed them in his heart.}
 Sure my kind saint took pity on
 me, 286
 And I blessed them unaware. ^{The spell begins to break.}

"The selfsame moment I could pray;
 And from my neck so free

The Albatross fell off, and sank 290
 Like lead into the sea.

PART V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
 Beloved from pole to pole!
 To Mary Queen the praise be given!
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, 293
 That slid into my soul.

"The silly¹ buckets on the deck, ^{By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with}
 That had so long remained,
 I dreamt that they were filled
 with dew;
 And when I awoke, it rained. 300

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs: 305
 I was so light — almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

"And soon I heard a roaring ^{He heard sounds and seeth strange sight- and compassions in the wind and the elements.}
 Wind:
 It did not come anear, sky and sea
 But with its sound it shook the
 sails, 311
 That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life!
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about! 315
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge;
 And the rain poured down from one black
 cloud; 320
 The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side:
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
 A river steep and wide.
^{1 empty.}

"The loud wind never reached ^{The bodies of the}
^{the ship,} ^{inspired, and the}
^{ship moves on,}

Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan. 330

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew, 336
The manners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do,
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew. 340

"The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee 10 knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!" ^{But not by the}
"Be calm, thou Weddine-Guest!" ^{souls of the men,}
"Twas not those souls that fled ^{earth or middle}
^{air, but by a}
^{blessed troop of}
^{angelic spirits,}
^{sent down by the}
^{invocation of the}
^{guardian saint}
in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

"For when it dawned — they dropped their
arms, 350
And clustered round the mast,
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun; 355
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing,
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute,

And now it is an angel's song, 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

"Under the keel nine fathom ^{The lonesome}
^{Spirit from the}
^{south-pole carries}
^{on the ship as fat}
^{as the Line, in}
^{obedience to the}
^{angelic troop, but}
^{still requireth}
^{verdee}
From the land or mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune, 381
And the ship stood still also.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But m a minute she 'gan stir, 385
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound: 390
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

"How Ions: in that same fit I lay, ^{The Polar Spirit's}
^{fellow demon-, the}
^{invisible inhabi-}
^{itants of the ele-}
^{ment, take part}
^{in his wrong, and}
^{two of them re-}
^{late, one to the}
^{other, that pen-}
^{ance long and}
^{heavy for the}
^{ancient Mannel}
^{hath been accorded}
^{to the Polar Spirit,}
^{who returneth}
^{southward.}
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

"'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this
the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400
The harmless Albatross.

" 'The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.' 405

¹ The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.' "

PART vi
FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again, 410
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?"

SECOND VOICE

"Still as a slave before his lord, 415
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

"If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously 420
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

"But why drives on that ship ^{The Manner hath}
so fast, ^{trance, for the}
Without or wave or wind?' ^{causeth The vessel}

SECOND VOICE

"The air is cut away before, 425
And closes from behind.'

"Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.' 429

"I woke, and we were sailing on ^{The Supernatural}
As in a gentle weather: ^{mode is regarded,}
'Twas night, calm night, the ^{the Manner}
moon was high; ^{awaken, and his}
The dead men stood together. ^{penance begins}

"All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter: 435
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:

I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
Nor turn them up to pray.

"And now this spell was ^{the ship's}
once more ^{finally expired.}

I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen — 445

"Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend 450
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade. 455

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

"Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed ^{And the ancient}
The light-house top I see? ^{Manner behold-}
Is this the hill? is this the kirk? ^{th his native}
Is this mine own countree? 466 ^{country.}

"We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway. 470

"The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon. 475

"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

"And the bay was white with silent light 480
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows ^{The angelic spirits}
were, ^{leave the dead}
In crimson colors came. ^{bodies,}

"A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were: 485
I turned my eyes upon the deck —
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood! 489
A man all light, a seraph-man, ^{And, indeed, in}
On every corse there stood. ^{their own forms}
^{of light,}

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light; 495

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart —
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast: 505
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third — I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
That he makes in the wood.
He'll sneve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

"This Hermit good lives in that ^{The Hermit of the}
wood ^{wood,}
Which slopes down to the sea. 515
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countrec.

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump: 520
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair, 525
That signal made but now?'

""Strange, by my faith!" the Her- ^{Approaches}
mit said — ^{the ship, with wonder,}
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere! 530
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

""Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535
And the owl whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

" 'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared' — 'Push on, push on!' 540
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard. 545

"Under the water it rumbled on, ^{the ship suddenly}
Still louder and more dread: ^{snatch}
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead. 549

"Stunned by that loud and dread- ^{The ancient Man-}
^{Ful Sound,} ^{ner is saved in the}
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been Seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found 555
Within the Pilot's boat.

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round,
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

⁴⁴ 'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him, and he obeys him.
man i' 576
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee
say —
What manner of man art thou?'

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580
And then it left me free.

"Since then, at an uncertain hour, And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constrained him to travel from land to land.
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns. 585

"I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach. 590

"What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell, 595
Which biddeth me to prayer!

"O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be. 600

"Oh sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company! —

"To walk together to the kirk, 605
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay! 609

⁴¹ Farewell, farewell! but this I And to teach by his own example love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth
^{tell}
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small; 615
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest 620
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn. 625
1798.

Frost at Midnight

The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry
Came loud — and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits 5
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant¹ slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood.
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and 6
wood, IT
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
¹ His son Hartley, born in 1796.

Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;
 Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
 Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing. 16
 Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
 Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
 Making it a companionable form,
 Whose puny flaps and freaks, the idling Spirit
 By its own mood interprets, every where 21
 Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
 And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,
 How oft, at school,¹ with most believing
 mind, 25

Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
 To watch that fluttering *stranger!*¹ and as oft
 With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
 Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-
 tower, 29

Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
 From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
 So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
 Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
 So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt,
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my
 dreams! 36

And so I brooded all the following morn,
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
 Fixed with mock study on my swimming
 book: 39

Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
 For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
 My play-mate when we both were clothed
 alike!

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep
 calm, 46

Fill up the interspersed vacancies
 And momentary pauses of the thought!
 My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee, 50
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
 And in far other scenes! For I was reared

¹ Christ's Hospital.

³ Soot burning on the bars of a grate was popularly supposed to mean the coming of a stranger or some one unexpected.

In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a
 breeze 55

By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and
 shores

And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and
 hear

The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible 60
 Of that eternal language, which thy God
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach
 Himself in all, and all things in Himself.
 Great universal Teacher! He shall mold
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask. 65

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
 Whether the summer clothe the general earth
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch 70
 Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-
 drops fall,

Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon. 75
 1798.

Christabel

Preface to the First Edition. 1816

"The first part of the following poem was written in the year 1797, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part after my return from Germany, in the year 1800, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year."

"It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame—

¹ This was never done.

"I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition, in the nature of the imagery or passion." (Coleridge.)

Christabel is essentially a tale of witchery—a story suggested by the music of the poem rather than told definitely in words. Coleridge remarked once that the poem was "partly founded on the notion that the virtuous of the world save the wicked." Perhaps the famous lines 408-26 contain something of a clue. Geraldine, of course, is a supernatural spirit of evil, a lovely woman and yet a scaly serpent.

PART I

Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing
cock,
Tu — whit! — Tu — whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew. 5

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch.
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower, n
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark. 15
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray: 20
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late, 25
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;

And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away, ac

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree 35
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell. — 40
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air 45
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek —
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can, sc
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak, 55
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone: 60
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandalled were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair. 65
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she —
Beautiful exceedingly!

"Mary mother, save me now!"
(Said Christabel,) "And who art thou?" 70

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet: —

"Have pity on my sore distress,
 I scarce can speak for weariness:
 Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!"
 Said Christabel, "How earnest thou here?" 76
 And the lady, whose voice was faint and
 sweet,
 Did thus pursue her answer meet: —

"My sire is of a noble line,
 And my name is Geraldine: 80
 Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
 Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
 They choked my cries with force and fright,
 And tied me on a palfrey white.
 The palfrey was as fleet as wind, 85
 And they rode furiously behind.
 They spurred amain, their steeds were white:
 And once we crossed the shade of night.
 As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
 I have no thought what men they be; 90
 Nor do I know how long it is
 (For I have lain entranced, I wis)
 Since one, the tallest of the five,
 Took me from the palfrey's back,
 A weary woman, scarce alive. 95
 Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
 He placed me underneath this oak;
 He swore they would return with haste;
 Whither they went I cannot tell —
 I thought I heard, some minutes past, 100
 Sounds as of a castle bell.
 Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
 And help a wretched maid to flee."

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
 And comforted fair Geraldine: 105
 "Oh well, bright dame! may you command
 The service of Sir Leoline:
 And gladly our stout chivalry
 Will he send forth, and friends withal,
 To guide and guard you safe and free no
 Home to your noble father's hall."

She rose: and forth with steps they passed
 That strove to be, and were not, fast.
 Her gracious stars the lady blest,
 And thus spake on sweet Christabel: 115
 "All our household are at rest,
 The hall as silent as the cell;
 Sir Leoline is weak in health,
 And may not well awakened be,

But we will move as if in stealth, isc
 But I beseech your courtesy,
 This night, to share your couch with me."

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
 Took the key that fitted well;
 A little door she opened straight, 125
 All in the middle of the gate;
 The gate that was ironed within and without,
 Where an army in battle array had marched
 out.
 The lady sank, belike through pain,
 And Christabel with might and main 130
 Lifted her up, a weary weight,
 Over the threshold of the gate:¹
 Then the lady rose again,
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear, 135
 They crossed the court: right glad they were.
 And Christabel devoutly cried
 To the lady by her side:
 "Praise we the Virgin all divine
 Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!"
 "Alas, alas!" said Geraldine, 141
 "I cannot speak for weariness."
 So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old 145
 Lay fast asleep in moonshine cold.
 The mastiff old did not awake,
 Yet she an angry moan did make!
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
 Never till now she uttered yell 150
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.
 Perhaps it is the owlet's scntch:
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch?²

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
 Pass as lightly as you will! 155
 The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
 Amid their own white ashes lying;
 But when the lady passed, there came
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
 And Christabel saw the lady's eye, 160
 And nothing else saw she thereby,

¹ Evil spirits can cross Christian thresholds only when helped.

² Animals are supposed to be sensitive to the presence of evil spirits.

Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
"Oh softly tread," said Christabel,
"My father seldom sleepeth well." 165

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room, 170
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air, 175
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain, 180
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim. 185
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

"O weary lady, Geraldine, 190
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers."

"And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?" 195
Christabel answered — "Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell 200
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!"
"I would," said Geraldine, "she were!"

But soon with altered voice, said she —
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine! 205
I have power to bid thee flee."

Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she, 210
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine —
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue — 215
"Alas!" said she, "this ghastly ride —
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!"
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, " 'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank: 220
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrec. 235

And thus the lofty lady spake —
"All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake 230
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
And now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

Quoth Christabel, "So let it be!" 235
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro, 240
That vain it were her lids to close:
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed, 245
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest, 250
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,

- Behold! her bosom and half her side —
 A. sight to dream of, not to tell!
 Oh shield her! shield sweet Christabel!
- Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs; 255
 Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
 Deep from within she seems half-way
 To lift some weight with sick assay,
 And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
 Then suddenly, as one defied, 260
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,
 And lay down by the maiden's side! —
 And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah well-a-day!
 And with low voice and doleful look 265
 These words did say:
 "In the touch of this bosom there worketh a
 spell,
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-
 morrow,
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my
 sorrow: 270
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning, '275
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
 And didst bring her home with thee in love
 and in charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp
 air."
- THE CONCLUSION TO PART I
- It was a lovely sight to see
 The lady Christabel, when she 280
 Was praying at the old oak tree.
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows; 285
 Her slender palms together prest,
 Heaving sometimes on her breast;
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale —
 Her face, oh call it fair, not pale,
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
 Each about to have a tear. 291
- With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
- Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
 Dreaming that alone, which is — 295
 O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
 And lo! the worker of these harms,
 That holds the maiden in her arms,
 Seems to slumber still and mild, 300
 As a mother with her child.
- A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine! since arms of thine
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.
 O Geraldine! one hour was thine — 305
 Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
 The night-birds all that hour were still.
 But now they are jubilant anew,
 From cliff and tower, tu — whoo' tu —
 whoo!
 Tu — whoo! tu — whoo! from wood and 310
 fell!
- And see! the lady Christabel
 Gathers herself from out her trance;
 Her limbs relax, her countenance
 Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
 Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds —
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright! 316
 And oft the while she seems to smile
 As infants at a sudden light!
- Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
 Like a youthful hermitess, 320
 Beauteous in a wilderness,
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
 And, if she move unquietly,
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
 Comes back and tingles in her feet. 325
 No doubt she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
 What if she knew her mother near?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call: 330
 For the blue sky bends over all!
- PART II
- Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
 Knells us back to a world of death.
 These words Sir Leoline first said,
 When he rose and found his lady dead: 335
 These words Sir Leoline will say,
 Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell, 340
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke — a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, "So let it knell I 345
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can!
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between."
In Langdale Pike and Witch's lair, 350
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t other,
The death-note to their living brother; 355
And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud 360
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight, 365
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied 370
The same who lay down by her side —
Oh rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet; and yet more fair!
For she belike hath drunken deep 375
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air,
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts. 380
"Sure I have sinned!" said Christabel,
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!"
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet,

With such perplexity of mind 385
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown, 390
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom, 395
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies, 400
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale, 405
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermame?

Alas! they had been friends¹ in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above; 410
And life is thorny, and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline. 415
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted — ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining — 420
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between: —
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween, 425
The marks of that which once hath been.

¹ Coleridge had in mind, in all probability, Wordsworth and Thomas Poole, a tanner, who helped Coleridge financially. Coleridge made up the quarrels.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
 Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
 And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
 Came back upon his heart again. 430

Oh then the Baron forgot his age,
 His noble heart swelled high with rage;
 He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
 He would proclaim it far and wide,
 With trump and solemn heraldry, 435
 That they who thus had wronged the dame,
 Were base as spotted infamy!
 "And if they dare deny the same,
 My herald shall appoint a week,
 And let the recreant traitors seek 440
 My tourney court — that there and then
 I may dislodge their reptile souls
 From the bodies and forms of men!"
 He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
 For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he
 Kenned 445
 In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
 And fondly in his arms he took
 Fair Geraldme, who met the embrace,
 Prolonging it with joyous look. 450
 Which when she viewed, a vision fell
 Upon the soul of Christabel,
 The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
 She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again —
 (Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee, 455
 Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
 Again she felt that bosom cold,
 And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
 Whereat the Knight turned wildly round, 460
 And nothing saw but his own sweet maid
 With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
 And in its stead that vision blest,
 Which comforted her after-rest 465
 While in the lady's arms she lay,
 Had put a rapture in her breast,
 And on her lips and o'er her eyes
 Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
⁴⁴ What ails then my beloved child?" 470
 The Baron said — His daughter mild

Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
 I ween, she had no power to tell
 Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine, 475
 Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
 Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
 As if she feared she had offended
 Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
 And with such lowly tones she prayed, 480
 She might be sent without delay
 Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
 "Ho! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine!
 Go thou, with music sweet and loud, 485
 And take two steeds with trappings proud,
 And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
 To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
 And clothe you both in solemn vest,
 And over the mountains haste along, 490
 Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
 Detain you on the valley road.
 And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
 My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
 Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth
 Wood, 495
 And reaches soon that castle good
 Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are
 fleet
 Ye must ride up the hall, your music so
 sweet
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
 And loud and loud to Lord Roland call, 501
 Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
 Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —
 Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
 He bids thee come without delay 505
 With all thy numerous array;
 And take thy lovely daughter home:
 And he will meet thee on the way
 With all his numerous array
 White with their panting palfreys' foam: 510
 And by mine honor! I will say,
 That I repent me of the day
 When I spake words of fierce disdain
 To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine! —
 — For since that evil hour hath flown, 515

Many a summer's sun hath shone;
 Yet ne'er found I a friend again
 Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
 Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing; 520
 And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
 His gracious hail on all bestowing! —
 "Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
 Are sweeter than my harp can tell;
 Yet might I gain a boon of thee, 525
 This day my journey should not be,
 So strange a dream hath come to me;
 That I had vowed with music loud
 To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
 Warned by a vision in my rest! 530
 For in my sleep I saw that dove,
 That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
 And call'st by thy own daughter's name —
 Sir Leolme! I saw the same
 Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan, 535
 Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
 Which when I saw and when I heard,
 I wondered what might ail the bird;
 For nothing near it could I see,
 Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
 old tree. 540

"And in my dream methought I went
 To search out what might there be found;
 And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
 That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
 I went and peered, and could descry 54-5
 No cause for her distressful cry,
 But yet for her dear lady's sake
 I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
 When lo! I saw a bright green snake
 Coiled around its wings and neck. 550
 Green as the herbs on which it couched,
 Close by the dove's its head it crouched;
 And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
 Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
 I woke; it was the midnight hour, 555
 The clock was echoing in the tower;
 But though my slumber was gone by,
 This dream it would not pass away —
 It seems to live upon my eye!
 And thence I vowed this self-same day, 560
 With music strong and saintly song
 To wander through the forest bare,
 Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
 Half-listening heard him with a smile; 565
 Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
 His eyes made up of wonder and love;
 And said in courtly accents fine,
 "Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
 With arms more strong than harp or song, 570
 Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"
 He kissed her forehead as he spake,
 And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
 Casting down her large bright eyes,
 With blushing cheek and courtesy fine 575
 She turned her from Sir Leolme;
 Softly gathering up her train,
 That o'er her right arm fell again;
 And folded her arms across her chest,
 And couched her head upon her breast, 580
 And looked askance at Christabel —
 Jesu Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
 And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her
 head,
 Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye, 585
 And with somewhat of malice, and more of
 dread,
 At Christabel she looked askance! —
 One moment — and the sight was fled!
 But Christabel in dizzy trance
 Stumbling on the unsteady ground 590
 Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
 And Geraldine again turned round,
 And like a thing that sought relief,
 Full of wonder and full of grief,
 She rolled her large bright eyes divine 595
 Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
 She nothing sees — no sight but one!
 The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
 I know not how, in fearful wise 600
 So deeply had she drunken in
 That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
 That all her features were resigned
 To this sole image in her mind;
 And passively did imitate 605
 That look of dull and treacherous hate!
 And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
 Still picturing that look askance
 With forced unconscious sympathy
 Full before her father's view — 610

As far as such a look could be
In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:
Then falling at the Baron's feet, 615
"By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!"
She said: and more she could not say:
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'ermastered by the mighty spell. 620

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died! 625
O, by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child!
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died:
Prayed that the babe for whom she died, 630
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine? 635

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage, 640
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonored thus in his old age;
Dishonored by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend 645
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end —
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere — 650
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldme! 655

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,

A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight 660
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness. 665
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty 670
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sm
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain 675
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.
1797-1800.

Dejection: An Ode

This poem, according to Coleridge, was written during a fit of dejection and addressed to Wordsworth. When Coleridge printed the poem, he disguised the references to Wordsworth, using Otway's name in stanza 7 and "Dear Lady" in stanza 8.

Written April 4, 1802

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
Ballad of SIR PATRICK SPENCE

I

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who
made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go
hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mold yon cloud in lazy
flakes, 5
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and
rakes
Upon the strings of this 'olian lute
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!

And overspread with phantom light, 10
 (With swimming phantom light o'erspread
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
 The comming-on of rain and squally blast.
 And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
 And the slant night-shower driving loud
 and fast!
 Those sounds which oft have raised me,
 whilst they awed,
 And sent my soul abroad,
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse
 give,
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it
 move and live! 20

1

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
 A stifled, drowsy, unpassioned grief,
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
 In word, or sigh, or tear —
 O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood, 25
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
 All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
 And still I gaze — and with how blank an eye!
 And those thin clouds above, in flakes and
 bars, 31
 That give away their motion to the stars;
 Those stars, that glide behind them or be-
 tween,
 Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always
 seen.
 Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew 35
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

3

My genial spirits fail;
 And what can these avail 40
 To lift the smothering weight from off my
 breast?
 It were a vain endeavor,
 Though I should gaze for ever
 On that green light that lingers in the west:
 I may not hope from outward forms to win 45
 The passion and the life, whose fountains are
 within.

4

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone docs Nature live:
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
 And would we aught behold, of higher
 worth, 50
 Than that inanimate cold world allowed
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
 Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth — 55
 And from the soul itself must there be sent
 A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
 Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

5

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
 What this strong music in the soul may be! 60
 What, and wherein it doth exist,
 This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
 This beautiful and beauty-making power.
 Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was
 given,
 Save to the pure, and in their purest hour, 65
 Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and
 shower, —
 Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
 Which, wedding Nature to us, gives in dower
 A new Earth and new Heaven,
 Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud;
 Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous
 cloud: —
 We in ourselves rejoice! 72
 And thence flows all that charms our ear or
 sight,
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,
 All colors a suffusion from that light. 75

6

There was a time when, though my path
 was rough,
 This joy within me dallied with distress,
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of happi-
 ness:
 For Hope grew round me, like the twining
 vine, 80
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed
 mine.
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth:

Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;
 But oh! each visitation
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
 My shaping spirit of Imagination. 86
 For not to think of what I needs must feel,
 But to be still and patient, all I can;
 And haply by abstruse research to steal
 From my own nature all the natural
 man — 90
 This was my sole resource, my only plan:
 Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
 And now is almost grown the habit of my
 soul.

7

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my
 mind,
 Reality's dark dream! 95
 I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
 Which long has raved unnoticed.
 What a scream
 Of agony by torture lengthened out
 That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st
 without, 100
 Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted
 tree,
 Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
 Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
 Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
 Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
 Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping
 flowers, 106
 Mak'st Devil's yule, with worse than wintry
 song,
 The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves
 among.
 Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
 Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold! no
 What tell'st thou now about?
 Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
 With groans of trampled men, with smart-
 ing wounds —
 At once they groan with pain, and shudder
 with the cold!
 But hush! there is a pause of deepest
 silence! 115
 And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
 With groans, and tremulous shuddering —
 all is over —
 It tells another tale, with sounds less deep
 and loud!

A tale of less affright,
 And tempered with delight, 120
 As Otway¹ self had framed the tender lay; —
 'Tis of a little child²
 Upon a lonesome wild,
 Not far from home, but she hath lost her way;
 And now moans low in bitter grief and
 fear, 125
 And now screams loud, and hopes to make
 her mother hear.

8

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of
 sleep:
 Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
 Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
 And may this storm be but a mountain-
 birth, 130
 May all the stars hang bright above her
 dwelling,
 Silent as though they watched the sleeping
 Earth!
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes;
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice; 135
 To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
 Their life the eddying of her living soul!
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
 Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice. 140
 1802.

Youth and Age

Verse, a breeze amid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee —
 Both were mine! Life went a-maymg
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young! 5
 When I was young? — Ah, woeful When!
 Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong,
 O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, 10
 How lightly *then* it flashed along: —
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,

¹ Thomas Otway, "tcndei" Otway, the English dramatist (1652-85), author of *Venice Preserved*.

* The tale that Coleridge refers to here is, of course, Wordsworth's *Lucy day*.

On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide! 15
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like, 20
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth¹ for years so many and sweet, 25
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit —
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled. —
And thou wert aye a masker bold! 30
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To *make believe*, that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips, 35
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve! 40
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismissed,
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.
1823-32.

Work Without Hope

Lines Composed zist February, 1827

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
lair —
The bees are stirring — birds are on the
wing —

And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing, 5
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor
sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of
nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom yc
may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams,
away! 10
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I
stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse
my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.
1827.

FROM Biographia Literaria: 1817

Biographia Literaria contains the best example of Coleridge's criticism in his discussion of Wordsworth's theory of poetry and its application in *Lyrical Ballads*. Chapters 14, 17, 18, and 22 embody this discussion. Chapter 10 is interesting as autobiography, and as an account of the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Stowey, and of their situation when, because of their sympathy with the French Revolution, they were objects of suspicion and espionage. In regard to the financial history of *The Watchman*, Coleridge's memory was inaccurate. Coleridge's friend and patron, Joseph Cottle, wrote: "The fact is Biggs the printer (a worthy man) never threatened nor even importuned for the money."

CHAPTER x

... Toward the close of the first year from the time, that in an inauspicious hour I left the friendly cloisters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honored Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry philanthropists and Anti-polemists¹ to set on foot a periodical work, entitled *The Watchman*, that, according to the general motto of the work, *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt¹ opponents of war.

it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only four-pence. Accordingly with a flaming prospectus, — "*Knowledge is Power*," "To cry the state of the political atmosphere," — and so forth, I set off on a tour to the North, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon¹ might be seen on me. For I was at that time and long after, though a Trinitarian (that is *ad normam Platonis*)² in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a Psilanthropist,³ one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested. My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous, but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of what I believed to be the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of myself at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow-chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face *κατ' ἐμφασιν*!⁴ I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, — *-pin&ui-nttesctnt*[^] cut in a straight line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eye-brows, that looked like a scorched after-math from a last week's

shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of color and lustre, with the coarse yet glib cordage, which I suppose he called his hair, and which with a bend inward at the nape of the neck, — the only approach to flexure in his whole figure, — slunk in behind his waistcoat, while the countenance lank, dark, very hard, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a used grid-iron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the thorough-bred, a true lover of liberty, and, as I was informed, had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in The Revelation, that *spoke as a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first stroke in the new business I had undertaken of an author, yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion after some imperfect sentences and a multitude of hums and has, abandoned the cause to his client, and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros,¹ the tallow-chandler, varying my notes, through the whole gamut of eloquence, from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied, and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millennium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out of the *Religious Musings*:

Such delights
As float to earth, permitted visitants!
When in some hour of solemn jubilee
The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odors snatched from beds of amaranth,
And they, that from the crystal river of life
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!

[*Religious Musings*, 11. 356 f.]

My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though, as I was afterwards told, on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial, it was a melting day with him. "And
¹ lover of freedom.

¹ Roman Church.

² By rule of Plato — which included the good, the true, and the beautiful.

³ Coleridge's coinage from the Greek words *ψιλος* and *άνθρωπος*, meaning, merely man.

* according to appearance. ⁵ shining with oil.

what, Sir," he said, after a short pause, "might be the cost?" "Only four-pence," — (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal bathos of that four-pence!) — "only four-pence, Sir, each number, to be published on every eighth day." — "That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much, did you say, there was to be for the money?" — "Thirty-two pages, Sir, large octavo, closely printed." — "Thirty and two pages? Bless me! why except what I do in a family way on the Sabbath, that's more than I ever reads, Sir! all the year round. I am as great a one, as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty and truth and all them sort of things, but as to this, — no offence, I hope, Sir, — I must beg to be excused."

So ended my first canvass: from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and, having perused it, measured me from head to foot and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing. I presented my prospectus to him. He rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly, the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and significantly rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and lastly putting it into his pocket turned his back on me with an "over-run with these articles!" and so without another syllable retired into his counting-house. And, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

This, I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other *illuminati* of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my lifetime, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with

Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow color, — not forgetting the lamentable difficulty, I have always experienced, in saying, "No," and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing, — I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bowl with salt. I was soon however compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which, as I had drunk but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement; but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and, I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing-room, and opened a small packet of letters, which he had received from Bristol for me; ere I sank back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, deathly pale and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while one after another there dropped in the different gentlemen, who had been invited to meet, and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment one of the gentlemen began the conversation, with "Have you seen a paper to-day, Mr. Coleridge?" "Sir!" I replied, rubbing my eyes, "I am far from convinced, that a Christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest." This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather, incongruous with, the purpose, for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced an involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom indeed have I passed so many delightful hours, as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of that laugh till an early hour the

next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information, and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me in the most friendly and yet most flattering expressions, that neither was the employment fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet, if I determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and, that failing, the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, — indeed, at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me how opposite even then my principles were to those of Jacobinism¹ or even of democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the tenth and eleventh numbers of *The Friend*.

From this rememberable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of *The Watchman*; yet more than half convinced, that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it, for I was at that period of my life so completely haggard by the fear of being influenced by selfish motives, that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of prudence was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings, that the contrary was the dictate of duty. Accordingly, I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which, I have been informed, for I did not see them myself, eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But alas! the publication

of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number an essay against fast clays, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah¹ for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and democratic patrons; for, disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *psstosophy*,² and perhaps thinking, that charity ought to begin nearest home; instead of abusing the government and the Aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected of me, I levelled my attacks at "modern patriotism," and even ventured to declare my belief, that whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition, or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gag&tng* bills,³ yet the bills themselves would produce an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects, the principles of which they had never bottomed and from "pleading to the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading/or them." At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education and a concurring spread of the Gospel were the indispensable condition of any true political amelioration. Thus by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification — (but why should I say this, when in truth I cared too little for any thing that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) — of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropt the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling; he was a——— and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after such delays as rendered that little worth nothing, and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month, for a sum between eighty and ninety pounds,

¹ "Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp." Isaiah xvi, n.

² Coleridge puns by substituting *ψαλς* for *φίλος* — "mere wisdom" instead of "love of wisdom."

³ Laws passed in 1793 restricting liberty of speech and assembly.

¹ The extremists of the French Revolution were known as Jacobins.

if the money¹ had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend,¹ who attached himself to me from my first arrival at Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, nor a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favorers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence, — (for it was part of my political creed, that whoever ceased to act as an individual by making himself a member of any society not sanctioned by his Government, forfeited the rights of a citizen) — a vehement Anti-Ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland,² a more vehement Anti-Gallican, and still more intensely an Anti-Jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly, that literature was not a profession, by which I could expect to live, for I could not disguise from myself, that, whatever my talents might or might not be in other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equidistant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness; "La, Sir!" (replied poor Nanny) "why, it is only Watchmen."

I now devoted myself to poetry and to the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of

Hartley's *Essay on Man*,¹ that I gave his name to my first-born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbor,² whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighborhood of one, to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man.³ His conversation extended to almost all subjects, except physics and politics, with the latter he never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy sycophants⁴ of that day, — (I here use the word sycophant in its original sense, as a wretch who *flatters* the prevailing party by *informing* against his neighbors, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited figs or fancies, — for the moral application of the term it matters not which) — one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the politics of the neighborhood, uttered the following deep remark: "As to Coleridge, there is not so much harm in *him*, for he is a whirl-brain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that——! he is the dark traitor. You never hear HIM say a syllable on the subject "

Now that the hand of Providence has disciplined all Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings, it will with difficulty be credited, how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation, — (the too constant attendant on party-zeal) — during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Add-

¹ probably Thomas Poole.

² Coleridge's chronology is uncertain. The French attacked Switzerland in 1798. Coleridge had retired to Stowey in 1796.

¹ *Observations on Man*, etc., 1748.

³ Thomas Poole.

⁴ Wordsworth.

⁴ *Εἰκὼν φαίμεν*, to show or detect figs, the exportation of which from Athens was forbidden. (Coleridge.)

ington¹ administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partisans, exhausted by excess of stimulation and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes, that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost, we may say, of humiliating sacrifices, and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth; and Providence, never wanting to a good work when men have done their parts, soon provided a common *focus* in the cause of Spain, which made us all once more Englishmen by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties. The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom, while the *honest* zealots of the people could not but admit, that freedom itself assumed a more winning form, humanized by loyalty and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears, now, disciplined by the succeeding storms and sobered by increase of years, had been taught to prize and honor the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain² too disappointment has nipped our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was

¹ Henry Addington (1757-1844), afterwards Lord Sidmouth, became Premier in 1801. The Peace of Amiens between France and England was signed in October of that year.

² Ferdinand VII, restored to the throne of Spain in 1814, proved thoroughly reactionary, and the enemy of all reform.

perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk to *kern* well; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican blight on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their wolfish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to *us* heaven has been just and gracious. The *people* of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted by all ranks to have been the main agents of our success. "*We fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera*"³ If then unanimity grounded on moral feelings has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of principles. For by these all opinions must be ultimately tried; and (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions), on the knowledge of these all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar, who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke at the commencement of the American war and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the principles exactly the same and the deductions the same; but the practical inferences almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other; yet in both equally legitimate and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he the superiority of foresight? Whence arose the striking difference, and in most instances even, the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by him and by those who voted with him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of Ed-
fudges iv, 18-22.

mund Burke are more interesting at the present day than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs, that the same conclusion, which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other. It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact to attribute this difference to the deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmijnd Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to principles. He was a scientific statesman, and therefore a seer. For every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and, as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and (to men in general), the only test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful, that he

—went on refining,

And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.

Our very sign-boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence, that there has been a Titian in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of Edmund Burke. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution with the sentiments, and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of Jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the

higher and from the literary classes, may not, like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher occasioned by his charge to the Wexford grand jury,¹ and published in the *Courier*. Be this as it may, the evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the Cerberean whelps of feud and slander, no longer walk their rounds, in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous *Quidnunc* met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighborhood, that a spy was actually sent down from the government *four surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but variety of these "honorable men" at the disposal of Ministers: for this proved a very honest fellow. After three weeks' truly Indian perseverance in tracking us (for we were commonly together), during all which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing, — (and all the while utterly unsuspected; how indeed *could* such a suspicion enter our fancies?) — he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together behind a bank at the sea-side (our favorite seat), and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied, that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy No6y*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to listen to *that*; but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined

¹ November and December, 1814. (Coleridge.)

me on the road (this occurred, as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage); and, passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a democrat way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of Jacobinism; but (he added), I had "plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed though he had only *puf it on*" I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer; and so little did I suspect the true object of my "tempter ere accuser," that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief, that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident therefore prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which through a friendly medium came to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the Government gentleman in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and, after the absolving suffrage of the *gentleman honored with the confidence of Ministers*, answered, as follows, to the following queries: "D. Well, landlord! and what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister——, my landlord (*that is, the owner of the house*), and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford;¹ but I never said a word to him or he to me. D. But do you not know, that he has distributed papers and hand-bills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your Honor! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of, his haranguing and talking to knots and clusters of the inhabitants? — What are you grinning at, Sir? L. Beg your Honor's pardon! but I was only thinking, how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard

be true, your Honor! they would not have understood a word he said. When our Vicar was here, Dr. L.¹ the master of the great school and Canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister——'s; and one of the farmers, that was there, told us that he and the Doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together after dinner. D. Answer the question, Sir! does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope your Honor an't angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one, but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the Channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your Honor! I own, I have heard; I am sure, I would not wish to say ill of any body, but it is certain, that I have heard — D. Speak out, man! don't be afraid, you are doing your duty to your King and Government. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your Honor! as how that he is a *Poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print, and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some *consarn* in the business." — So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and at the same time entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life. I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of *The Task*, that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on beyond the three or four first pages, and that, throughout the poem, the connections are frequently awkward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject, that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of bent, to the first break

¹ The village where Wordsworth and Miss Wordsworth resided. (Coleridge.)

¹ Dr. Langford. (Coleridge.)

or fall, where its drops become audible, and it begins to form a channel; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered; to the sheepfold; to the first cultivated plot of ground; to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath, to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the seaport. My walks therefore were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombes. With my pencil and memorandum-book in my hand, I was *making studies*, as the artists call them, and often molding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled *The Brook*. Had I finished the work, it was my purpose in the heat of the moment to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety as containing the charts and maps, with which I was to have supplied the French Government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these too for a tract of coast that, from Clevedon to Mmehcad, scarcely permits the approach of a fishing-boat!

CHAPTER xiv

Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed — Preface to the second edition — The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony — Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry with scholia.

During, the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself — (to which of us I do not recollect) — that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at

least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; in which it was agreed, that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote *The Ancient Mariner*, and was preparing among other poems, *The Dark Ladde*, and the *Chrtstabel*, in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the *Lyrical Ballads* were published, and

were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being; had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its religious fervor. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to

his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice, in the greater part of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honored more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with the opinions supported in that preface, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the com-

position will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several months;

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November, &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm super-added, whatever be their contents, may be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attainment of the end, but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the *Bathyllus* even of an Anacreon, or the *Alexis* of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere super-addition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct at-

tention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species — (having *this* object in common with it) — it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word, and in few instances has this been more striking, than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes disjoined from its context, and forms a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem

of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air, — at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Practtandus est liber spntus* says Petronius most happily. The epithet, *Itber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Jeremy Taylor, and Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradicting objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah — (indeed a very large portion of the whole book) — is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, or ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of one, though not a peculiar property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the early part of this work. What is poetry? — is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? — that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the

images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control, *laxts effertur habenis*,¹ reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference, of the general with the concrete, the idea with the image, the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects, a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement, and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and 'our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. Doubtless, as Sir John Davies observes of the soul — (and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic Imagination) —

Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,
As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
As we our food into our nature change.

From their gross matter she abstracts *their* forms,
And draws a kind of quintessence from things;
Which to her proper nature she transforms
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

Thus does she, when from *individual* states
She doth abstract the universal kinds;
Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates
Steal access through the senses to our minds.³

Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life,

¹ A free spirit should be thrown forward.

² Bishop Thomas Burnet, whose *Telluris Theoria Sacra* was a fanciful account of the structure of the earth.

³ Is borne along with loosened reins.

² Quoted with alterations from Sir John Davies' poem *On the Soul of Man*, sect. Iv (1599).

and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

CHAPTER xvII

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth — Rustic life (above all, low and rustic life) especially unfavorable to the formation of a human diction — The best parts of language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds — Poetry essentially ideal and generic — The language of Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.

As far then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the dramatic propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these prin-

ciples others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conducted not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions, which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is practicable, it is yet as a rule useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen low and rustic life; but not as low and

rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in fact, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an imitation as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes actual clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."¹

Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as *The Brothers, Michael, Ruth, The Mad Mother*, and others, the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common acceptance of those words; and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to

causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that independence, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, education, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the Liturgy or Hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far accidental, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned: the intermixture of tongues, and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced that, for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is prerequisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labors. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants: and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor

¹ From Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*.

rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and centre; — I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulgated in this preface. I adopt with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially ideal, that it avoids and excludes all accident, that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class: not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess. If my premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of *The Brothers*, and that of the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the *Michael*, have all the verisimili-

tude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take Michael, for instance:

An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes
When others heeded not, He heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him and left him on the heights.
So lived he, until his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had im-
pressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills
Which were his living Being, even more
Than his own blood — what could they less? had
laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched in a lower key, as the *Harry Gill*, and *The Idiot Boy*, the feelings are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the scene in the country, in order to place himself in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In *The Idiot Boy*, indeed, the mother's character is not so much the real and native product of a

"situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless: at least, they are the only plausible objections, which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordinary morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He was even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so evenly balanced by the folly of the mother, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In *The Thorn*, the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men having nothing to do become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem — and the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic poetry, if indeed even the Nurse can be deemed altogether a case in point — it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dullness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts — (and these form the far larger portion of the whole) — which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own char-

acter, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;¹ the seven last lines of the tenth;— and the five following

¹ I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

² Nay, rack your brain — 'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond
Which is a little step beyond,
I wish that you would go:
Perhaps, when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

I'll give you the best help I can:
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know.
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill,
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fixed the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went —
Poor Martha! on that woeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent,
A lire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months afu i this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen,
'Tis said a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain,
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!

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Last Christmas when they talked of this,
Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

No more I know, I wish I did,
And I would tell it all to you:

stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth,¹ are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, nor as general rule. "The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar — (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials) — will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration — (equally

important though less obvious) — that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things and modes of action requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized, while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the

For what became of this poor child
There's none that ever knew:
And if a child was born or no,
There's no one that could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead,
There's no one knows, as I have said;
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

¹ i.e. of the last stanza quoted above in footnote 2.

most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed, nor reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes of the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language" — (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism) — "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;" it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange.¹ Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences — "a selection of the real language of men;" — "the lan-

guage of these men" (that is, men in low and rustic life) "has been adopted; I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men."

"Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any *essential difference*:" it is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities, secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that, which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis*. And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the acci-

¹ Obscure writers of the seventeenth century.

dental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, and barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono -publico*. Anterior to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, where he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create, but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or — (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) — whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce, yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as

illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.* (Judges v, 27.)

CHAPTER xviii

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose — Origin and elements of metre — Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I conclude, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable, and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand, but likewise by following the order, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater disjunction and separation in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that survey, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

In distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads, alone.
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway, I met;
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet:

Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;
And in his arms a lamb he had.

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," etc., etc. But when I turn to the following stanza in *The Thorn*:

At all times of the day and night
This wretched woman thither goes;
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows:
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits,
When the blue day-light's in the skies,
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,

Or frosty air is keen and still,
And to herself she cries,
Oh misery! Oh misery!
Oh woe is me! Oh misery!

5 and compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of
20 true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

The Vision and the Faculty divine.

Sir Walter Scott • 1771-1832

Scott, who captivated all England and Scotland with his novels, began his literary career as an antiquary and as a poet. While a member of the Bar in Edinburgh, engaged in various sorts of legal work, he translated German ballads and Goethe's romantic play *Got% von Bcrlichtngcn*; collected popular ballads, which he published in three volumes under the title *The Mtnstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1801, 1803), and edited the medieval romance, *Sir Trts-trem*. In 1805, his literary career really began with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Then followed the other well-known narrative poems, *Marmion* (1808), and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). Two years later he built, in the architecture of a medieval castle, Abbotsford, near Melrose, which became his home for the rest of his life. In 1814, *Waverley*, his first novel, appeared anonymously. From that time on, partly because of Byron's growing popularity as a narrative poet, partly because of Scott's own inclination, his literary work was almost entirely in the field of the novel. These novels are too well known to be listed here. In their blending of realistic and romantic elements, their originality of treatment, and their range of subject-matter, they were a revelation to Scott's contemporaries. Scott also edited the works of Dryden and Swift, wrote a life of Napoleon in nine volumes, and a history of Scotland. In spite of his high achievement and large output in these fields, and his great influence in the development of the novel, Scott, to many readers, is beloved as the writer of lyrics. Most of these are scattered through his novels and longer poems.

These lyrics are simple, always musical, dealing with the ordinary, but eternal, emotions of life. They reflect the temperament of Scott himself. As a man, he was particularly

lovable. His life was the embodiment of nineteenth-century romanticism in a sensible way. Anything old thrilled him. Old castles, old books delighted him. The supernatural lured him. Though lame, he reveled in the out-of-doors, especially in wild landscapes. Family pride, realized in his estate at Abbotsford and his baronetcy, was to him a romantic ideal. Loyalty to a lost, but glorious cause, like Bonnie Prince Charlie's, inspired him. Chivalry, with its code of honor, was a religion to him. At the same time he was modern in his desire for money, with which to support his life as a Scottish laird. Not satisfied with the profits of authorship, he entered as a silent partner the publishing house of the Ballantynes. On their failure, in 1816, he assumed a debt of £130,000, not legally his, and worked prodigiously during his remaining years to pay it off. Yet, with all his aristocratic leanings, Scott had the sympathy of a Burns for the common man, and the admiration of a Byron for the sincere iconoclast.

Carlyle and Ruskin, however, viewing Scott as the great conservative in an age of revolution — in contrast to the young Wordsworth and to Shelley and Byron — condemned him for his indifference to what Victorians called "higher things." "There is nothing spiritual in him," complained Carlyle; "all is economical, material, of the earth earthy." He felt that Scott offered in his prose and verse only romantic compensation for "indolent, languid men," and that he earned £15,000 a year to "buy upholstery with it."

Scott's works are easily available in various editions. The best biography is by J. G. Lockhart, his son-in-law, which ranks with Boswell's *Life of Johnson* as one of the great biographies of English literature. It is unsurpassed in its detail and its vividness. A slightly abridged version of this very long biography may be obtained in Everyman's Library. For an appraisal of Scott's work, see Lewis E. Gates, *Studies and Appreciations* (1900) and Oliver Elton, *Sir Walter Scott* (1911). A short life by R. H. Hutton is included in the English Men of Letters series (1878). Other biographies are by Andrew Lang (1906) and John Buchan (1932.). *Scott and His Circle*, by Donald Carswell (1930), is an interesting study.

Lochinvar

From *Marmion*, Canto v

Lady Heron's Song

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the
best,
And save his good broadsword, he weapons
had none;
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war, 5
There never was knight like the young
Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for
stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was
none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,

The bride had consented, the gallant came
late: 10

For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:

Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on
his sword, 15

(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a
word,)

"O, come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Loch-
invar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you
denied,—

Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its
tide, — 20

And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up, 25
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —
"Now tread we a measure," said young Lochinvar. 30

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard¹ did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bridemaids whispered, "Twere better by far 35
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near,
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprang!
"She is won! we are gone! over banlc, bush, and scaur;² 41
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Grasmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee, 45

¹ lively dance.

² steep bank.

But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.

So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Pub. 1808.

PROLOGUE TO The Lady of the Lake

Harp of the North! that moldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string— 5
Oh minstrel Harp! still must thine accents sleep?

Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, 10
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless Jove, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high! 15
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

Oh wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray,
Oh wake once more! though scarce my skill command 21

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay,
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its way,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again! 27

Pub. 1810.

Soldier, Rest! Thy Warfare O'er

From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto I

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking:
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 In our isle's enchanted hall, 5
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall,
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting fields no more: 10
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
 Trump nor pibroch¹ summon here 15
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
 Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
 At the daybreak from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 Booming from the sedgy shallow. 20
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here,
 Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
 Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done, 25
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
 Dream not, with the rising sun,
 Bugles here shall sound reveille.
 Sleep! the deer is in his den;
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying; 30
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
 How thy gallant steed lay dying.
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
 Think not of the rising sun,
 For at dawning to assail ye, 35
 Here no bugles sound reveille.
 Pub. 1810.

Boat Song

From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto n

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
 Honored and blest be the evergreen pine!

¹ stirring music of the bagpipe.

Long may the Tree in his banner that
 glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our
 line!
 Heaven send it happy dew, 5
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gayly to burgeon, and broadly to grow,
 While every highland glen
 Sends our shout back agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,¹ ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the foun-
 tain, 11
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
 When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf
 on the mountain,
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her
 shade.
 Moored in the rifted rock, 15
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
 Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his pmifes again,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen
 Fruin, 21
 And Banachar's groans to our slogan re-
 plied,
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in
 ruin,
 And the best of Loch-Lornond lie dead on
 her side.
 Widow and Saxon maid 25
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with
 woe,
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear again,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the High-
 lands! 31
 Stretch to your oars, for the evergreen
 Pine!

Oh! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to
 twine!
 Oh! that some seedling gem, 35
 Worthy such noble stem,

¹ Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.

Honored and blessed in their shadow might
 grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then
 Ring from her deepmost glen, 39
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"
 Pub. 1810.

Coronach¹

From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto in
 He is gone on the mountain,
 He is lost to the forest,
 Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the sorest.
 The font, reappearing, 5
 From the rain-drops shall borrow,
 But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary, 10
 But the voice of the weeper
 Walls manhood in glory;
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing, 15
 When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,²
 Sage counsel in cumber,³
 Red hand in the foray,
 How sound is thy slumber! 20
 Like the dew on the mountain,
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone, and for ever!
 Pub. 1810.

Brignall Banks

From *Rokeby*, Canto m
 O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer queen.
 And as I rode by Dalton-hall, 5
 Beneath the turrets high,

A maiden on the castle wall
 Was singing merrily:
 "O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green; 10
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
 Than reign our English queen."

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
 To leave both tower and town,
 Thou first must guess what life lead we, 15
 That dwell by dale and down.
 And if thou canst that riddle read,
 As read full well you may,
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
 As blithe as Queen of May." 20

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are green;
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there
 Than reign our English queen.

"I read¹ you, by your bugle-horn, 25
 And by your palfrey good,
 I read you for a ranger sworn
 To keep the king's greenwood."
 "A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
 And 'tis at peep of light; 30
 His blast is heard at merry morn,
 And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are gay;
 I would I were with Edmund there, 35
 To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon²
 So gallantly you come,
 I read you for a bold dragoon,
 That lists the tuck of drum." 40
 "I list no more the tuck of drum,
 No more the trumpet hear,
 But when the beetle sounds his hum,
 My comrades take the spear.

"And O, though Brignall banks be fair, 45
 And Greta woods be gay,
 Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
 Would reign my Queen of May!

¹ Highland funeral lament.
² * a hillside good for hunting. ³ trouble.

¹ think, guess.
² short musket.

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
 A nameless death I'll die, 50
 The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
 Were better mate than I!
 And when I'm with my comrades met,
 Beneath the greenwood bough,
 What once we were we all forget, 55
 Nor think what we are now.

"Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer queen." 60
 Pub. 1813.

Jock of Hazeldean

The first stanza is ancient. The others **were**
 ivritten by Scott.

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladle?
 Why weep ye by the tide?
 I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
 And ye sail be his bride;
 And ye sail be his bride, ladie, 5
 Sac comely to be seen" —
 But aye she loot¹ the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
 And dry that cheek so pale; 10
 Young Frank is chief of Errington,
 And lord of Langley-dale;
 His step is first in peaceful ha',
 His sword in battle keen" —
 But aye she loot the tears down fa' 15
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sail not lack,
 Nor braid to bind your hair;
 Nor mettled hound, nor managed² hawk,
 Nor palfrey fresh and fair; 20
 And you, the foremost o' them a',
 Shall ride our forest queen." —
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide, 25
 The tapers glimmered fair;
 The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
 And dame and knight are there.
 Met. ³ trained.

They sought her baith by bower and ha',
 The lady was not seen! 30
 She's o'er the Border, and awa'
 Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.
 Pub. 1816.

Pibroch of Donald Dhu

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,¹
 Pibroch of Donuil,
 Wake thy wild voice anew,
 Summon Clan Conuil.
 Come away, come away, 5
 Hark to the summons!
 Come in your war array,
 Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
 From mountain so rocky, 10
 The war-pipe and pennon
 Are at Inverlochy.
 Come every hill-plaid and
 True heart that wears one,
 Come every steel blade, and 15
 Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
 The flock without shelter;
 Leave the corpse uninterred,
 The bride at the altar; 20
 Leave the deer, leave the steer,
 Leave nets and barges:
 Come with your fighting gear,
 Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when 25
 Forests are rended;
 Come as the waves come, when
 Navies are stranded:
 Faster come, faster come,
 Faster and faster, 30
 Chief, vassal, page and groom,
 Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
 See how they gather!
 Wide waves the eagle plume, 35
 Blended with heather.

¹ i.e., Donald the Black.

Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

40

Pub. 1816.

Clarion

From *Old Mortality*

The author of this quatrain is not known. Ever since Scott used it as a motto at the head of chapter xxxix, it is popularly regarded as Scott's.

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

Pub. 1816.

Lullaby of an Infant Chief

O hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers
which we see,

They are all belonging, dear babie, to thee.

O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,¹ 5

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O fear not the bugle, though loudly it
blows,

It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades
would be red,

Ere the step of a foeman drew near to thy bed.

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc. 11

O hush thee, my babie, the time soon will
come,

When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet
and drum;

Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while
you may,

For strife comes with manhood, and waking
with day. 15

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

1815.

¹ The last three words, meaning "Sleep on till day," are the title of old air upon which this song is based.

Proud Maisie

From *The Heart of Midlothian*, chapter XL

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird, 5

When shall I marry me?" —

"When six braw¹ gentlemen

Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed, 10

Birdie, say truly?" —

"The gray-headed sexton

That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.

The owl from the steeple sing, 15

'Welcome, proud lady.' "

Pub. 1818.

County Guy

From *Quentin Durward*, chapter iv

Ah! County* Guy, the hour is nigh,

The sun has left the lea,

The orange-flower perfumes the bower,

The breeze is on the sea.

The lark, his lay who trilled all day, 5

Sits hushed his partner nigh,

Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,

But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade,

Her shepherd's suit to hear; 10

To beauty shy, by lattice high,

Sings high-born Cavalier.

The star of Love, all stars above,

Now reigns o'er earth and sky;

And high and low the influence know — 15

But where is County Guy?

Pub. 1823.

¹ fine,
earl.

Bonny Dundee

John Graham of Claverhouse (Claver'se), Viscount Dundee, refused, before the Scottish Parliament (the Convention), to recognise the new king, William of Orange. He gathered a band of Jacobites and won a victory for James II at Killiecrankie, but died of wounds received in the battle.

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se
who spoke:
"Ere the King's crown shall fall there are
crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honor and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses and call up
your men; 6
Come open the West Port and let me gang
free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny
Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward,¹ the drums they
are beat; 10
But the Provost,² douce³ man, said, "Just e'en
let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of
Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the
Bow,⁴
Ilk carline⁵ was flyting⁶ and shaking her
pow,⁷ 15
But the young plants of grace⁸ they looked
couthie⁹ and slee,¹⁰
Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny
Dundee!
Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass market¹¹
was crammed,
As if half the West had set tryst to be hanged!

¹ The chimes played backward was an alarm signal.
³ chief magistrate. ³ calm.

⁴ Bow Street in Edinburgh. ⁵ every old woman.

⁶ quarreling, scolding. ⁷ head.
⁸ i.e., the young girls. ⁹ sympathetic.

¹⁰ sly.

¹¹ A square in Edinburgh, formerly the place for executions. See *The Heart of Midlothian*[^] especially the beginning of chapter II.

There was spite in each look, there was fear
in each e'e, 21
As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cows¹ of Kilmarnock had spits and
had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies² to kill cavaliers; 25
But they shrunk to close-heads³ and the
causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle
rock,*
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke:
"Let Mons Meg⁴ and her marrows⁵ speak twa
words or three, 31
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way he
goes —
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of
Montrose!⁷ 35
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings
of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There are hills beyond Pentland and lands
beyond Forth;
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs
in the North; 40
There are wild Duniewassals⁸ three thousand
times three,
Will cry *boigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barked⁹
bull-hide;
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles
beside; 45

¹ Presbyterian hoods; i.e., those opposed to the Stu-
arts. ³ blind alleys.

⁴ Edinburgh Castle is on a rock towering over the
city. At this time it was in the hands of the Duke of
Gordon. ⁵ The nickname of a big cannon.

⁶ companions. ⁷ A Cavalier executed in 1650.

⁸ Highlanders of lower rank. * tanned.

The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall
flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the
rocks —
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the
fox! 50
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of
your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and
me!"
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the trumpets
were blown,
The kettle-drums clashed and the horsemen
rode on, 55
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's
lee
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the
men,
Come open your gates and let me gae
free, 60
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny
Dundee!
December, 1825.

Here's a Health to King Charles

From *Woodstock*, chapter xx
Bring the bowl which you boast,
Fill it up to the brim;
'Tis to him we love most,
And to all who love him. 5
Brave gallants, stand up,
And avaunt ye, base carles!¹
Were there death in the cup,
Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,
Unaided, unknown, 10
Dependent on strangers,
Estranged from his own;
Though 'tis under our breath,
Amidst forfeits and perils,
Here's to honor and faith, 15
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honors abound
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword; 20
But the time shall come round
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,
The loud trumpet shall sound,
Here's a health to King Charles!

Tub. 1826.

¹ fellows.

George Gordonj Lord Byron • 1788-18x4

The most striking writer among the poets of the Romantic Period, with the most vivid personality, George Gordon Byron, was born in London, January 12, 1788. He was the son of "Mad Jack" Byron, who had squandered his wife's fortune and three years later died in France (whither he had fled to escape his creditors), leaving his wife only a small annuity. The poet's childhood was spent in Aberdeen, where he received erratic attention from his mother, religious instruction from his nurse, and four years' training at the local grammar school. Coming into a barony unexpectedly in 1798, when his great-uncle was killed in action in Corsica, he was given private instruction, and in 1801 was sent to aristocratic Harrow, where he spent his time at cricket and boxing, and read prodigiously. In 1805, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he received his M. A., as a peer, in 1808. Here he added swimming to his diversions, and, in general, led a care-free, jovial life, publishing, however, through the help of Hobhouse, his best friend at

college and later his executor, *Fugitive Pieces* in 1806. This volume, revised and republished in 1807 under the title *Hours of Idleness*, provoked the famous attack of *The Edinburgh Review* in January, 1808.

The next year Byron took his seat in the House of Lords, and won instantaneous popularity with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. In couplets reminiscent of Pope, of whose poetry he was an ardent admirer, Byron satirized not only Jeffrey, the editor of *The Edinburgh Review*, but romantic poets in general, especially Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. To him, at this time, the art of Dryden and the refinement of the eighteenth century were models. In the same year he began a journey with Hobhouse which took him to Portugal, and then, through the Mediterranean, to Turkey. It was on this trip, in the course of which he swam the Hellespont, that he became enamored of Greece. Back in London by the end of 1811, he wrote steadily, and threw himself with customary vigor and abandon into Bohemian life with new friends, chief among whom was Tom Moore. In 1811, he published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. "I awoke one morning," he said later, "and found myself famous." There followed during the next year *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*, in 1814, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, and *The Siege of Corinth*. These eastern tales were enthusiastically received by an eager public. *The Giaour* (pronounced djaa-oor) tells the exciting story of Giaour's love for the slave-girl Leila, *The Bride*, the tragic love-story of Selim and Zuleika, the pasha's daughter. *The Corsair* and its sequel *Lara* recount vividly in heroic couplets the exploits and loves of the pirate Conrad. *The Siege of Corinth* relates the story of the attack on that city by the Turks.

On January 1, 1815, after having been rejected several times, he married Annabella, daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke, and published *Hebrew Melodies*, a collection of poems written, it is said, during his engagement. On January 15, 1816, less than a month after the birth of their daughter, Augusta Ada, Lady Byron left the poet; and on April 15, a week after articles of separation were signed, Byron sailed, with a retinue of servants, for the Continent, never to return to England during his lifetime. That summer he spent in Switzerland with the Shelleys and Jane Clairmont, Mrs. Shelley's step-sister, writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, and much of *Manfred*, a drama in verse, presenting the mental tortures of Faust-like Manfred seeking forgetfulness in his retreat in the Alps. In the fall he went to Venice; in Bath, Jane gave birth to their daughter, Allegra. In 1819, he fell in love with the Countess Guiccioli, with whom he lived intermittently at Venice, Pisa, and Genoa until 1823. During these years he was visited by Tom Moore, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, and other Englishmen, and during these years he composed the bulk of his poetry: many lyrics, the *Lament of Tasso* (1817), showing the Italian poet's agony during his enforced imprisonment; in 1818, *Beppo*, a mock-heroic satire of the type of Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, and the fourth and last canto of *Childe Harold*, in 1819, several poetic plays, most striking of which, besides *Manfred*, are *Cain*, *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*; and the famous *Don Juan*, 1819-14, regarded by many critics as his greatest work.

In the summer of 1813, Byron left Italy, eager to help the Greeks in their fight for independence. While at Missolonghi, attempting to raise a regiment, he contracted a fever, and died on April 19, 1814. His body was taken to England and buried in the village church at Hucknall Torkard.

Byron, like Wordsworth when he was young, Coleridge, Keats, and especially Shelley, was a poet of revolt. He hated vehemently the hypocrisy of his time, whether in politics, in religion, or in personal character. His life and his writings were a glorification of the

proud hero who, in a grand, romantic manner, defied everything that confined the spirit. The strong individual had the right to wrest happiness for himself from a world that was peopled with timid, unadventurous souls, cabined and confined by petty conventions.

Like Marlowe, Byron is the poet of grandeur. For energetic narrative verse he surpasses Scott (who, in the face of Byron's popularity, turned to the novel). In bitter satire and humor and sentiment he excels all of his contemporaries. To the young Englishmen of his day, chafing against "middle-class respectability," cant, and emotional suppression, and to nearly all foreign critics, Byron, with his lusty, defiant life, and the vigorous originality of his writings, was a poet of the very first rank.

Others place him lower because of his cynical disregard of accepted moral standards, or because he seems at times insincere. Less often than his contemporaries, Keats and Shelley, does he achieve the line or passage which strikes us with the inevitability of expression that results from genius. His chief faults arise from his too great facility and his tendency toward oratory. To him might be applied Yeats's statement: "We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry."

The best one-volume editions of Byron are the Cambridge, and Murray's (1905), with notes and a full introductory memoir by E. H. Coleridge. The official biography is by Tom Moore. There are other lives by K. Elze, Nichol, Noel, and L. Stephen (in the *Dictionary of National Biography*). Among the many essays on Byron may be noted those by Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and John Morley. For recollections of Byron and his circle, see Leigh Hunt's *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries* (1828) and E. J. Trelawney's *Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author* (1858).

When We Two Parted

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold, 5
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow — 10
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken, 15
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear? 20
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well: —

Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met — 25
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years, 30
How should I greet thee? —
With silence and tears.

1814-16.

Maid of Athens, Ere We Part

Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.¹

I

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go, 5
Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

¹ "Romaic expression of tenderness. If I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that

2

By those cresses unconfirmed,
Wooed by each y^æEgean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge; 10
By those wild eyes like the roe,

Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

3

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell 15
What words can never speak so well;
By Love's alternate joy and woe,

Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

4

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone. 20
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!

Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Athens, 1810.

1812.

She Walks in Beauty

This poem and the next are from *Hebrew Melodies*, lyrics written by Byron to be set to music. Most of these poems (like the second below) deal with incidents in the Old Testament.

She¹ walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light 5
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace

I supposed they could not; and, if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconception on the part of the latter, I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as Juvenal tells us, the two first words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenised." (Byron.)
Anne Beatrix, wife of Byron's cousin, Robert Wilmot.

Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face; 10
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent, 16
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!
June 12, 1814.

The Destruction of Sennacherib¹

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green, 5
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed; 10
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;

¹ See 2 Kings, xix. Sennacherib was king of Assyria, 705-681 B.C.

And the foam of his gasping lay white on the
turf, 15
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating
surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on
his mail:

And the tents were all silent — the banners
alone —
The lances unlifted — the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their
wail, 21

And the idols are broke in the temple of
Baal;

And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by
the sword,

Hath melted like snow in the glance of the
Lord!

February 17, 1815.

Stanzas for Music

There's not a joy the world can give like that
it takes away,

When the glow of early thought declines in
feeling's dull decay;

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush
alone, which fades so fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere
youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the
wreck of happiness 5

Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of
excess:

The magnet of their course is gone, or only
points in vain

The shore to which their shivered sail shall
never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like
death itself comes down;

It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not
dream its own; 10

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain
of our tears,

And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis
where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and
mirth distract the breast,

Through midnight hours that yield no more
their former hope of rest,

'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined tur-
ret wreath, 15

All green and wildly fresh without, but worn
and grey beneath.

Oh, could I feel as I have felt, — or be what
I have been,

Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many
a vanished scene;

As springs, in deserts found, seem sweet, all
brackish though they be,

So, midst the withered waste of life, those
tears would flow to me. 20

March, 1815.

FROM Childe Harold's Pilgrimage

Childe Harold is a travel poem, perhaps the best
in the English language. It gives the thoughts
and especially the feelings aroused in the author
by the places he visits, rather than a description
of the scenes themselves. Byron called his hero
"Childe" (an appellation given to heroes in the
old ballads) "as more consonant with the old
structure of versification ... adopted." The verse-
form he uses is the Spenserian stanza.

CANTO THE THIRD

*Afin que cette application vous forçât à penser à autre chose.
Il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.*¹

Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.

I

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada!² sole daughter of my house and heart?

When last I saw thy young blue eyes they
smiled,

And then we parted, — not as now we
part,

But with a hope. —

Awaking with a start, 5

The waters heave around me; and on high

¹ "In order that this occupation may force you to
think of something else. Truly, there is no remedy
except that (i.e., a difficult task or problem) and time."
The extract is from a letter of Frederick the Great of
Prussia to D'Alembert, the French mathematician,
upon the death of a friend of the latter's.

² Byron's daughter.

The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not, but the hour's gone
by,
When Albion's¹ lessening shores could grieve
or glad mine eye.

2

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a
steed ii
That knows his rider. Welcome to their
roar!
Swift be their guidance, wherso'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as
a reed,
And the rent canvass fluttering strew the
gale, 15
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to
sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's
breath prevail.

3

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,²
The wandering outlaw of his own dark
mind, 20
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I
find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up
tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track be-
hind, 25
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life, — where not a
flower appears.

4

Since my young days of passion — joy or
pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a
string —
And both may jar: it may be, that in
vain 30
I would essay, as I have sung, to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;

¹ England's.

² i.e., *Childe Harold*; the first two cantos of the poem
had been published four years before.

So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful
theme. 36

5

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of
life,
So that no wonder waits Him — nor below
Can Love or Sorrow, Fame, Ambition,
Strife, 40
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance — he can tell
Why Thought seeks refuge in lone cares,
yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpaired, though old, in the Soul's
haunted cell. 45

6

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now —
What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse
earth, 51
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy
birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crushed
feelings' dearth.

7

Yet must I think less wildly: — I *have*
thought 55
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to
tame,
My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis too
late! 60
Yet am I changed; though still enough the
same
In strength to bear what Time cannot
abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing
Fate.

8

Something too much of this: — but now
 'tis past,
 And the spell closes with its silent seal: 65
 Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last —
 He of the breast which fain no more would
 feel,
 Wrung with the wounds which kill not,
 but ne'er heal;
 Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
 In soul and aspect as in age: years steal 70
 Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb;
 And Life's enchanted cup but sparkles near
 the brim.

9

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he
 found
 The dregs were wormwood; but he filled
 again,
 And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
 And deemed its spring perpetual — but in
 vain! 76
 Still round him clung invisibly a chain
 Which galled for ever, fettering though un-
 seen,
 And heavy though it clanked not; worn
 with pain,
 Which pined although it spoke not, and
 grew keen, 80
 Entering with every step he took through
 many a scene.

10

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed
 Again in fancied safety with his kind,
 And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed
 And sheathed with an invulnerable mind, 85
 That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;
 And he, as one, might 'midst the many
 stand
 Unheeded, searching through the crowd to
 find
 Fit speculation; such as in strange land
 He found in wonder-works of God and Na-
 ture's hand. 90

11

But who can view the ripened rose, nor
 seek
 To wear it? who can curiously behold

The smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's
 cheek,
 Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
 Who can contemplate Fame through clouds
 unfold 95
 The star which rises o'er her steep, nor
 climb?
 Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled
 On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
 Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's
 fond¹ prime.

12

But soon he knew himself the most unfit 100
 Of men to herd with Man, with whom he
 held
 Little in common; untaught to submit
 His thoughts to others, though his soul was
 quelled
 In youth by his own thoughts; still un-
 compelled,
 He would not yield dominion of his
 mind 105
 To Spirits against whom his own rebelled,
 Proud though in desolation — which could
 find
 A life within itself, to breathe without man-
 kind.

13

Where rose the mountains, there to him
 were friends;
 Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his
 home; no
 Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, ex-
 tends,
 He had the passion and the power to roam;
 The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
 Were unto him companionship; they spake
 A mutual language, clearer than the tome
 Of his land's tongue, which he would oft
 forsake 116
 For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on
 the lake.

14

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the
 stars,
 Till he had peopled them with beings
 bright

¹ foolish.

As their own beams; and earth, and earth-
born jars, 120
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that
flight

He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the
link 125

That keeps us from yon heaven which v/oos
us to its brink.

15

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and weari-
some,

Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipped
wing,

To whom the boundless air alone were
home: 130

Then came his fit again, which to o'er-
come,

As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage — so the
heat

Of his impeded Soul would through his bosom
eat. 135

16

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of Hope left, but with less of
gloom;

The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild, — as on the
plundered wreck 141

When mariners would madly meet their
doom

With draughts intemperate on the sinking
deck, —

Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to
check.

17

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's
dust! 145

An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchered below!
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?

None;¹ but *the moral's truth* tells simpler so
As the ground was before, thus let it
be; — 150

How that red rain hath made the harvest
grow!

And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of Fields! king-making
Victory?

18

And Harold stands upon this place of
skulls,

The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo;
How in an hour the Power which gave
annuls 156

Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place"¹ here last the eagle³
flew,

Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations
through; 160

Ambition's life and labors all were vain;
He wears⁴ the shattered links of the world's
broken chain.

19

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters; — but is Earth more
free?

Did nations combat to make *One* submit?
Or league to teach all Kings true Sover-
eignty? 166

What! shall reviving Thralldom again be
The patched-up Idol⁵ of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion⁶ down, shall
we

Pay the Wolf⁷ homage? proffering lowly
gaze 170

And servile knees to Thrones? No; *prove*
before ye praise!

10

If not, o'er one fallen Despot boast no
more!

In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot
tears

¹ The monument on the field of Waterloo was erected
later.

² The highest point in flight — a term in falconry.

³ Napoleon.

⁴ Napoleon was then en route to St. Helena.

⁵ The Holy Alliance. ⁶ Napoleon.

* The Austrian Emperor.

For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain,
years 175

Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the
accord

Of roused-up millions; all that most en-
dears

Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius¹ drew on Athens' tyrant
lord. 180

21

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and
brave men,²

A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell, 186
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake
again,

And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a
rising knell!

22

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the
Wind, 190

Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and
Pleasure meet

To chase the glowing Hours with flying
feet —

But hark! — that heavy sound breaks in
once more, 195

As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer — clearer — deadlier than be-
fore!

Arm! Arm! it is — it is — the cannon's
opening roar!

23

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain;³ he did
hear 200

¹ He killed the tyrant Hipparchus with a sword
hidden in myrtle leaves.

² At the Duchess of Richmond's ball.

³ The Duke of Brunswick, nephew of George III,
who fell in the very beginning of the battle.

That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's pro-
phetic ear;

And when they smiled because he deemed
it near,

His heart more truly knew that peal too
well

Which stretched his father¹ on a bloody
bier, 205

And roused the vengeance blood alone
could quell;

He rushed into the field, and, foremost fight-
ing, fell.

M

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of
distress,

And cheeks all pale, which but an hour
ago 210

Blushed at the praise of their own loveli-
ness;

And there were sudden partings, such as
press

The life from out young hearts, and chok-
ing sighs

Which ne'er might be repeated; who could
guess

If ever more should meet those mutual
eyes, 215

Since upon night so sweet such awful morn
could rise!²

2-5

And there was mounting in hot haste —
the steed,

The mustering squadron, and the clattering
car,

Went pouring forward with impetuous
speed,

And swiftly forming in the ranks of war —
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar; 221

And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the Morning
Star;

While thronged the citizens with terror
dumb,

Or whispering, with white lips — "The foe!
they come! they come!" 225

¹ Killed at Auerstadt in 1806.

² Compare Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, chapters xxix ff.

2.6

And wild and high the "Cameron's gather-
ing"¹ rose!
The war-note of Lochiel,² which Albyn's³
hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her
Saxon foes: —
How in the noon of night that pibroch
thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath
which fills 230
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the moun-
taineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's — Donald's — fame rings in each
clansman's ears!

2.7

And Ardennes⁴ waves above them her
green leaves, 235
Dewcy with Nature's tear-drops as they
pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but *above* shall
grow 240
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living Valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high Hope shall molder
cold and low.

18

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 245
The Midnight brought the signal-sound of
strife,
The Morn the marshaling in arms, — the
Day
Battle's magnificently-sterne array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which
when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped
and pent, 251
Rider and horse, — friend, — foe, — in one
red burial blent!

¹ The war-song of Clan Cameron.

² The chief of the clan. ³ Scotland's.

⁴ Woods near the battlefield, supposed to be the
forest of Arden of Shakespeare.

2.9

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps
than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud
throng,
Partly because they blend me with his
line, 255
And partly that I did his Sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow
song;
And his was of the bravest, and when
showered
The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files
along,
Even where the thickest of War's tempest
lowered, 260
They reached no nobler breast than thine,
young gallant Howard!¹

3°

There have been tears and breaking hearts
for thee,
And mine were nothing had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green
tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease
to live, 265
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the
Spring
Came forth her work of gladness to con-
trive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she
could not bring. 270

3i

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom
each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to
teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must
awake 275
Those whom they thirst for; though the
sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake

¹ The third son of Byron's guardian, the Earl of
Carlisle, a distant relative. For the wrong Byron did
the Earl, see *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honored but assumes a stronger, bitterer
claim.

32

They mourn, but smile at length — and,
smiling, mourn: 280
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail
be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but molders on the hall
In massy hoariness, the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are
gone; 285
The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
The day drags through, though storms
keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly
live on:

33

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies — and makes
A thousand images of one that was 291
The same — and still the more, the more it
breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not for-
sakes,
Living in shattered guise; and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow
aches, 295
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are
untold.

34

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison, — a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it
were 300
As nothing did we die; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er 305
Such hours 'gainst years of life, — say, would
he name threescore?

35

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man:
They are enough; and if thy tale be true,

Thou, who didst grudge him even that
fleeting span,

More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo! 310
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and
say —

"Here, where the sword united nations
drew,

Our countrymen were warring on that
day!"

And this is much — and all — which will
not pass away. 315

36

There sunk the greatest,¹ nor the worst of
men,

Whose Spirit, antithetically mixed,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixed,
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been be-
twixt, 320

Thy throne had still been thine, or never
been;

For daring made thy rise as fall: thou
seek'st

Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of
the scene!

37

Conqueror and Captive of the Earth art
thou! 325

She trembles at thee still, and thy wild
name

Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds
than now

That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy Vassal, and
became

The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same 331
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou
didst assert.

38

Oh, more or less than man — in high or
low —

Battling with nations, flying from the
field; 335

¹ Napoleon.

Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-
stool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to
yield;
An Empire thou couldst crush, command,
rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled, 340
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust
of War,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the
loftiest Star.

39

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning
tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it Wisdom, Coldness, or deep
Pride, 345
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard
by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou
hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye; —
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favorite
child, 350
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him
piled.

40

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could
contemn
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel,
not so 355
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turned unto thine over-
throw:
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot
who choose. 360

4¹

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall
alone,
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the
shock;

But men's thoughts were the steps which
paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son¹ was thine, not
then 366
(Unless aside thy Purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptered Cynics Earth were far too wide
a den.

42-

But Quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell, 370
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the Soul which will not
dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless ever
more, 375
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

43

This makes the madmen who have made
men mad
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom
add 381
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet
things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret
springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they
fool;
Envi'd, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a
school 386
Which would unteach Mankind the lust to
shine or rule:

44

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife, 390
That should their days, surviving perils
past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
¹ Alexander the Great, son of Philip of Macedon.

With its own flickering, or a sword laid
by, 395
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

45
He who ascends to mountain tops, shall
find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds
and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the Sun of Glory glow,
And far *beneath* the Earth and Ocean spread,
Hound him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those
summits led. 405

46
Away with these! true Wisdom's world
will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine, 410
A blending of all beauties; streams and
dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, moun-
tain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern fare-
wells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly
dwells.

47
And there they stand, as stands a lofty
mind, 415
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying Wind,
Or holding dark communion with the
Cloud.
There was a day when they were young
and proud; 419
Banners on high, and battles¹ passed below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust
ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no
future blow.

¹ battalions.

48
Beneath those battlements, within those
walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud
state 425
Each robber chief upheld his armèd halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want¹ these outlaws conquerors
should have,
But History's purchased page to call them
great? 430
A wider space — an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls
were full as brave.

49
In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their
shields, 435
With emblems well devised by amorous
pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would
glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and
drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief
won, 440
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its ruin
run.

50
But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure
for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation
so, 445
Nor its fair promise from the surface
mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then
to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven — and to seem
such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream? — that it
should Lethe be. 450

¹ lack.

51

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,
But these and half their fame have passed
away,

And Slaughter heaped on high his welter-
ing ranks:

Their very graves are gone, and what are
they?

Thy tide washed down the blood of yester-
day, 455

And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glassed, with its dancing light, the sunny
ray;

But o'er the blackened Memory's blighting
dream

Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as
they seem.

52-

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,
Yet not insensible to all which here 461

Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile
dear:

Though on his brow were graven lines
austere,

And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en
the place 465

Of feelings fierier far but less severe —

Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with
transient trace.

53

Nor was all Love shut from him, though
his days 469

Of Passion had consumed themselves to dust.

It is in vain that we would coldly gaze

On such as smile upon us, the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though Dis-
gust

Hath weaned it from all worldings: thus
he felt,

For there was soft Remembrance, and
sweet Trust 475

In one fond breast,¹ to which his own
would melt,

And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom
dwelt.

¹ Byron's half-sister Augusta, by his father's first marriage.

54

And he had learned to love, — I know not
why,

For this in such as him seems strange of
mood,— 479

The helpless looks of blooming Infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;

But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipped affections have to
grow, 485

In him this glowed when all beside had ceased
to glow.

55

And there was one soft breast, as hath
been said,

Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal, and, though
unwed,

That love was pure — and, far above dis-
guise, 490

Had stood the test of mortal enmities,
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;

But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent
greetings pour! 195

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine;
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these, 502
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strewed a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou*¹ with me. 505

II

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this Paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of
gray; 510

And many a rock which steeply lowers,

¹ Augusta.

And noble arch in proud decay,
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
 But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine! 515

in

I send the lilies given to me —
 Though long before thy hand they touch,
 I know that they must wither'd be,
 But yet reject them not as such;
 For I have cherished them as dear, 520
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,
 And guide thy soul to mine even here —
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
 And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,
 And offered from my heart to thine! 525

iv

The river nobly foams and flows —
 The charm of this enchanted ground,
 And all its thousand turns disclose
 Some fresher beauty varying round:
 The haughtiest breast its wish might
 bound 530
 Through life to dwell delighted here;
 Nor could on earth a spot be found
 To Nature and to me so dear —
 Could thy dear eyes in following mine
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

56

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground, 536
 There is a small and simple Pyramid,
 Crowning the summit of the verdant
 mound,
 Beneath its base are Heroes' ashes hid —
 Our enemy's — but let not that forbid 540
 Honor to Marceau!¹ o'er whose early tomb
 Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough
 soldier's lid,
 Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
 Falling for France, whose rights he battled
 to resume.

57

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young
 career, — 545
 His mourners were two hosts, his friends
 and foes;
 And fitly may the stranger lingering here

¹ A general of the French Revolutionary armies.

Pray for his gallant Spirit's bright repose;
 For he was Freedom's Champion, one of
 those

The few in number, who had not o'er-
 stepped 550

The charter to chastise which she bestows
 On such as wield her weapons; he had
 kept

The whiteness of his soul — and thus men
 o'er him wept.

38

Here Ehrenbreitstein,¹ with her shattered
 wall

Black with the miner's blast, upon her
 height 555

Yet shows of what she was, when shell and
 ball

Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
 A Tower of Victory! from whence the flight
 Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:
 But Peace destroyed what War could never
 blight, 560

And laid those proud roofs bare to sum-
 mer's ram —

On which the iron shower for years had
 poured in vain.

59

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long de-
 lighted

The stranger fain would linger on his way!
 Thine is a scene alike where souls united,
 Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray,
 And could the ceaseless vultures cease to
 prey 567

On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
 Where Nature, nor too somber nor too gay,
 Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
 Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

60

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
 There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
 The mind is colored by thy every hue;
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign 575
 Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely
 Rhine!

'Tis with the thankful heart of parting
 praise;

¹ The fortress across the Rhine from Coblenz.

More mighty spots may rise — more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze,
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories of
old days. 580

61

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between, —
The wild rocks shaped, as they had turrets
been, 585
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires
near them fall. 589

62.

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy
scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold Sublimity, where forms and falls
The Avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave
vain man below.

63

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be passed in
vain, — 600
Morat!¹ the proud, the patriot field!
where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that
plain;
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless
host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain, 605
Themselves their monument; — the Stygian
coast
Unsepulchred they roamed, and shrieked
each wandering ghost.

¹ The town where the Swiss defeated Charles the Bold of Burgundy in 1476.

64

While Waterloo with Cannae's¹ carnage
vies,
Morat and Marathon² twin names shall
stand; 609
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely
cause
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making Kings' rights divine, by some Draconic³ clause. 616

65

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild-bewildered
gaze 620
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it
stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Leveled Aventicum,⁴ hath strewed her subject
lands. 625

66

And there — oh! sweet and sacred be the
name!
Julia⁵ — the daughter — the devoted —
gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath
a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's
grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers
would crave 630
The life she lived in — but the judge was
just —
And then she died on him she could not
save.

¹ Where Hannibal defeated the Romans in 216 B.C.
^a Scene of the famous victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 490 B.C.

^j The code of Draco, earliest of Athenian lawmakers, was extremely rigid and severe.

⁴ Capital city of Roman Switzerland.

⁵ A young priestess of Aventicum who died after trying in vain to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor.

Their tomb was simple, and without a
bust,
And held within their urn one mind — one
heart — one dust.

67

But these are deeds which should not pass
away, 635
And names that must not wither, though
the Earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved — their
death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of Worth
Should be — and shall, survivor of its
woe, 640
And from its immortality, look forth
In the Sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,¹
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

68

Lake Leman² woos me with its crystal
face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains
view 645
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height
and hue:
There is too much of Man here, to look
through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than
of old, 651
Ere mingling with the herd had penned me
in their fold.

69

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind:
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind 655
Deep in its fountain, Jest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the
spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long,
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for
wrong 660
Midst a contentious world, striving where
none are strong.

¹ Mont Blanc. ² Geneva.

70

There, in a moment, we may plunge our
years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own Soul turn all our blood to tears,
And color things to come with hues of
Night; 665
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea
The boldest steer but where their ports
invite —
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity,
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored
ne'er shall be. 670

71

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing Lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care, 676
Kissing its cries away as these awake, —
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to
inflict or bear?

72-

I live not in myself, but I become 680
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture- I can sec
Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, 685
Classed among creatures, when the soul
can flee,
And with the sky — the peak — the heav-
ing plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle — and not in
vain.

73

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past, 690
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the
Blast 695

Which it would cope with, on delighted
wings,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round
our being cling.

74

And when, at length, the mind shall be all
free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm, — 701
When Elements to Elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each
spot? 7"5
Of which, even now, I share at times the
immortal lot?

75

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a
part

Of me and of my Soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? should I not condemn
All objects, if compared with these? and
stem 711

A tide of suffering, rather than forgo
Such feelings for the hard and worldly
phlegm

Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts
which dare not glow? 715

76

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One,¹ whose dust was once all
fire,

A native of the land where I respire 720
The clear air for a while — a passing guest,
Where he became a being, — whose desire
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all
rest.

¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1712-78, native and for a long time resident of Geneva, noted champion of the "return to nature," author of *Julie or the New Héloïse* and the *Confessions*; his influence upon social thought in France, Germany, and England has been extensive.

77

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rous-
seau, 725

The apostle of Affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over Passion, and from Woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched;
yet he knew

How to make Madness beautiful, and
cast 730

O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly
hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they
passed

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly
and fast.

78

His love was Passion's essence — as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame 735
Kindled he was, and blasted, for to be
Thus, and enamored, were in him the
same.

But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal Beauty, which became 740
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though
it seems.

79

This breathed itself to life in *Julie*, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and
sweet;

This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss 745
Which every morn his fevered lip would
greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his
would meet,¹

But to that gentle touch through brain and
breast

Flashed the thrilled Spirit's love-devouring
heat;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more
blessed 750

Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek
possessed.

¹ This refers to the account, in his *Confessions*, of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdctot,... and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss, which was the common salutation of French acquaintance. (Byron.)

80

His life was one long war with self-sought
foes,
Or friends by him self-banished; for his
mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and
chose,
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,¹ 755
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange
and blind.
But he was frenzied, — wherefore, who
may know?
Since cause might be which Skill could
never find;
But he was frenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a
reasoning show. 760

81

For then he was inspired, and from him
came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave² of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no
more:
Did he not this for France? which lay,
before, 765
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows
o'ergrown fears?

82.

They made themselves a fearful monu-
ment! 770
The wreck of old opinions — things which
grew,
Breathed from the birth of Time: the veil
they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view;
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew 776
Dungeons and thrones, which the same
hour refilled,
As heretofore, because Ambition was self-
willed.

¹ mankind.² The Delphic oracle of Apollo; the Pythian was the priestess in charge.

83

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and
made it felt. 780
They might have used it better, but, al-
lured
By their new vigor, sternly have they dealt
On one another, Pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in Oppression's darkness caved had
dwelt, 785
They were not eagles, nourished with the
day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook
their prey?

84

What deep wounds ever closed without a
scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to
wear
That which disfigures it, and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been van-
quished, bear 791
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the
hour
Which shall atone for years; none need
despair:
It came — it cometh — and will come, —
the power 795
To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be
slower.

85

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to
forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing 801
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have
been so moved. 805

86

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet
clear,

Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly
seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capped heights
appear
Precipitously steep, and drawing near, 810
There breathes a Jiving fragrance from the
shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on
the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night
carol more.

8?

He is an evening reveler, who makes 815
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the Starlight dew
All silently their tears of Love instill, 821
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her
hues.

88

Ye Stars! which are the poetry of Heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the
fate 825
Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you, for ye are
A Beauty and a Mystery, and create 830
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That Fortune, Fame, Power, Life, have
named themselves a star.

89

All Heaven and Earth are still — though
not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling
most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too
deep: — 835
All Heaven and Earth are still: From the
high host
Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-
coast,
All is centered in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,

But hath a part of Being, and a sense 840
Of that which is of all Creator and Defense.

90

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then
doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone, 845
The soul and source of Music, which makes
known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,¹
Binding all things with beauty; — 'twould
disarm
The specter Death, had he substantial power
to harm. 850

91

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus
take
A fit and unvalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are
weak, 855
Upreared of human hands. Come, and
compare
Columns and idol-dwellings — Goth or
Greek —
With Nature's realms of worship, earth
and air —
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy
prayer!

92-

The sky is changed! — and such a change!
Oh, Night, 860
And Storm, and Darkness, ye are wondrous
strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in Woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags
among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one
lone cloud, 865
But every mountain now hath found a
tongue,

¹ The girdle of Venus, which was supposed to strike
love in the beholder.

And Jura answers, through her misty
shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her
aloud!

93

And this is in the Night: — Most glorious
Night! 869
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the
earth!
And now again 'tis black, — and now, the
glee 875
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-
mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young Earth-
quake's birth.

94

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his
way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have
parted
In hate, whose mining depths so inter-
vene, 880
That they can meet no more, though
broken-hearted:
Though in their souls, which thus each
other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and
then departed: —
Itself expired, but leaving them an age 885
Of years all winters, — war within them-
selves to wage:

95

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath
cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en
his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their
play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand
to hand, 890
Flashing and case around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills
hath forked

His lightnings, — as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as Desolation worked,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever
therein lurked. 895

96

Sky, Mountains, River, Winds, Lake,
Lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and
a Soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may
be
Things that have made me watchful; the
far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll¹ 900
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some
high nest?

97

Could I embody and unbosom now 905
That which is most within me, — could
I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus
throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong
or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I
seek,
Bear, know, feel — and yet breathe — into
one word, 910
And that one word were Lightning, I
would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it
as a sword.

98

The Morn is up again, the dewy Morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all
bloom — 915
Laughing the clouds away with playful
scorn,
And living as if earth contained no tomb, —
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find
room 920

¹ knell.

And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if pondered
fittingly.

99

Clarens!¹ sweet Clarens, birthplace of
deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate
Thought;
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows
above, 925
The very Glaciers have his colors caught,
And Sun-set into rose-hues sees them
wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the
rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love,
who sought 920
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the Soul with Hope that
woos, then mocks.

100

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are
trod, —
Undying Love's, who here ascends a
throne
To which the steps are mountains; where
the God 934
Is a pervading Life and Light, — so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath
blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender
power
Passes the strength of storms in their most
desolate hour. 940

101

All things are here of *htm*; from the black
pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud
roar
Of torrents, where he listcneeth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to
the shore,
Where the bowed waters meet him, and
adore, 945

¹ A town on Lake Geneva, often mentioned by Rousseau.

Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the
wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands
where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

102

A populous solitude of bees and birds 950
And fairy-formed and many-colored things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet
than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend 955
Of stirring branches, and the bud which
brings
The swiftest thought of Beauty, here
extend
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one
mighty end.

103

He who hath loved not, here would learn
that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who
knows 960
That tender mystery, will love the more;
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's
woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him
far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or
grows 965
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

104

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau¹ this
spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which Passion must
allot 970
To the Mind's purified beings; 'twas the
ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone un-
bound,
And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis
lone,

¹ In his *Julie*.

And wonderful, and deep, and hath a
 sound,
 And sense, and sight of sweetness; here
 the Rhone 975
 Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have
 reared a throne.

105

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the
 abodes
 Of Names¹ which unto you bequeathed a
 name,
 Mortals, who sought and found, by dan-
 gerous roads,
 A path to perpetuity of Fame: 980
 They were gigantic minds, and their steep
 aim
 Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
 Thoughts which should call down thunder
 and the flame
 Of Heaven again assailed — if Heaven the
 while
 On man and man's research could deign do
 more than smile. 985

106

The one² was fire and fickleness, a child
 Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
 A wit as various, — gay, grave, sage, or
 wild, —
 Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
 He multiplied himself among mankind, 990
 The Proteus' of their talents: But his own
 Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as the
 wind,
 Blew where it listed, laying all things
 prone, —
 Now to overthrow a fool, and now to shake a
 throne.

107

The other, deep and slow, exhausting
 thought, 995
 And hiving wisdom with each studious
 year,

¹ Gibbon finished his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* at Lausanne in 1788. See Thomas Hardy's poem, *Lausanne*. In *Gibbon's Old Gaiden* Voltane lived almost the entire last rune years of his life at Ferney.

² Voltane, 1694 1778.

³ Proteus, the sea god, could change himself into many shapes

In meditation dwelt, with learning
 wrought,
 And shaped his weapon with an edge
 severe,
 Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
 The lord of irony, — that master spell, 1000
 Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew
 from fear,
 And doomed him to the zealot's ready
 Hell,
 Which answers to all doubts so eloquently
 well.

108

Yet, peace be with their ashes, — for by
 them,
 If merited, the penalty is paid; 1005
 It is not ours to judge, — far less condemn;
 The hour must come when such things
 shall be made
 Known unto all, — or hope and dread
 allayed
 By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
 Which, thus much we are sure, must lie
 decayed; 1010
 And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
 will be to be forgiven — or suffer what is
 just.

109

But let me quit Man's works, again to read
 His Maker's, spread around me, and sus-
 pend 1014
 This page, which from my reveries I feed,
 Until it seems prolonging without end.
 The clouds above me to the white Alps
 tend,
 And I must pierce them, and survey what-
 e'er
 May be permitted, as my steps I bend
 To their most great and growing region,
 where 1020
 The earth to her embrace compels the powers
 of air.

NO

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
 Full flashes on the Soul the light of ages,
 Since the fierce Carthaginian¹ almost won
 thee,

¹ Hannibal.

To the last halo of the Chiefs and Sages 1025
 Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
 Thou wert the throne and grave of em-
 pires — still,
 The fount at which the panting Mind as-
 suages
 Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her
 fill,
 Flows from the eternal source of Rome's im-
 perial hill. 1030

III

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
 Renewed with no kind auspices: — to feel
 We are not what we have been, and to
 deem
 We are not what we should be, — and to
 steel
 The heart against itself; and to conceal, 1035
 With a proud caution, love, or hate, or
 aught, —
 Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,
 Which is the tyrant Spirit of our thought,
 Is a stern task of soul: — No matter, — it is
 taught.

112.

And for these words, thus woven into
 song, 1040
 It may be that they are a harmless wile, —
 The coloring of the scenes which fleet
 along,
 Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
 My breast, or that of others, for a while.
 Fame is the thirst of youth, — but I am
 not 1045
 So young as to regard men's frown or
 smile,
 As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot; —
 I stood and stand alone, — remembered or
 forgot.

113

I have not loved the World, nor the World
 me;
 I have not flattered its rank breath, nor
 bowed 1050
 To its idolatries a patient knee,
 Nor coined my cheek to smiles, — nor cried
 aloud
 In worship of an echo: in the crowd

They could not deem me one of such — I
 stood
 Among them, but not of them — in a
 shroud 1055
 Of thoughts which were not their thoughts,
 and still could,
 Had I not filed¹ my mind, which thus itself
 subdued.

114

I have not loved the World, nor the World
 me, —
 But let us part fair foes, I do believe,
 Though I have found them not, that there
 may be 1060
 Words which are things, — hopes which
 will not deceive,
 And Virtues which are merciful, nor weave
 Snares for the failing: I would also deem
 O'er others' griefs that some sincerely
 grieve —
 That two, or one, are almost what they
 seem, — 1065
 That Goodness is no name — and Happiness
 no dream.

115

My daughter! with thy name this song
 begun!
 My daughter! with thy name thus much
 shall end! —
 I see thee not — I hear thee not — but none
 Can be so wrapped in thee, thou art the
 Friend 1070
 To whom the shadows of far years extend:
 Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
 My voice shall with thy future visions
 blend,
 And reach into thy heart, — when mine is
 cold, —
 A token and a tone, even from thy father's
 mold. 1075

116

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
 Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
 Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
 Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to
 thee!

¹ defiled; Byron quotes in a note, *Macbeth*, III, i:
 — "If't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind."

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee, 1080
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's
kiss, —

This, it should seem, was not reserved for
me¹ —

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like
to this.

117

Yet, though² dull Hate as duty should be
taught, 1085

I know that thou wilt love me — though
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim:

Though the grave closed between us, —
'twere the same,

I know that thou wilt love me — though
to drain 1090

My blood from out thy being were an
aim,

And an attainment, — all would be in
vain, —

Still thou wouldst love me, still that more
than life retain.

118

The child of Love, though born in bitter-
ness,

And nurtured in Convulsion. Of thy
sire 1095

These were the elements, — and thine no
less.

As yet such are around thee, — but thy
fire

Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far
higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the
sea

And from the mountains where I now
respire, noo

Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have
been to me.

May-June, 1816.

¹ Byron never saw his daughter Ada after her childhood. She died at thirty-seven, and was buried next to her father.

² Byron here is referring to his wife.

Sonnet on Chillon

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!

Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art

For there thy habitation is the heart —

The heart which love of thee alone can bind,
And when thy sons to fetters are con-
signed — 5

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless
gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyr-
dom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every
wind.

Chillon!¹ thy prison is a holy place,

And thy sad floor an altar — for 't was
trod, 10

Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! — May none those marks
efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.

June, 1816.

The Prisoner of Chillon

Francois de Bonnivard (1496-1570) fought against the Duke of Savoy for the freedom of Geneva. He was imprisoned in Chillon from 1530 to 1536, being released when Geneva became republican. During the rest of his life he worked to make Geneva an educational center. He is said to have done much towards founding the public library and the university.

Byron's poem, of course, is largely imaginative.

I

My hair is gray, but not with years,

Nor grew it white

In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears.

My limbs are bowed, though not with
toil, 5

But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil,

And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air

Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare; 10

¹ The well-known castle on the edge of Lake Geneva, just outside Montreux, owned at this time by the Duke of Savoy, who controlled the city.

But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven — who now are one,

Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied; —
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

2

There are seven pillars of Gothic mold
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,

For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years — I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

3

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three — yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together — yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
*T was still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,

To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound — not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy — but to me
They never sounded like our own.

4

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do — and did my best —
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him — with eyes as blue as heaven —
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day —
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free) —
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for naught but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

5

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
I saw it silently decline —
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf;

To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

105

6

Lake Lemán lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,

no

Which round about the wave intrals:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay:

115

We heard it ripple night and day,
Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were
high

120

And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rocked,
And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

125

7

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 't was coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den,
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mold
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth? — he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died — and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave

130

135

140

145

150

Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer —
They coldly laughed — and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such Murder's fitting monument!

155

160

8

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired —
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood: —
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swollen convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of *Sm* delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmixed with such — but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,

165

170

175

180

185

190

195

For I was sunk in silence — lost 200
 In this last loss, of all the most;
 And then the sighs he would suppress
 Of fainting Nature's feebleness,
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
 I listened, but I could not hear — 205
 I called, for I was wild with fear;
 I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
 Would not be thus admonished;
 I called, and thought I heard a sound —
 I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210
 And rushed to him: — I found him not,
 I only stirred in this black spot,
 / only lived — / only drew
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
 The last — the sole — the dearest link 215
 Between me and the eternal brink,
 Which bound me to my failing race,
 Was broken in this fatal place.
 One on the earth, and one beneath —
 My brothers — both had ceased to breathe!
 I took that hand which lay so still, 221
 Alas! my own was full as chill;
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive —
 A frantic feeling, when we know 225
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.
 I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope — but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

9

What next befell me then and there
 I know not well — I never knew —
 First came the loss of light, and air,
 And then of darkness too:
 I had no thought, no feeling — none — 235
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray,
 It was not night — it was not day, 240
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,
 But vacancy absorbing space,
 And fixedness — without a place,
 There were no stars — no earth — no time —
 No check — no change — no good — no
 crime — 246
 But silence, and a stirless breath

Which neither was of life nor death,
 A sea of stagnant idleness,
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless! 250

10

A light broke in upon my brain, —
 It was the carol of a bird;
 It ceased, and then it came again,
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,
 And mine was thankful till my eyes 255
 Ran over with the glad surprise,
 And they that moment could not see
 I was the mate of misery;
 But then by dull degrees came back
 My senses to their wonted track; 260
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor
 Close slowly round me as before,
 I saw the glimmer of the sun
 Creeping as it before had done,
 But through the crevice where it came 265
 That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree;
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,
 And song that said a thousand things,
 And seemed to say them all for me! 270
 I never saw its like before,
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
 It seemed like me to want a mate,
 But was not half so desolate,
 And it was come to love me when 275
 None lived to love me so again,
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
 Had brought me back to feel and think.
 I know not if it late were free,
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280
 But knowing well captivity,
 Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
 Or if it were, in winged guise,
 A visitant from Paradise; 284
 For — Heaven forgive that thought! the while
 Which made me both to weep and smile —
 I sometimes deemed that it might be
 My brother's soul come down to me;
 But then at last away it flew,
 And then 't was mortal — well I knew, 290
 For he would never thus have flown,
 And left me twice so doubly lone, —
 Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
 Lone — as a solitary cloud,
 A single cloud on a sunny day, 295
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,

A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies arc blue, and earth is gay.

ii

A kind of change came in my fate, 300
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain, 305
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one, 310
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed, 315
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

ii

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all, 320
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child — no sire — no kin had I,
No partner in my misery; 325
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had¹ made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high, 330
The quiet of a loving eye.

13

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below, 335
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down; 340

¹ would have.

And then there was a little isle,¹
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor, 345
But in it there wdre three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue. 350
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly; 355
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled — and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode 360
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest. 365

J⁴

It might be months, or years, or days —
I kept no count — I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free, 370
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last, 375
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage — and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home: 380
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,

¹ Between the entrances of the Rhone and Ville-neuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island, the only one I could perceive in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view. (Byron.)

And why should I feel less than they?
 We were all inmates of one place, 385
 And I, the monarch of each race,
 Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!
 In quiet we had learned to dwell —
 My very chains and I grew friends,
 So much a long communion tends 390
 To make us what we are: — even I
 Regained my freedom with a sigh.
 June, 1816.

To Thomas Moore

What are you doing now,
 Oh Thomas Moore?¹
 What are you doing now,
 Oh Thomas Moore?
 Sighing or suing now, 5
 Rhyming or wooing now,
 Billing or cooing now,
 Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,
 Oh Thomas Moore! 10
 The Carnival's coming,
 Oh Thomas Moore!
 Masking and humming,
 Fifeing and drumming,
 Guitarring and strumming, 15
 Oh Thomas Moore!

December 24, 1816.

So Well Go No More A Roving

So, we'll go no more a roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.
 For the sword outwears its sheath, 5
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.
 Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon, 10
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving
 By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817.

¹ The Irish poet (1779-1852) was one of Byron's closest friends, to whom he entrusted his autobiography.

To Thomas Moore

My boat is on the shore,
 And my bark is on the sea;
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me, 5
 And a smile to those who hate;
 And, whatever sky's above me,
 Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the Ocean roar around me,
 Yet it still shall bear me on; 10
 Though a desert should surround me,
 It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
 As I gasped upon the brink,
 Ere my fainting spirit fell, 15
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
 That libation I would pour
 Should be — peace with thine and mine,
 And health to thee, Tom Moore. 20
 July, 1817.

Mazeppa

The story of Mazeppa's wild ride, told in a tense but quietly-humorous manner, is a good example of Byron's narrative skill.

I

'Twas after dread PultowaV day,
 When fortune left the royal Swede —
 Around a slaughtered army lay,
 No more to combat and to bleed.
 The power and glory of the war, 5
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
 Had passed to the triumphant Czar,
 And Moscow's walls were safe again —
 Until a day more dark and drear,
 And a more memorable year,² 10
 Should give to slaughter and to shame
 A mightier host and haughtier name;

¹ The Battle of Pultowa, July 8, 1709, in which the Russians (led by Charles XII of Sweden).

² Reference to Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in the winter of 1812.

A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

2

Such was the hazard of the die; 15
The wounded Charles¹ was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stained with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid 20
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When Truth had naught to dread from Power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta² gave
His own — and died the Russians' slave.
This, too, sinks after many a league 25
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests darkling,
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —
The beacons of surrounding foes —
A King must lay his limbs at length. 30
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In outworn Nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff — his limbs were
stark — 35
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kingly the Monarch bore his fall, 40
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

3

A band of chiefs! — alas! how few, 45
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinned it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed; 50
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade —

¹ Previously wounded, Charles XII directed the battle from a stretcher.

² Colonel Gicta, wounded, gave his own horse to King Charles.

Himself as rough, and scarce less old, 55
The Ukraine's hetman,¹ calm and bold;
But first, outspent with his long course,
The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed, 59
And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane,
And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,
And joyed to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews: 65
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do,
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb, 70
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obeyed his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around, — and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight, — 75
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

4

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good 80
The long day's march had well withstood —
If still the powder filled the pan,
And flints unloosened kept their lock —
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt; 85
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the Monarch and his men
The whole or portion offered then 90
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show, 95
And seem above both wounds and woe; —
And then he said — "Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done 100
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,

¹ viceroys.

Since Alexander's days till now,
 As thy Bucephalus¹ and them:
 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield 105
 For pricking on o'er flood and field."
 Mazeppa answered — "111 betide
 The school wherein I learned to ride!"
 Quoth Charles — "Old Hetman, wherefore so,
 Since thou hast learned the art so well?" no
 Mazeppa said — " 'Twere long to tell;
 And we have many a league to go,
 With every now and then a blow,
 And ten to one at least the foe,
 Before our steeds may graze at ease 115
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes;²
 And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
 And I will be the sentinel
 Of this your troop." — "But I request,"
 Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell 120
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
 For at this moment from my eyes
 The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track 125
 My seventy years of memory back:
 I think 'twas in my twentieth spring, —
 Ay, 'twas, — when Casimir was king —
 John Casimir, — I was his page
 Six summers, in my earlier age: 130
 A learned monarch, faith! was he,
 And most unlike your Majesty:
 He made no wars, and did not gain
 New realms to lose them back again;
 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet) 135
 He reigned in most unseemly quiet;
 Not that he had no cares to vex,
 He loved the muses and the Sex;
 And sometimes these so froward are,
 They made him wish himself at war; 140
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
 Another mistress — or new book:
 And then he gave prodigious fetes —
 All Warsaw gathered round his gates
 To gaze upon his splendid court, 145
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
 He was the Polish Solomon,
 So sung his poets, all but one,
 Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,

And boasted that he could not flatter. 150
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
 Even I for once produced some verses,
 And signed my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
 There was a certain Palatine,¹ 155
 A count of far and high descent,
 Rich as a salt² or silver mine;
 And he was proud, ye may divine,
 As if from Heaven he had been sent;
 He had such wealth in blood and ore 160
 As few could match beneath the throne;
 And he would gaze upon his store,
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 Until by some confusion led,
 Which almost looked like want of head, 165
 He thought their merits were his own.
 His wife was not of his opinion —
 His junior she by thirty years —
 Grew daily tired of his dominion;
 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears, 170
 To Virtue a few farewell tears,
 A restless dream or two — some glances
 At Warsaw's youth — some songs, and
 dances,
 Awaited but the usual chances,
 (Those happy accidents which render 175
 The coldest dames so very tender.)
 To deck her Count with titles given,
 'Tis said, as passports into Heaven;
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast
 Of these, who have deserved them most. 180

5
 "I was a goodly stripling then;
 At seventy years I so may say,
 That there were few, or boys or men,
 Who, in my dawning time of day,
 Of vassal or of knight's degree, 185
 Could vie in vanities with me;
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
 A port, not like to this ye see,
 But as smooth, as all is rugged now; 189
 For Time, and Care, and War, have
 ploughed
 My very soul from out my brow;
 And thus I should be disavowed

¹ The name of Alexander the Great's horse.

² The Dnieper, chief river of the Ukraine,
 a Casimir V, King of Poland.

¹ A count who, as chief of a palatinate or province,
 has certain royal privileges.

² The reference is natural here, for much of the wealth
 of Poland was in salt mines.

By all my kind and kin, could they
 Compare my day and yesterday.
 This change was wrought, too, long ere age
 Had ta'en my features for his page: 196
 With years, ye know, have not declined
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,
 Or at this hour I should not be
 Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200
 With starless skies my canopy.
 But let me on: Theresa's form —
 Methinks it glides before me now,
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
 The memory is so quick and warm; 205
 And yet I find no words to tell
 The shape of her I loved so well:
 She had the Asiatic eye,
 Such as our Turkish neighborhood,
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood, 210
 Dark as above us is the sky;
 But through it stole a tender light,
 Like the first moonrise of midnight;
 Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
 Which seemed to melt to its own beam; 215
 All love, half languor, and half fire,
 Like saints that at the stake expire,
 And lift their raptured looks on high,
 As though it were a joy to die.
 A brow like a midsummer lake, 220
 Transparent with the sun therein,
 When waves no murmur dare to make,
 And Heaven beholds her face within.
 A cheek and lip — but why proceed?
 I loved her then — I love her still, 225
 And such as I am, love indeed
 In fierce extremes — in good and ill.
 But still we love even in our rage,
 And haunted to our very age
 With the vain shadow of the past — 230
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

6

"We met — we gazed — I saw, and sighed;
 She did not speak, and yet replied;
 There are ten thousand tones and signs
 We hear and see, but none defines — 235
 Involuntary sparks of thought,
 Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
 And form a strange intelligence,
 Alike mysterious and intense,
 Which link the burning chain that binds, 240
 Without their will, young hearts and minds;

Conveying, as the electric wire,
 We know not how, the absorbing fire.
 I saw, and sighed — in silence wept,
 And still reluctant distance kept, 245
 Until I was made known to her,
 And we might then and there confer
 Without suspicion — then, even then,
 I longed, and was resolved to speak;
 But on my lips they died again, 250
 The accents tremulous and weak,
 Until one hour. — There is a game,
 A frivolous and foolish play,
 Wherewith we while away the day;
 It is — I have forgot the name — 255
 And we to this, it seems, were set,
 By some strange chance, which I forget:
 I recked not if I won or lost,
 It was enough for me to be
 So near to hear, and oh! to see 260
 The being whom I loved the most.
 I watched her as a sentinel,
 (May ours this dark night watch as well!)
 Until I saw, and thus it was,
 That she was pensive, nor perceived 265
 Her occupation, nor was grieved
 Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
 Played on for hours, as if her will
 Yet bound her to the place, though not
 That hers might be the winning lot. 270
 Then through my brain the thought did
 pass,
 Even as a flash of lightning there,
 That there was something in her air
 Which would not doom me to despair,
 And on the thought my words broke forth,
 All incoherent as they were; 276
 Their eloquence was little worth,
 But yet she listened — 'tis enough —
 Who listens once will listen twice;
 Her heart, be sure, is not of ice — 280
 And one refusal no rebuff.

7

"I loved, and was beloved again —
 They tell me, Sir, you never knew
 Those gentle frailties, if 'tis true,
 I shorten all my joy or pain; 285
 To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
 But all men are not born to reign,
 Or o'er their passions, or as you
 Thus o'er themselves and nations too.

I am — or rather was — a Prince, 290
 A chief of thousands, and could lead
 Them on where each would foremost bleed;
 But could not o'er myself evince
 The like control. — But to resume:
 I loved, and was beloved again; 295
 In sooth, it is a happy doom,
 But yet where happiest ends in pain. —
 We met in secret, and the hour
 Which led me to that lady's bower
 Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300
 My days and nights were nothing — all
 Except that hour which doth recall,
 In the long lapse from youth to age,
 No other like itself— I'd give
 The Ukraine back again to live 305
 It o'er once more — and be a page,
 The happy page, who was the lord
 Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
 And had no other gem nor wealth,
 Save nature's gift of Youth and Health. — 310
 We met in secret — doubly sweet,
 Some say, they find it so to meet;
 I know not that — I would have given
 My life but to have called her mine
 In the full view of Earth and Heaven; 315
 For I did oft and long repine
 That we could only meet by stealth.

8

"For lovers there are many eyes,
 And such there were on us; — The Devil
 On such occasions should be civil —• 320
 The Devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,
 It might be some untoward saint,
 Who would not be at rest too long,
 But to his pious bile gave vent —
 But one fair night, some lurking spies 325
 Surprised and seized us both.
 The Count was something more than wroth —
 I was unarmed; but if in steel,
 All cap-a-pie from head to heel,
 What 'gainst their numbers could I do? —
 'Twas near his castle, far away 331
 From city or from succor near,
 And almost on the break of day;
 I did not think to see another,
 My moments seemed reduced to few; 335
 And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
 And, it may be, a saint or two,
 As I resigned me to my fate,

They led me to the castle gate:
 Theresa's doom I never knew, 340
 Our lot was henceforth separate. —
 An angry man, ye may opine,
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
 And he had reason good to be,
 But he was most enraged lest such 345
 An accident should chance to touch
 Upon his future pedigree;
 Nor less amazed, that such a blot
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
 While he was highest of his line; 350
 Because unto himself he seemed
 The first of men, nor less he deemed
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.
 'Sdeath! with a page — perchance a king
 Had reconciled him to the thing; 355
 But with a stripling of a page —
 I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

9

"Bring forth the horse!" — the horse was
 brought!
 In truth, he was a noble steed,
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed, 360
 Who looked as though the speed of thought
 Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
 With spur and bridle undefiled —
 'Twas but a day he had been caught; 365
 And snorting, with erected mane,
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
 In the full foam of wrath and dread
 To me the desert-born was led:
 They bound me on, that menial throng, 370
 Upon his back with many a thong;
 They loosed him with a sudden lash —
 Away! — away! — and on we dash! —
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

10

"Away! — away! — My breath was gone —
 I saw not where he hurried on: 376
 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
 And on he foamed — away! — away! —
 The last of human sounds which rose,
 As I was darted from my foes, 380
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
 Which on the wind came roaring after
 A moment from that rabble rout:
 With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,

- And snapped the cord, which to the mane
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein, 386
 And, writhing half my form about,
 Howled back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
 The thunder of my courser's speed,
 Perchance they did not hear nor heed: 390
 It vexes me — for I would fain
 Have paid their insult back again.
 I paid it well in after days:
 There is not of that castle gate,
 Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight, 395
 Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
 Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
 Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
 And many a time ye there might pass, 400
 Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.
 I saw its turrets in a blaze,
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,
 And the hot lead pour down like rain 404
 From off the scorched and blackening roof,
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
 They little thought that day of pain,
 When launched, as on the lightning's flash,
 They bade me to destruction dash,
 That one day I should come again, 410
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.
 They played me then a bitter prank,
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,
 They bound me to his foaming flank: 415
 At length I played them one as frank —
 For Time at last sets all things even —
 And if we do but watch the hour,
 There never yet was human power
 Which could evade, if unforgiven, 420
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.
- II
- "Away, away, my steed and I,
 Upon the pinions of the wind!
 All human dwellings left behind, 425
 We sped like meteors through the sky,
 When with its crackling sound the night
 Is chequered with the Northern light.
 Town — village — none were on our track,
 But a wild plain of far extent, 430
 And bounded by a forest black,
 And, save the scarce seen battlement
 On distant heights of some strong hold,
 Against the Tartars built of old,
 No trace of man. The year before 435
 A Turkish army had marched o'er;
 And where the SpahiV hoof hath trod,
 The verdure flies the bloody sod.
 The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 And a low breeze crept moaning by — 440
 I could have answered with a sigh —
 But fast we fled, away, away! —
 And I could neither sigh nor pray;
 And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 Upon the courser's bristling mane; 445
 But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 He flew upon his far career.
 At times I almost thought, indeed,
 He must have slackened in his speed;
 But no — my bound and slender frame 450
 Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became:
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swoln limbs from their agony
 Increased his fury and affright: 455
 I tried my voice, — 'twas faint and low —
 But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang.
 Meantime my cords were wet with gore, 460
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
 And in my tongue the thirst became
 A something fierier far than flame.
- 12
- "We neared the wild wood — 'twas so wide,
 I saw no bounds on either side; 465
 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
 That bent not to the roughest breeze
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
 And strips the forest in its haste, —
 But these were few and far between, 470
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 Discolored with a lifeless red, 475
 Which stands thereon like stiffened gore
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er;
 And some long winter's night hath shed
 Its frost o'er every tombless head —
 So cold and stark — the raven's beak 480
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek.
- 1 Turkish horseman.

'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart — and well it were, 485
Or else a different lot were mine —

The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs, and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarred with cold,
My bonds forbade to loose my hold. 490
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop which can tire 495
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they followed on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood, 500
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wished for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish — if it must be so — 505
At bay, destroying many a foe!
When first my courser's race begun,
I wished the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed 510
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe —
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewildered with the dazzling blast, 515
Than through the forest-paths he past —
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild —
All furious as a favored child
Balked of its wish; or — fiercer still —
A woman piqued — who has her will! 520

13

"The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold —
Prolonged endurance tames the bold; 525
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er.
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path — 530

Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in Nature's nakedness,
(Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirred beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like 535
The rattle-snake's in act to strike,) —
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,
I seemed to sink upon the ground; 540
But erred — for I was fastly bound.
My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbbed awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel, 545
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther. He who dies
Can die no more than then I died,
O'er-tortured by that ghastly ride.
I felt the blackness come and go, 550
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
At the same time upheave and whelm, 555
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain; 560
But soon it passed, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must 565
Feel far more ere we turn to dust!
No matter! I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face — before — and now.

14

"My thoughts came back. Where was I?
Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse 570
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb: till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflowed though thick and
chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang, 575
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight returned, though dim, alas!

And thickened, as it were, with glass.
 Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
 There was a gleam too of the sky, 580
 Studded with stars; — it is no dream;
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
 The bright broad river's gushing tide
 Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
 And we are half-way, struggling o'er 585
 To yon unknown and silent shore.
 The waters broke my hollow trance,
 And with a temporary strength
 My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.
 My courser's broad breast proudly braves 590
 And dashes off the ascending waves,
 And onward we advance!
 We reach the slippery shore at length,
 A haven I but little prized,
 For all behind was dark and drear, 595
 And all before was night and fear.
 How many hours of night or day
 In those suspended pangs I lay,
 I could not tell; I scarcely knew
 If this were human breath I drew. 600

15

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
 And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
 The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
 Up the repelling bank.
 We gain the top: a boundless plain 605
 Spreads through the shadow of the night,
 And onward, onward, onward — seems,
 Like precipices in our dreams,
 To stretch beyond the sight;
 And here and there a speck of white, 610
 Or scattered spot of dusky green,
 In masses broke into the light,
 As rose the moon upon my right.
 But nought distinctly seen
 In the dim waste would indicate 615
 The omen of a cottage gate;
 No twinkling taper from afar
)Stood like a hospitable star;
 Not even an ignis-fatuu¹ rose
 To make him merry with my woes: 620
 That very cheat had cheered me then!
 Although detected, welcome still,
 Reminding me, through every ill,
 Of the abodes of men.

¹ phosphorescent light on a marsh; will-o'-the-wisp.

16

"Onward we went — but slack and slow; 625
 His savage force at length o'erspent,
 The drooping courser, faint and low,
 All feebly foaming went.
 A sickly infant had had power
 To guide him forward in that hour! 630
 But, useless all to me.
 His new-born tameness nought availed —
 My limbs were bound; my force had failed,
 Perchance, had they been free.
 With feeble effort still I tried 635
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied —
 But still it was in vain;
 My limbs were only wrung the more,
 And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
 Which but prolong'd their pain. 640
 The dizzy race seemed almost done,
 Although no goal was nearly won:
 Some streaks announced the coming sun —
 How slow, alas! he came!
 Methought that mist of dawning gray 645
 Would never dapple into day;
 How heavily it rolled away —
 Before the eastern flame
 Rose crimson, and posed the stars,
 And called the radiance from their cars, 650
 And filled the earth, from his deep throne,
 With lonely lustre, all his own.

17

"Up rose the sun, the mists were curled
 Back from the solitary world
 Which lay around — behind — before. 655
 What booted it to traverse o'er
 Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
 Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
 Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
 No sign of travel — none of toil; 660
 The very air was mute;
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,
 Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
 From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,¹
 Panting as if his heart would burst, 665
 The weary brute still staggered on;
 And still we were — or seemed — alone.
 At length, while reeling on our way,
 Methought I heard a courser neigh
 From out yon tuft of blackening firs. 670
 Is it the wind those branches stirs?

¹ verst, in Russia 3500 feet.

No, no! From out the forest prance
 A trampling troop; I see them come!
 In one vast squadron they advance!
 I strove to cry — my lips were dumb! 675
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
 But where are they the reins to guide?
 A thousand horse — and none to ride!
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,
 Wide nostrils — never stretched by pain, 680
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
 And feet that iron never shod,
 And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea, 685
 Came thickly thundering on,
 As if our faint approach to meet!
 The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
 A moment, with a faint low neigh, 690
 He answered, and then fell!
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
 And reeking limbs immovable;
 His first and last career is done!
 On came the troop — they saw him stoop, 695
 They saw me strangely bound along
 His back with many a bloody thong.
 They stop — they start — they snuff the air,
 Gallop a moment here and there,
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round, 700
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,
 Headed by one black mighty steed,
 Who seemed the patriarch of his breed,
 Without a single speck or hair
 Of white upon his shaggy hide. 705
 They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve
 aside,
 And backward to the forest fly,
 By instinct, from a human eye. —
 They left me there to my despair,
 Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch, 710
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,
 From whence I could not extricate
 Nor him nor me — and there we lay,
 The dying on the dead! 715
 I little deemed another day
 Would see my houseless, helpless head.
 "And there from morn till twilight bound,
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,
 With just enough of life to see 720

My last of suns go down on me,
 In hopeless certainty of mind,
 That makes us feel at length resigned
 To that which our foreboding years
 Presents the worst and last of fears: 725
 Inevitable — even a boon,
 Nor more unkind for coming soon;
 Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,
 As if it only were a snare
 That Prudence might escape: 73*
 At times both wished for and implored,
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,
 Yet still a dark and hideous close
 To even intolerable woes,
 And welcome in no shape. 733
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
 They who have revelled beyond measure
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
 Die calm, or calmer oft than he
 Whose heritage was Misery: 740
 For he who hath in turn run through
 All that was beautiful and new,
 Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
 And, save the future, (which is viewed
 Not quite as men are base or good, 745
 But as their nerves may be endured.)
 With nought perhaps to grieve: —
 The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
 Appears, to his distempered eyes, 750
 Arrived to rob him of his prize,
 The tree of his new Paradise.
 To-morrow would have given him all,
 Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall;
 To-morrow would have been the first 755
 Of days no more deplored or curst,
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
 Guerdon of many a painful hour;
 To-morrow would have given him power 760
 To rule — to shine — to smite — to save —
 And must it dawn upon his grave?

18

"The sun was sinking — still I lay
 Chained to the chill and stiffening steed!
 I thought to mingle there our clay; 765
 And my dim eyes of death had need,
 No hope arose of being freed.
 I cast my last looks up the sky,
 And there between me and the sun

1 saw the expecting raven fly, 770
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun.

He flew, and perched, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit, 775
And once so near me he alit

I could have smote, but lacked the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be called a voice, 781

Together scared him off at length. —
I know no more — my latest dream

Is something of a lovely star
Which fixed my dull eyes from afar, 785
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath, 790
A little thrill, a short suspense,

An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that crossed my brain —
A gasp — a throb — a start of pain,
A sigh — and nothing more. 795

19

"I woke — Where was I? — Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie? 800
And is it mortal, yon bright eye
That watches me with gentle glance?

I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er. 805
A slender girl, long-haired, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall:
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw 810

A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free.
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be, —
But that I lived, and was released 815
From adding to the vulture's feast.
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unsealed,

She smiled — and I essayed to speak,
But failed — and she approached, and 820
made

With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid, 825
And smoothed the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,

And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music followed her light feet; — 830

But those she called were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she passed,
Another look on me she cast,

Another sign she made, to say,
That I had naught to fear, that all 835
Were near, at my command or call,
And she would not delay
Her due return: — while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

20

"She came with mother and with sire — 840
What need of more? — I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest.

They found me senseless on the plain —
They bore me to the nearest hut — 845
They brought me into life again —
Me — one day o'er their realm to reign!

Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,

Sent me forth to the wilderness, 850
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne, —

What mortal his own doom may guess? —
Let none despond, let none despair!

To-morrow the Borysthenes 855
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank, — and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there.

Comrades, good night!" — The Hetman
threw 860

His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him who took his rest when'er
The hour arrived, no matter where: 865

His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wondered not, —
The king had been an hour asleep.

FROM Don Ju[^]n

Don Juan is Byron's great humorous poem. He completed sixteen cantos, and had started a seventeenth, before his death. In letters to his publisher, Murray, he called it "a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped," and "a satire on *abuses* of the present states of society, and not an eulogy of vice." Part of the humor of the poem resides in Byron's use of elaborately ingenious double and triple rhymes. The hero's name — as the meter indicates — is pronounced Joo-an.

CANTO THE SECOND, STANZAS 1- 53

The famous description in this canto of the shipwreck is an excellent example of realism in verse. Byron told his publisher that the picture is a composite of a number of actual shipwrecks, that in it "there was not a *single circumstance ... not taken from fact.*"

I

Oh ye! who teach the ingenuous youth of nations,

Holland, France, England, Germany, or Spain,

I pray ye flog them upon all occasions —

It mends their morals, never mind the pain:
The best of mothers and of educations 5

In Juan's case were but employed in vain,
Since, in a way that's rather of the oddest, he
Became divested of his native modesty.

2

Had he but been placed at a public¹ school,

In the third form, or even in the fourth, 10
His daily task had kept his fancy cool,

At least, had he been nurtured in the North;
Spain may prove an exception to the rule,

But then exceptions always prove its worth —

A lad of sixteen causing a divorce 15
Puzzled his tutors very much, of course.

3

I can't say that it puzzles me at all,

If all things be considered: first, there was

¹ In the British sense, i.e., a private school, like Eton.

His lady-mother, mathematical,

A — never mind, his tutor, an old ass, 20

A pretty woman — (that's quite natural,

Or else the thing had hardly come to pass)

A husband rather old, not much in unity

With his young wife — a time, and opportunity.

4

Well — well; the World must turn upon its axis, 25

And all Mankind turn with it, heads or tails,

And live and die, make love and pay our taxes,

And as the veering wind shifts, shift our sails;

The King commands us, and the Doctor quacks us, 29

The Priest instructs, and so our life exhales,

A little breath, love, wine, ambition, fame,

Fighting, devotion, dust, — perhaps a name.

5

I said that Juan had been sent to Cadiz —

A pretty town, I recollect it well —

'Tis there the mart of the colonial trade is,

(Or was, before Peru learned to rebel), 36

And such sweet girls! — I mean, such graceful ladies,

Their very walk would make your bosom swell;

I can't describe it, though so much it strike,
Nor liken it — I never saw the like: 40

6

An Arab horse, a stately stag, a barb

New broke, a camelopard, a gazelle,

No — none of these will do; — and then their garb,

Their veil and petticoat — Alas! to dwell

Upon such things would very near absorb 45

A canto—then their feet and ankles,—well,

Thank Heaven I've got no metaphor quite ready,

(And so, my sober Muse — come, let's be steady —

7

Chaste Muse I — well, — if you must, you must) — the veil

Thrown back a moment with the glancing hand, 50

While the o'erpowering eye, that turns you
 pale,
 Flashes into the heart: — All sunny land
 Of Love! when I forget you, may I fail
 To — say my prayers — but never was
 there planned
 A dress through which the eyes give such
 a volley, 55
 Excepting the Venetian Fazzioli.¹

8

But to our tale: the Donna Inez sent
 Her son to Cadiz only to embark;
 To stay there had not answered her intent,
 But why? — we leave the reader in the
 dark — 60
 Twas for a voyage the young man was meant,
 As if a Spanish ship were Noah's ark,
 To wean him from the wickedness of earth,
 And send him like a Dove of Promise forth.

9

Don Juan bade his valet pack his things 65
 According to directions, then received
 A lecture and some money: for four springs
 He was to travel; and though Inez grieved
 (As every kind of parting has its stings),
 She hoped he would improve — perhaps
 believed: 70
 A letter, too, she gave (he never read it)
 Of good advice — and two or three of credit.

10

In the meantime, to pass her hours away,
 Brave Inez now set up a Sunday school
 For naughty children, who would rather
 play 75
 (Like truant rogues) the devil, or the fool;
 Infants of three years old were taught that day,
 Dunces were whipped, or set upon a stool:
 The great success of Juan's education
 Spurred her to teach another generation. 80

ii

Juan embarked — the ship got under way,
 The wind was fair, the water passing rough;
 A devil of a sea rolls in that bay,
 As I, who've crossed it oft, know well
 enough;

¹ Literally, little handkerchiefs — the veils most
 availing of St. Mark. (Byron.)

And, standing on the deck, the dashing spray
 Flies in one's face, and makes it weather-
 tough: 86
 And there he stood to take, and take again,
 His first — perhaps his last — farewell of
 Spain.

12.

I can't but say it is an awkward sight
 To see one's native land receding through 90
 The growing waters; it unmans one quite,
 Especially when life is rather new:
 I recollect Great Britain's coast looks white,
 But almost every other country's blue,
 When gazing on them, mystified by distance,
 We enter on our nautical existence. 96

13

So Juan stood, bewildered on the deck:
 The wind sung, cordage strained, and
 sailors swore,
 And the ship creaked, the town became a
 speck,
 From which away so fair and fast they
 bore. 100
 The best of remedies is a beefsteak
 Against seasickness: try it, Sir, before
 You sneer, and I assure you this is true,
 For I have found it answer — so may you.

14

Don Juan stood, and, gazing from the stern,
 Beheld his native Spam receding far: 106
 First partings form a lesson hard to learn,
 Even nations feel this when they go to war;
 There is a sort of unexpressed concern,
 A kind of shock that sets one's heart ajar,
 At leaving even the most unpleasant people
 And places — one keeps looking at the
 steuple. 112

15

But Juan had got many things to leave,
 His mother, and a mistress, and no wife,
 So that he had much better cause to grieve 115
 Than many persons more advanced in life:
 And if we now and then a sigh must heave
 At quitting even those we quit in strife,
 No doubt we weep for those the heart en-
 dears —
 That is, till deeper griefs congeal our tears. 120

16

So Juan wept, as wept the captive Jews
 By Babel's waters, still remembering Sion:
 I'd weep, — but mine is not a weeping Muse,
 And such light griefs are not a thing to
 die on;
 Young men should travel, if but to amuse 125
 Themselves; and the next time their serv-
 vants tie on
 Behind their carriages their new port-
 manteau,
 Perhaps it may be lined with this my canto.

17

And Juan wept, and much he sighed and
 thought,
 While his salt tears dropped into the salt
 sea, 130
 "Sweets to the sweet," (I like so much to
 quote;
 You must excuse this extract, — 'tis where
 she,
 The Queen of Denmark, for Ophelia brought
 Flowers to the grave;) and, sobbing often,
 he
 Reflected on his present situation, 135
 And seriously resolved on reformation.

18

"Farewell, my Spain! a long farewell!" he
 cried,
 "Perhaps I may revisit thee no more,
 But die, as many an exiled heart hath died,
 Of its own thirst to see again thy shore:
 Farewell, where Guadalquivir's waters glide!
 Farewell, my mother! and, since all is
 o'er, 142
 Farewell, too, dearest Julia! — (here he drew
 Her letter out again, and read it through.)

*9

"And oh! if e'er I should forget, I swear — 145
 But that's impossible, and cannot be —
 Sooner shall this blue Ocean melt to air,
 Sooner shall Earth resolve itself to sea,
 Than I resign thine image, oh, my fair!
 Or think of anything, excepting thee, 150
 A mind diseased no remedy can physic —
 (Here the ship gave a lurch, and he grew
 seasick.)

10

"Sooner shall Heaven kiss earth — (here he
 fell sicker)
 Oh, Julia! what is every other woe? —
 (For God's sake let me have a glass of liquor;
 Pedro, Battista, help me down below.) 156
 Julia, my love! — (you rascal, Pedro, quick-
 er)-
 Oh, Julia! — (this curst vessel pitches so) —
 Beloved Julia, hear me still beseeching!"
 (Here he grew inarticulate with retching.)

21

He felt that chilling heaviness of heart, 161
 Or rather stomach, which, alas! attends,
 Beyond the best apothecary's art,
 The loss of Love, the treachery of friends,
 Or death of those we dote on, when a part 165
 Of us dies with them as each fond hope
 ends:
 No doubt he would have been much more
 pathetic,
 But the sea acted as a strong emetic.

22

Love's a capricious power: I've known it
 hold
 Out through a fever caused by its own
 heat, 170
 But be much puzzled by a cough and cold,
 And find a quinsy very hard to treat;
 Against all noble maladies he's bold,
 But vulgar illnesses don't like to meet,
 Nor that a sneeze should interrupt his sigh,
 Nor inflammation redden his blind eye. 176

2-3

But worst of all is nausea, or a pain
 About the lower region of the bowels,
 Love, who heroically breathes a vein,
 Shrinks from the application of hot
 towels, 180
 And purgatives are dangerous to his reign,
 Seasickness death: his love was perfect,
 how else
 Could Juan's passion, while the billows roar,
 Resist his stomach, ne'er at sea before? 184

M

The ship, called the most holy "Trinidad,"
 Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;

For there the Spanish family Moncada
 Were settled long ere Juan's sire was born:
 They were relations, and for them he had a
 Letter of introduction, which the morn 190
 Of his departure had been sent him by
 His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

25

His suite consisted of three servants and
 A tutor, the licentiate Pednllo,
 Who several languages did understand, 195
 But now lay sick and speechless on his
 pillow,
 And, rocking in his hammock, longed for land,
 His headache being increased by every
 billow;
 And the waves oozing through the port-hole
 made
 His berth a little damp, and him afraid. 200

16

'Twas not without some reason, for the wind
 Increased at night, until it blew a gale;
 And though 'twas not much to a naval mind,
 Some landsmen would have looked a little
 pale,
 For sailors are, in fact, a different kind: 205
 At sunset they began to take in sail,
 For the sky showed it would come on to blow,
 And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

17

At one o'clock the wind with sudden shift
 Threw the ship right into the trough of
 the sea, 210
 Which struck her aft, and made an awkward
 rift,
 Started the stern-post, also shattered the
 Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she could
 lift
 Herself from out her present jeopardy,
 The rudder tore away: 'twas time to sound 215
 The pumps, and there were four feet water
 found.

18

One gang of people instantly was put
 Upon the pumps, and the remainder set
 To get up part of the cargo, and what not,
 But they could not come at the leak as
 yet; 220

At last they did get at it really, but
 Still their salvation was an even bet:
 The water rushed through in a way quite
 puzzling,
 While they thrust sheet, shirts, jackets, bales
 of muslin,

29

Into the opening, but all such ingredients 225
 Would have been vain, and they must
 have gone down,
 Despite of all their efforts and expedients,
 But for the pumps: I'm glad to make them
 known
 To all the brother tars who may have need
 hence,
 For fifty tons of water were upthrown 230
 By them per hour, and they had all been un-
 done,
 But for the maker, Mr. Mann, of London.

3°

As day advanced the weather seemed to
 abate,
 And then the leak they reckoned to reduce,
 And keep the ship afloat, though three feet
 yet 235
 Kept two hand- and one chain-pump
 still in use.
 The wind blew fresh again: as it grew late
 A squall came on, and while some guns
 broke loose,
 A gust — which all descriptive power tran-
 scends—
 Laid with one blast the ship on her beam
 ends. 240

3¹

There she lay, motionless, and seemed upset;
 The water left the hold, and washed the
 decks,
 And made a scene men do not soon forget;
 For they remember battles, fires, and
 wrecks,
 Or any other thing that brings regret, 245
 Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads,
 or necks.
 Thus drownings are much talked of by the
 divers,
 And swimmers, who may chance to be sur-
 vivors.

32

Immediately the masts were cut away,
 Both mam and mizen; first the mizen
 went, 250
 The main-mast followed: but the ship still
 lay
 Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
 Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and
 they
 Eased her at last (although we never
 meant 251
 To part with all till every hope was blighted),
 And then with violence the old ship righted.

33

It may be easily supposed, while this
 Was going on, some people were unquiet,
 That passengers would find it much amiss
 To lose their lives, as well as spoil their
 diet; 260
 That even the able seaman, deeming his
 Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,
 As upon such occasions tars will ask
 For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the
 cask.

34

There's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit
 calms 265
 As rum and true religion: thus it was,
 Some plundered, some drank spirits, some
 sung psalms,
 ' The high wind made the treble, and as
 bass
 The hoarse harsh waves kept time; fright
 cured the qualms
 Of all the luckless landmen's seasick
 maws: 270
 Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, de-
 votion,
 Clamored in chorus to the roaring Ocean.

35

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but for
 Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his years,
 Got to the spirit-room, and stood before 275
 It with a pair of pistols; and their fears,
 As if Death were more dreadful by his door
 Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,
 Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,
 Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.

36

"Give us more grog," they cried, "for it will
 be 281
 All one an hour hence." Juan answered,
 "No!
 'Tis true that Death awaits both you and me,
 But let us die like men, not sink below
 Like brutes:" — and thus his dangerous post
 kept he, 285
 And none liked to anticipate the blow;
 And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,
 Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

37

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,
 And made a loud and pious lamentation;
 Repented all his sins, and made a last 291
 Irrevocable vow of reformation;
 Nothing should tempt him more (this peril
 past)
 To quit his academic occupation,
 In cloisters of the classic Salamanca, 295
 To follow Juan's wake, like Sancho Panca.

38

But now there came a flash of hope once more;
 Day broke, and the wind lulled: the masts
 were gone,
 The leak increased; shoals around her, but
 no shore,
 The vessel swam, yet still she held her
 own. 300
 They tried the pumps again, and though,
 before,
 Their desperate efforts seemed all useless
 grown,
 A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to
 bale —
 The stronger pumped, the weaker thrummed
 a sail.

39

Under the vessel's keel the sail was passed, 305
 And for the moment it had some effect;
 But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,
 Nor rag of canvas, what could they expect?
 But still 'tis best to struggle to the last, 309
 'Tis never too late to be wholly wrecked:
 And though 'tis true that man can only die
 once,
 'Tis not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

40

There winds and waves had hurled them, and
 from thence,
 Without their will, they carried them away;
 For they were forced with steering to dis-
 pense, 315
 And never had as yet a quiet day
 On which they might repose, or even com-
 mence
 A jurymast or rudder, or could say
 The ship would swim an hour, which, by
 good luck, 319
 Still swam — though not exactly like a duck.

4¹

The wind, in fact, perhaps, was rather less,
 But the ship labored so, they scarce could
 hope
 To weather out much longer; the distress
 Was also great with which they had to cope 325
 For want of water, and their solid mess
 Was scant enough: in vain the telescope
 Was used — nor sail nor shore appeared in
 sight,
 Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

42-

Again the weather threatened, — again blew
 A gale, and in the fore and after-hold 330
 Water appeared, yet, though the people knew
 All this, the most were patient, and some
 bold,
 Until the chains and leathers were worn
 through
 Of all our pumps: — a wreck complete she
 rolled, 334
 At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
 Like human beings during civil war.

43

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears
 In his rough eyes, and told the captain, he
 Could do no more: he was a man in years,
 And long had voyaged through many a
 stormy sea, 340
 And if he wept at length they were not fears
 That made his eyelids as a woman's be,
 But he, poor fellow, had a wife and chil-
 dren, —
 Two things for dying people quite bewilder-
 ing.

44

The ship was evidently settling now 345
 Fast by the head; and, all distinction gone,
 Some went to prayers again, and made a vow
 Of candles to their saints — but there were
 none
 To pay them with; and some looked o'er
 the bow;
 Some hoisted out the boats, and there was
 one 350
 That begged Pedrillo for an absolution,
 Who told him to be damned — in his con-
 fusion.

45

Some lashed them in their hammocks, some
 put on
 Their best clothes, as if going to a fair;
 Some cursed the day on which they saw the
 Sun, 355
 And gnashed their teeth, and, howling,
 tore their hair;
 And others went on as they had begun,
 Getting the boats out, being well aware
 That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,
 Unless with breakers close beneath her lee. 360

46

The worst of all was, that in their condition,
 Having been several days in great distress,
 'Twas difficult to get out such provision
 As now might render their long suffering
 less:
 Men, even when dying, dislike inanition; 365
 Their stock was damaged by the weather's
 stress:
 Two casks of biscuit, and a keg of butter,
 Were all that could be thrown into the cutter.

47

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow
 Some pounds of bread, though injured by
 the wet, 370
 Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so;
 Six flasks of wine; and they contrived to get
 A portion of their beef up from below,
 And with a piece of pork, moreover, met,
 But scarce enough to serve them for a lunch-
 eon — 375
 Then there was rum, eight gallons in a pun
 cheon.

48

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had
 Been stove in the beginning of the gale;
 And the long-boat's condition was but bad,
 As there were but two blankets for a sail,
 And one oar for a mast, which a young lad 381
 Threw in by good luck over the ship's
 rail,
 And two boats could not hold, far less be
 stored,
 To save one half the people then on board.

49

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went
 down
 Over the waste of waters; like a veil, 386
 Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the
 frown
 Of one whose hate is masked but to assail.
 Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was
 shown,
 And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale, 300
 And the dim desolate deep: twelve days had
 Fear
 Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

50

Some trial had been making at a raft,
 With little hope in such a rolling sea,
 A sort of thing at which one would have
 laughed, 395
 If any laughter at such times could be,
 Unless with people who too much have
 quaffed,
 And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,
 Half epileptical, and half hysterical: —
 Their preservation would have been a
 miracle. 400

5¹

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hencoops,
 spars,
 And all things, for a chance, had been cast
 loose,
 That still could keep afloat the struggling
 tars,
 For yet they strove, although of no great
 use: 404
 There was no light in heaven but a few stars,
 The boats put off o'ercrowded with their
 crews,

She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
 And, going down head foremost — sunk, in
 short.

52

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell —
 Then shrieked the timid, and stood still
 the brave, — 410
 Then some leaped overboard with dreadful
 yell,
 As eager to anticipate their grave;
 And the sea yawned around her like a hell,
 And down she sucked with her the whirl-
 ing wave,
 Like one who grapples with his enemy, 415
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

53

And first one universal shriek there rushed,
 Louder than the loud Ocean, like a crash
 Of echoing thunder; and then all was hushed,
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless
 dash 420
 Of billows; but at intervals there gushed,
 Accompanied by a convulsive splash,
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

CANTO THE THIRD, STANZAS 85-END

85

Thus, usually, when *he*¹ was asked to sing,
 He gave the different nations something
 national;
 'Twas all the same to him — "God save the
 king," 675
 Or "*Ca ira*"² according to the fashion all:
 His muse made increment of any thing,
 From the high lyric down to the low ra-
 tional:
 If Pindar³ sang horse-races, what should
 hinder
 Himself from being as pliable as Pindar? 680

86

In France, for instance, he would write a
 chanson;
 In England a six canto quarto tale;

¹ Byron had in mind Southey.

² A song of the French Revolution.

³ Most of his odes, while religious in character, were
 written to celebrate victories in the Greek games.

In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war — much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on 685
Would be old Goethe's (see what says De

Stael),¹
In Italy he'd ape the "Trecentisti,"²
In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like
this t' ye:

I

The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho³ loved and sung, 690
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos' rose, and Phcebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

2

The Scians and the Tcian⁶ muse, 605
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the lame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds whit h echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest." 700

3

The mountains look on Marathon⁸ —
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave, 705
I could not deem myself a slave.

4

A king' sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;¹⁰
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations; — all were his! 710
He counted them at break of day —
And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore

¹ Madame de Staël, 1766-1817, author of *De l'Allemagne*.

² Fourteenth-century Italian artists.

³ The great Greek poetess of love, who wrote about 610 B.C.

⁴ « The island of Delos, the birthplace of Phoebus Apollo, was supposed to have risen in the Ægean Sea.

⁵ Homer, because the island of Scio was said to be his birthplace.

⁶ Anacreon, born in Teos in Asia Minor.

⁷ The MakApwv vijfoi of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Gape de Verde Islands, or the Canaries. (Byron.)

⁸ Where the Greeks defeated the Persians, 490 B.C.

⁹ Xerxes, King of Persia.

¹⁰ The island near which the Greek navy defeated Xerxes, 480 B.C.

The heroic lay is tuneless now — 715
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

6

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race, 720
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

7

Must we but weep o'er days more blest? 725
Must we but blush? — Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylae! 730

8

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, "Let one living head,
But one arise, — we come, we come!" 735
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian² wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine! 740
Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10

You have the Pyrrhic dance' as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic' phalanx gone? 745
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus' gave —
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

II

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these! 750
It made Anacreon's⁶ song divine:
He served — but served Polycrates —
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

¹ The pass which Leonidas and his small band of Spartans defended heroically, but in vain, against Xerxes in 480 B.C.

² from the island of Samos.

³ A war dance.

⁴ King Pyrrhus of Epirus, third century B.C., evolved the phalanx.

⁵ The supposed inventor of the alphabet.

⁶ Anacreon lived in Samos for a time as court-poet to the tyrant Polycrates, his patron.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese¹ 755
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!²
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind. 760

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,³
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric⁴ mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown, 765
The Heracleidan bloods might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
They have a king who buys and sells:
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells; 770
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
I see their glorious black eyes shine; 775
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16

Place me on Sunium's⁵ marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I, 780
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
Dash down your cup of Samian wine!

87

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have
sung, 785

The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was
young,

Yet in these times he might have done
much worse:

His strain displayed some feeling — right or
wrong;

And feeling, in a poet, is the source 790
Of others' feeling; but they are such liars,
And take all colors — like the hands of dyers.

¹ The peninsula of Gallipoli.

² Who commanded the Greeks at Marathon.

³ In Albania. ⁴ Spartan.

⁵ The blood of Heracles or Hercules.

⁶ Southernmost point of Attica, site of an old temple to Athena which faces the sea.

88

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps mil-
lions, think; 795
'Tis strange, the shortest letter which man
uses
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages; to what straits old Time reduces
Frail man, when paper — even a rag like
this,
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's his.

89

And when his bones arc dust, his grave a
blank, 801
His station, generation, even his nation,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
In chronological commemoration,
Some dull MS. Oblivion long has sank, 805
Or graven stone found in a barrack's sta-
tion
In digging the foundation of a closet,
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit,

90

And Glory long has made the sages smile;
'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion,
wind — 810
Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves behind:
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to
Hoyle:¹

The present century was growing blind
To the great MarlboroughV skill in giving
knocks, 815
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Cox.

91

Milton's the Prince of Poets — so we say;
A little heavy, but no less divine:
An independent being in his day — •
Learned, pious, temperate in love and
wine; 820
But, his life falling into Johnson's way,
We're told this great High Priest of all the
Nine

¹ Kdmond Hoyle (1672-1769), a writer and an authority on card-games, whose book on whist (1742) was the standard guide until 1864.

² The victor at Blenheim, 1704.

Was whipt at college — a harsh sire — odd
 spouse,
 For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

9¹

All these are, *cerfes*, entertaining facts, 825
 Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord
 Bacon's bribes;
 Like Titus' youth, and Caesar's earliest acts;
 Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well de-
 scribes);
 Like Cromwell's pranks; — but although
 Truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
 As most essential to their hero's story, 831
 They do not much contribute to his glory.

93

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
 He prated to the world of "Pantisoc-
 racy;"¹
 Or Wordsworth unexcised,² unhired, who
 then 835
 Seasoned his pedlar poems with Democ-
 racy;
 Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
 Let to the *Morning Post* its aristocracy;
 When he and Southey, following the same
 path,
 Espoused two partners³ (milliners of Bath).

94

Such names at present cut a convict figure, 841
 The very Botany Bay⁴ in moral geography;
 Their loyal treason, renegado rigor,
 Are good manure for their more bare biog-
 raphy.
 Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is
 bigger 845
 Than any since the birthday of typog-
 raphy;
 A drowsy frowsy poem, called the "*Excur-
 sion*,"
 Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

¹ The reference is to the ideal commonwealth that Coleridge and Southey planned to establish. Seep. 66.

² Wordsworth held a sinecure position as distributor of stamps.

³ Edith and Sarah Fricker.

⁴ The English convict colony in New South Wales, Australia.

95

He there builds up a formidable dyke
 Between his own and others' intellect; 850
 But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers,
 like
 Joanna Southcote¹ Shiloh, and her sect,
 Are things which in this century don't strike
 The public mind, — so few are the elect;
 And the new births of both their stale vir-
 ginities 855
 Have proved but dropsies,³ taken for divin-
 ities.

96

But let me to my story: I must own,
 If I have any fault, it is digression —
 Leaving my people to proceed alone,
 While I soliloquize beyond expression; 860
 But these are my addresses from the throne,
 Which put off business to the ensuing
 session:
 Forgetting each omission is a loss to
 The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.³

97

I know that what our neighbors call "*lon-
 gueurs*""* 865
 (We've not so good a word, but have the
thtng^
 In that complete perfection which insures
 An epic from Bob Southey every spring),
 Form not the true temptation which allures
 The reader; but 'twould not be hard to
 bring 870
 Some fine examples of the *epopee*,¹
 To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

98

We learn from Horace,⁶ "Homer sometimes
 sleeps;"
 We feel without him, — Wordsworth some-
 times wakes, — 874
 To show with what complacency he creeps,
 With his dear "*Waggoners*," around his
 lakes.

¹ She predicted the birth to her in 1814 of a new Messiah

² Miss Southcote died of dropsy, instead of giving birth to a child.

³ Great romantic poet of Italy (1474-1533) who wrote *Orlando Furioso*.

⁴ tediousness.

s epic.

⁶ In his *Ars Poetica*.

He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps —
Of Ocean? - No, of air; and then he makes
Another outcry for "a little boat,"
And drivels seas to set it well afloat. 880

99

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,
And Pegasus runs restive in his "Waggon,"
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's
Wain?¹

Or pray Medea² for a single dragon?
Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain, 885
He feared his neck to venture such a nag
on,
And he must needs mount nearer to the
moon,
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

100

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Waggons!"
Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to
this? 890

That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack
Cades

Of sense and song above your graves may
hiss—

The "littleboatman" and his "Peter Bell" 895
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"³

101

T' our tale. — The feast was over, the slaves
gone,

The dwarfs and dancing girls had all re-
tired;

The Arab lore and Poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expired; 900
The lady and her lover, left alone,

The rosy flood of Twilight's sky admired;—
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest
thee!

¹ wagon; Charles's Wain is another name for the constellation of the Great Bear, popularly known as "the dipper."

² After she was forsaken by Jason, Medea killed her children, set fire to the house, and escaped in a dragon-drawn chariot.

a A reference to Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*.

102

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour! 905

The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant
tower,

Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft, oio
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with
prayer.

103

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer!

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of Love!

Ave Maria! may our spirits dare 915

Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!

Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!

Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty
Dove —

What though 'tis but a pictured image? —
strike —

That pain-ting is no idol, — 'tis too like. 920

104

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,

In nameless print — that I have no devo-
tion;

But set those persons down with me to pray,

And you shall see who has the properest
notion

Of getting into Heaven the shortest way; 925

My altars are the mountains and the
Ocean,

Earth, air, stars, — all that springs from the
great Whole,

Who hath produced, and will receive the Soul.

105

Sweet Hour of Twilight! — in the solitude

Of the pine forest, and the silent shore 930

Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,

Rooted where once the Adrian wave flowed
o'er,

To where the last Caesarean fortress stood,

Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore

And Dryden's lay¹ made haunted ground to
me, 935

How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

¹ Dryden's poem, *Theodore and Honoria*, which is based on a story in Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

106

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
 Making their summer lives one ceaseless
 song,
 Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and
 mine,
 And Vesper bell's that rose the boughs
 along; 940
 The spectre huntsman¹ of Onesti's line,
 His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair
 throng
 Which learned from this example not to fly
 From a true lover, — shadowed my mind's eye.

107

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer, 946
 To the young bird the parent's brooding
 wings,
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabored steer;²
 Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone
 clings,
 Whate'er our household gods protect of
 dear, 950
 Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's
 breast.

108

Soft Hour! which wakes the wish and melts
 the heart
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
 When they from their sweet friends are torn
 apart; 955
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
 As the far bell of Vesper makes him start,
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
 Ah! surely Nothing dies but Something
 mourns! 960

109

When Nero perished by the justest doom
 Which ever the Destroyer yet destroyed,
 Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
 Of nations freed, and the world overjoyed,
 Some hands unseen strewed flowers upon his
 tomb: 965

* ¹ This ghost, in Boccaccio's story, haunts the girl
 who spurned his love when he was alive.

² These four lines are a paraphrase from Sappho.

Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
 Of feeling for some kindness done, when
 Power
 Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

no

But I'm digressing; what on earth has Nero,
 Or any such like sovereign buffoons, 970
 To do with the transactions of my hero,
 More than such madmen's fellow man —
 the moon's?
 Sure my invention must be down at sero,
 And I grown one of many "wooden spoons"
 Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs¹
 please 975
 To dub the last of honors in degrees).

in

I feel this tediousness will never do —
 'Tis being too epic, and I must cut down
 (In copying) this long canto into two;
 They'll never find it out, unless I own 980
 The fact, excepting some experienced few;
 And then as an improvement 'twill be
 shown:
 I'll prove that such the opinion of the critic is
 From Aristotle *passim*. — See IloiTjTi/ojs.²
 October-November, 1819.

Stanzas

*Written on the Road Between Florence
 and Pisa*

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
 The days of our Youth are the days of our
 glory;
 And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-
 twenty
 Are worth all your laurels, though ever so
 plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow
 that is wrinkled? 5
 'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew be-
 sprinkled.
 Then away with all such from the head that
 is hoary!
 What care I for the wreaths that can only
 give glory?

¹ Cambridge men.

² *The Poetics*, Aristotle's great discussion of literature.

Oh FAME! — if I e'er took delight in thy
praises,
'T was less for the sake of thy high sounding
phrases, 10
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one
discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love
her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found
thee;

Her Glance was the best of the rays that sur-
round thee;

When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright
in my story, 15

I knew it was Love, and I felt it was Glory.
November, 1821.

On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year

Missolonghi, January 22, 1814

Byron's last poem, written three months before
his death.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf; 5
The flowers and fruits of Love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys 10
Is lone as some volcanic isle;

No torch is kindled at its blaze —
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share, 15
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus* — and 'tis not *here* —
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor
now,

Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow. 20

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece — she is awake!) 25
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood! — unto thee 30
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of Beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here: — up to the field, and give 35
Away thy breath!

Seek out — less often sought than found —
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest. 40

At Missolonghi, January 22, 1824.

Tercy Bysshe Shelley • 179'-1812.

Shelley, all his life a convinced radical, eager to overthrow the existing order of society and to substitute for it an idealized anarchy, was by birth an aristocrat. The eldest son of Timothy Shelley, a well-to-do country squire who later became a baronet (a title to which the poet could have succeeded), he was born at Field Place, near Horsham in Sussex, August 4, 1791. After six years at fashionable Eton, he entered University College, Oxford, in 1810. He was expelled in the following year for admitting and defending his authorship of a pamphlet, *The Necessity of Atheism*, published anonymously by a local bookseller.

Sir Timothy was much displeased with his son's radicalism, and his displeasure increased when Shelley, in August of the same year, eloped with Harriet Westbrook, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a retired innkeeper. Nevertheless he continued his son's small allowance, which enabled the Shelleys to live in lodgings in various cities of the British Isles. During these years Shelley wrote sporadically, read much among the writings of social radicals, and urged the necessity of freedom upon everybody whom he met. His first published poem was *Queen Mab* (1813). This is an immature, but passionate, outcry on the part of young Shelley (he was eighteen when he wrote it) against human institutions that he thought were bad: government, the Christian religion, commerce, marriage. It was published without his consent three years after he wrote it.

In 1814 he became acquainted with William Godwin, the author of the quite revolutionary *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. He fell in love with his daughter Mary, whose mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, author of the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, and went with her to France. Two years later, when Harriet Westbrook Shelley drowned herself in the Serpentine in London, the poet married Mary Godwin. In 1817 the Court of Chancery refused Shelley the possession of his two children by Harriet, and in 1818 he left England, never to return.

During the previous four years Shelley had made several excursions to the Continent. He had published *Alastor* in 1816, and *The Revolt of Islam* in 1817. *Alastor* marks a great advance over *Queen Mab*. It is an allegory in noble blank verse telling how the happy idealist, wrapped in his own beautiful visions, goes forth to put his philosophy into action, and dies in despair. The title means "avenger." *The Revolt of Islam* is a somewhat confused story, an allegory of revolution, told in exquisitely molded Spenserian stanzas, through which runs Shelley's firm conviction that love for mankind and truth will eventually overcome the oppression and misery in the world.

In 1818 Shelley went direct to Italy, living the last years of his life at Naples, Venice, Rome, and finally Pisa. Mary was his constant companion. He spent much time with Byron, with whom he had traveled in Switzerland during the summer of 1816, and whom he saw often in Venice.

The year 1819 was the great, productive year in Shelley's life. During the summer he wrote rapidly *The Masque of Anarchy*, in which he attacked directly, in language that the ordinary man could understand, the political and economic injustices existing in England. This year saw, too, the completion of *The Cenci*, the greatest poetic tragedy since Shakespeare, which, refused at the time by Covent Garden because it deals with the theme of incest, has since been produced with marked success. Many of the great odes were composed during this year, as well as the sublime *Prometheus Unbound* (published in 1820). In this play Shelley changed somewhat the end of the old story. Prometheus, the friend of man, wins in his struggle against Jupiter, and, supported by his wife, Asia, his mother, Earth, and Demogorgon, the Original Power, secures the throne and institutes an era of love.

The year 1811 marks the end of Shelley's active, literary career. Along with some shorter poems, he wrote *A Defence of Poetry*, *Adonais*, and *Epipsychidion*. The *Defence* is Shelley's clarion call in prose, proclaiming the poet as the legislator of mankind. In *Adonais* he paid a noble tribute to the memory of his friend John Keats. To another friend, Emilia Viviani, an Italian lady, he addressed his *Epipsychidion*. This is a Platonic but impassioned plea, in which the poet, deeply in love with both his wife and Emilia, elaborates Plato's doctrine of the universality and unity of love throughout the universe.

On July 8, 1811, Shelley and a friend, Mr. Williams, were caught in a squall while

sailing a small boat in the Gulf of Lend. Several days later, Shelley's body was washed ashore, and, in accordance with Italian law, was cremated on the beach, in the presence of Trelawney, Leight Hunt, and Byron. His ashes were taken to Rome and buried in the Protestant cemetery, near the grave of Keats.

To many critics, Shelley, like Spenser, is a "poet's poet," who can be appreciated best by those with a gift, or a great love, for poetry. He is not a "popular" poet in the sense that Scott and Byron are popular. Unlike them, he cares less for the story than for the ideas and emotion behind the story; and often this thought and feeling are not so much expressed in concrete form as suggested. He gives us "the still, sad music of humanity," which must be felt before it is comprehended. His world is not the everyday world of Wordsworth, but it is none the less true, even though, to the realistically minded, it seems a strange ethereal world of clouds and winds and light and rapid motion. Shelley would have insisted that this ethereal world of his was much nearer to ultimate reality than our everyday world, which he declared to be only "a stormy vision." Less often than Keats and Coleridge, who also give us dream worlds, does he create the illusion of reality. According to Shelley (see his *Defence of Poetry*), poetry is imagination, and imagination, to him, is the perception of the *value* of facts and ideas, both separately and as a whole, which experience and reason have produced. In his practice, he relied most on intuition and feeling as the source of real wisdom.

Shelley believed in human nature, its essential goodness and its perfectibility. He looked forward to the brotherhood of man in a world of freedom, beauty, and love. In his own life he was impracticable, misunderstood and often condemned. But he was, said Byron, "the best and least selfish man I ever knew. I never knew one who was not a beast in comparison."

Good one-volume editions of Shelley's poetry are the Cambridge and the Globe. For a complete biography, consult E. Dowden. J. A. Symonds has written a short life for the English Men of Letters series. A. Maurois' *Ariel* gives a vivid idea of the man, but says little of the poet. Among the numerous essays on Shelley may be mentioned those by Arnold, Browning, Leigh Hunt, and Francis Thompson. The most recent and penetrating studies are those by C. H. Grabo, *Newton Among Poets* (1930), and *The Magic Plant* (1936).

Hymn to Intellectual Beauty

The theme of the poem, according to Mrs. Shelley, came to the poet during a trip on Lake Geneva with Byron. Shelley's idea of beauty is Platonic. A beautiful object does not give us true or complete beauty. It can only suggest the flawless, immaterial beauty behind it. In other words, it is not the thing, but the idea of the thing, that matters.

I

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats though unseen among us, visiting
This various world with as inconstant
wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to
flower;

Like moonbeams that behind some piny
mountain shower, 5
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
Like memory of music fled, 10
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

i

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine
upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou
gone? 15

Why dost them pass away, and leave our
state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and deso-
late?
Ask why the sunlight not forever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain
river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is
shown; 20
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom; why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope.

3

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given; 26
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and
Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavor,
Frail spells, whose uttered charm might not
avail to sever,
From all we hear and all we see, 30
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains
driven,
Or music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream, 35
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

4

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds, de-
part
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state with-
in his heart. 41
Thou messenger of sympathies
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes!
Thou, that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame, 45
Depart not as thy shadow came,
Depart not, lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality!

5

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave
and ruin, 50

And starlight wood, with fearful steps pur-
suing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead;
I called on poisonous names with which our
youth is fed.
I was not heard — I saw them not —
When, musing deeply on the lot 55
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are
wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming, —
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ec-
stasy! 60

6

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine — have I not kept the
vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes,
even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in
visioned bowers 65
Of studious zeal or love's delight
Outwatched with me the envious night—
They know that never joy illumed my brow
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst
free
This world from its dark slavery, 70
That thou, O awful LOVELINESS,
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot
express.

7

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past; there is a harmony
In autumn, and a luster in its sky, 75
Which through the summer is not heard or
seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
Thus let thy power, which like the
truth
Of nature on my passive youth
Descended, to my onward life supply 80
Its calm, — to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all humankind.
1816.

Ozymandias

I met a traveler from an antique land
 Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of
 stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose
 frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold com-
 mand, 5
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless
 things,
 The hand¹ that mocked them, and the heart
 that fed;²
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings: 10
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away."
 1817.

Stanzas Written in Dejection
Near Naples

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright,
 Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
 The purple noon's transparent might;
 The breath of the moist earth is light 5
 Around its unexpanded buds;
 Like many a voice of one delight,
 The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods',
 The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor 10
 With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
 I see the waves upon the shore
 Like light dissolved in star-showers
 thrown;
 I sit upon the sands alone —
 The lightning of the noon-tide ocean 15
 Is flashing round me, and a tone
 Arises from its measured motion,
 How sweet! did any heart now share in my
 emotion.

¹ The sculptor's.² The king's heart, which nursed those passions.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
 Nor peace within nor calm around, 20
 Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
 The sage in meditation found,
 And walked with inward glory crown-
 ed—
 Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
 Others I see whom these surround — 25
 Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
 To me that cup has been dealt in another
 measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
 Even as the winds and waters are;
 I could lie down like a tired child, 30
 And weep away the life of care
 Which I have borne, and yet must
 bear,
 Till death like sleep might steal on me,
 And I might feel in the warm air
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea 35
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monoton-
 y.

Some might lament that I were cold,
 As I, when this sweet day is gone,
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
 Insults with this untimely moan; 40
 They might lament — for I am one
 Whom men love not, — and yet regret,
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun
 Shall on its stainless glory set,
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in
 memory yet. 45
 1818.

The Masque of Anarchy

*Written on the Occasion of the
 Massacre at Manchester¹*

This poem, written while Shelley was at work
 on *The Cenci*¹ illustrates his deep interest in the
 social problems of the time. Mrs. Shelley's note

¹ A meeting failed to discuss the need of Parli-
 amentary reform was forbidden by the authorities of
 Manchester. The sponsors of the meeting went ahead
 nevertheless, setting the date for August 16, 1819,
 and the place as St. Peter's Field. Soldiers dispersed
 the thousands who gathered, killing six and injuring
 scores. The victory for law and order was called
 "Peterloo" in contempt. The Cabinet upheld the
 Manchester magistrates.

is instructive: "The poem was written for the people, and is therefore in a more popular tone than usual: portions strike as abrupt and unpolished, but many stanzas are all his own. I heard him repeat, and admired, those beginning

'My Father Time is old and gray,'

before I knew to what poem they were to belong. But the most touching passage is that which describes the blessed effects of liberty; it might make a patriot of any man whose heart was not wholly closed against his humbler fellow-creatures."

As I lay asleep in Italy,
There came a voice from over the sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poesy.

I met Murder on the way — 5
He had a mask like Castlereagh;¹
Very smooth he looked, yet grim;
Seven bloodhounds followed him.

All were fat; and well they might 10
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew,
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

Next came Fraud, and he had on, 15
Like Eldon,² an ermined gown;
His big tears, for he wept well,
Turned to mill-stones as they fell

And the little children, who 20
Round his feet played to and fro,
Thinking every tear a gem,
Had their brains knocked out by them.

Clothed with the Bible as with light,
And the shadows of the night,
Like Sidmouth,³ next Hypocrisy 25
On a crocodile rode by.

And many more Destructions played
In this ghastly masquerade,
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

¹ Foreign secretary at the time, who committed suicide three years later.

² The Tory Lord Chancellor who pronounced the decision which deprived Shelley of the guardianship of his children by Harriet.

³ Henry Addington, Viscount Sidmouth, a Tory statesman, who was largely responsible for the Manchester massacre.

Last came Anarchy; he rode 30
On a white horse splashed with blood;
He was pale even to the lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

And he wore a kingly crown;
In his hand a scepter shone; 35
On his brow this mark I saw —
"I am God, and King, and Law!"

With a pace stately and fast,
Over English land he passed,
Trampling to a mire of blood 40
The adoring multitude.

And a mighty troop around
With their trampling shook the ground,
Waving each a bloody sword 45
For the service of their Lord.

And, with glorious triumph, they
Rode through England, proud and gay,
Drunk as with intoxication
Of the wine of desolation.

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea, 50
Passed that pageant swift and free,
Tearing up, and trampling down,
Till they came to London town.

And each dweller, panic-stricken, 55
Felt his heart with terror sicken,
Hearing the tempestuous cry
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

For with pomp to meet him came,
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,
The hired murderers, who did sing, 60
"Thou art God, and Law, and King.

"We have waited, weak and lone,
For thy coming, Mighty One!
Our purses are empty, our swords are cold,
Give us glory, and blood, and gold." 65

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,
To the earth their pale brows bowed;
Like a bad prayer not over loud,
Whispering — "Thou art Law and God!"

Then all cried with one accord, 70
"Thou art King, and God, and Lord;

- Anarchy, to thee we bow,
Be thy name made holy now!"
- And Anarchy, the Skeleton,
Bowed and grinned to every one, 75
As well as if his education
Had cost ten millions to the nation.
- For he knew the palaces
Of our kings were rightly his;
His the scepter, crown, and globe, 80
And the gold-inwoven robe.
- So he sent his slaves before
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,¹
And was proceeding with intent
To meet his pensioned Parliament, 85
- When one fled past, a maniac maid,
And her name was Hope, she said;
But she looked more like Despair,
And she cried out in the air:
- "My father Time is weak and gray 90
With waiting for a better day;
See how idiot-like he stands,
Fumbling with his palsied hands!
- "He has had child after child,
And the dust of death is piled 95
Over every one but me.
Misery, oh, Misery!"
- Then she lay down in the street,
Right before the horses' feet,
Expecting, with a patient eye, 100
Murder, Fraud, and. Anarchy;
- When between her and her foes
A mist, a light, an image rose, —
Small at first, and weak, and frail,
Like the vapor of a vale; 105
- Till as clouds grow on the blast,
Like tower-crowned giants, striding fast,
And glare with lightnings as they fly,
And speak in thunder to the sky.
- It grew — a Shape² arrayed in mail no
Brighter than the viper's scale,
- And upborne on wings whose grain
Was as the light of sunny rain.
- On its helm, seen far away,
A planet, like the Morning's, lay; 115
And those plumes its light rained through,
Like a shower of crimson dew.
- With step as soft as wind it passed
O'er the heads of men — so fast
That they knew the presence there, 120
And looked 7- but all was empty air.
- As flowers beneath May's footstep waken,
As stars from Night's loose hair are shaken,
As waves arise when loud winds call, 124
Thoughts sprung where e'er that step did fall.
- And the prostrate multitude
Looked — and ankle-deep in blood,
Hope, that maiden most serene,
Was walking with a quiet mien;
- And Anarchy, the ghastly birth, 130
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The Horse of Death, tameless as wind,
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust the murderers thronged behind.
- A rushing light of clouds and splendor, 135
A sense, awakening and yet tender,
Was heard and felt, and at its close
These words of joy and fear arose,
- As if their own indignant Earth,
Which gave the sons of England birth, 140
Had felt their blood upon her brow,
And, shuddering with a mother's throe,
- Had turned every drop of blood,
By which her face had been bedewed,
To an accent unwithstood, 145
As if her heart had cried aloud:
- "Men of England, heirs of glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty Mother,
Hopes of her, and one another: 150
- "Rise like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number;

¹ The Bank of England and the Tower of London.² Liberty.

Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you —
Ye are many, they are few.

"What is Freedom? — Ye can tell
That which Slavery is too well,
For its very name has grown
To an echo of your own.

"'Tis to work, and have such pay 160
As just keeps life from day to day
In your limbs, as in a cell,
For the tyrants' use to dwell, —

"So that ye for them arc made
Loom, and plow, and sword, and spade; 165
With or without your own will, bent
To their defense and nourishment.

"Tis to see your children weak
With their mothers pine and peak,
When the winter winds are bleak — 170
They are dying whilst I speak.

"Tis to hunger for such diet
As the rich man in his riot
Casts to the fat dogs that lie
Surfeiting beneath his eye. 175

"Tis to let the Ghost of Gold
Take from toil a thousandfold
More than e'er its substance could
In the tyrannies of old,

"Paper coin — that forgery 180
Of the title-deeds which ye
Hold to something from the worth
Of the inheritance of Earth.

"Tis to be a slave in soul,
And to hold no strong control 185
Over your own wills, but be
All that others make of ye.

"And at length when ye complain
With a murmur weak and vain,
'Tis to see the Tyrant's crew
Ride over your wives and you — igo
Blood is on the grass like dew!

"Then it is to feel revenge,
Fiercely thirsting to exchange

Blood for blood — and wrong for wrong:
Do not thus when ye are strong! 196

"Birds find rest in narrow nest,
When weary of their winged quest;
Beasts find fare in woody lair,
When storm and snow are in the air. 200

"Horses, oxen, have a home,
When from daily toil they come;
Household dogs, when the wind roars,
Find a home within warm doors.

"Asses, swine, have litter spread, 205
And with fitting food are fed;
All things have a home but one —
Thou, O Englishman, hast none!

"This is Slavery; savage men,
Or wild beasts within a den, 210
Would endure not as yet do —
But such ills they never knew.

"What art thou, Freedom? Oh, could slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand, tyrants would flee 215
Like a dream's dim imagery.

"Thou art not, as impostors say,
A shadow soon to pass away,
A superstition, and a name
Echoing from the cave of Fame. 220

"For the laborer thou art bread
And a comely table spread,
From his daily labor come
In a neat and happy home.

"Thou art clothes, and fire, and food 225
For the trampled multitude;
No — in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be '
As in England now we see.

"To the rich thou art a check; 230
When his foot is on the neck
Of his victim, thou dost make
That he treads upon a snake.

"Thou art Justice — ne'er for gold
May thy righteous laws be sold. 235

As laws are in England; them
Shield'st alike the high and low.

"Thou art Wisdom — freemen never
Dream that God will damn forever
All who think those things untrue 240
Of which priests make such ado.

"Thou art Peace — never by thee
Would blood and treasure wasted be,
As tyrants wasted them, when all
Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.¹ 245

"What if English toil and blood
Was poured forth — even as a flood?
It availed, O Liberty!
To dim, but not extinguish thee.

"Thou art Love — the rich have kissed 250
Thy feet, and like him² following Christ,
Give their substance to the free
And through the rough world follow thee;

"Or turn their wealth to arms, and make
War for thy beloved sake 255
On wealth and war and fraud, whence they
Drew the power which is their prey.

"Science, Poetry, and Thought
Are thy lamps, they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot 260
Such thy curse their Maker not.

"Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless
Art thou — let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness. 265

⁴ Let a great Assembly be
Of the fearless and the free,
On some spot of English ground
Where the plains stretch wide around.

"Let the blue sky overhead, 270
The green earth on which ye tread,
All that must eternal be,
Witness the solemnity.

"From the corners uttermost
Of the bounds of English coast; 275

¹ France.

³ Any rich man who gives of his wealth to the poor.

From every hut, village, and town,
Where those, who live and suffer, moan
For others' misery or their own,

"From the workhouse and the prison,
Where, pale as corpses newly risen, 280
Women, children, young and old,
Groan for pain, and weep for cojd,

"From the haunts of daily life,
Where is waged the daily strife
With common wants and common cares, 285
Which sows the human heart with tares;

"Lastly, from the palaces,
Where the murmur of distress
Echoes, like the distant sound
Of a wind alive, around 290

"Those prison-halls of wealth and fashion,
Where some few feel such compassion,
For those who groan, and toil, and wail,
As must make their brethren pale, —

"Ye who suffer woes untold, 295
Or to feel or to behold
Your lost country bought and sold
With a price of blood and gold:

"Let a vast Assembly be,
And with great solemnity 300
Declare with measured words that ye
Are, as God has made ye, free!

"Be your strong and simple words
Keen to wound as sharpened swords;
And wide as targets let them be, 305
With their shade to cover ye.

"Let the tyrants pour around
With a quick and startling sound,
Like the loosening of a sea,
Troops of armed emblazonry. 310

"Let the charged artillery drive,
Till the dead air seems alive
With the clash of clanging wheels
And the tramp of horses' heels.

"Let the fixed bayonet 315
Gleam with sharp desire to wet

Its bright point in English blood,
Looking keen as one for food.

"Let the horsemen's scimitars
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars 320
Thirsting to eclipse their burning
In a sea of death and mourning.

"Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms, and looks which are 325
Weapons of unvanquished war.

"And let Panic, who outspeeds
The career of armed steeds,
Pass, a disregarded shade,
Through your phalanx undismayed. 330

"Let the laws of your own hind,
Good or ill, between ye stand,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute:

"The old laws of England — they 335
Whose reverend heads with age are gray,
Children of a wiser day,
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo — Liberty!

"On those who first should violate 340
Such sacred heralds in their state,
Rest the blood that must ensue;
And it will not rest on you.

"And if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there, 345
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew:
What they like, that let them do.

"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay, 350
Till their rage has died away.

"Then they will return with shame
To the place from which they came;
And the blood thus shed will speak 355
In hot blushes on their cheek.

"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand;

They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street

"And the bold, true warriors 360
Who have hugged Danger in wars,
Will turn to those who would be free,
Ashamed of such base company.

"And that slaughter to the Nation
Shall steam up like inspiration, 365
Eloquent, oracular;
A volcano heard afar.

"And these words shall then become
Like Oppression's thundered doom 369
Ringing through each heart and brain,
Heard again — again — again!

"Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you — 375
Ye are many, they are few!"
1819.

Ode to the West Wind

"This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions. The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it." (Shelley.)

The poem is remarkable for the boldness of its imagery, which is supported not so much by thought as by the intense emotion and exquisite music of the poem. It is a model of careful construction. The themes of the first three sections are autumn leaves, clouds, waves. The fourth section summarizes these themes and brings them together into a single unified idea.

Note that Shelley uses the *terza rima* of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with a couplet after each group of four strophes, thus: *aba bcb cdc ded ee*. The result is a stanza which looks like the sonnet-form, but is different in effect.

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's
being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves
dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter
fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou 5
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and
low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow 9

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver, hear, oh hear!

2.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's
commotion, 15
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are
shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and
ocean,

Angels¹ of rain and lightning' there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge, 19
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad,² even from the dim
verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou
dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre, 25
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh
hear!

¹ messengers.

³ Bacchante, frenzied attendant of Bacchus.

3

Thou who didst waken from his summer-
dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay, 30
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice¹ isle in BaiaeV bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which
wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know 40

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

4

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free 46
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed 50
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have
striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and
bowed 55
One too like thee — tameless, and swift, and
proud.

5

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies 59

¹ soft volcanic lava.

³ A seaside town not far from Naples.

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit
fierce,

My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new
birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse, 65

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among man-
kind!

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? 70
1819.

The Indian Serenade

I arise from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee, s
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me — who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

The wandering airs, they faint
On the dark, the silent stream — 10
The champak¹ odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine, 15
O beloved as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale. 20
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

1819.

¹ Hindu for a kind of magnolia tree.

FROM Prometheus Unbound

End of the Last Act

Prometheus Unbound is Shelley's lyric drama on the defiant Titan who stole fire from the gods for man. In Shelley's version of the story, Prometheus, after much suffering, wins in his fight against Jupiter. With the help of his wife, Asia, his mother, Earth, and Demogorgon, who is the Original Power, he ascends the throne and inaugurates an era of love.

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll
The love which paves thy path along the
skies:

THE EARTH

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies. 5

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly
Earth
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee,
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift
birth
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

THE MOON

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee. 10

DEMOGORGON

Ye Kings of suns and stars, Demons and
Gods,
Ethnical Dominations, who possess
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

A VOICE FROM ABOVE

Our great Republic hears: we are blest, and
bless. 15

DEMOGORGON

Ye happy Dead, whom beams of brightest
verse
Are clouds to hide, not colors to portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered —

A VOICE FROM BENEATH

Or, as they 20
Whom we have left, we change and pass
away.

DEMOGORGON

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central
stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted
domes
To the dull weed some sea-worm battens
on: 25

A CONFUSED VOICE

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

DEMOGORGON

Spirits, whose homes are flesh; ye beasts an
birds,
Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves and
buds;
Lightning and wind, and ye untamable herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng air's
solitudes: 30

A VOICE

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

DEMOGORGON

Man who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this immortal
day: 35

ALL

Speak: thy strong words may never pass
away.

DEMOGORGON

This is the day which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born spell yawns for Heaven's
despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive through
the deep, 39
Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery,
steep
¹ Prometheus.

And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endur-
ance — 45

These are the seals of that most firm assur-
ance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's
strength;

And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free

The serpent that would clasp her with his
length; 50

These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contem-
plates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be 59
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.
1818-19.

The Cloud

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;

I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.

From my wings are shaken the dews that
waken 5

The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.

I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under, 10

And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;

And all the night 'tis my pillow white, 15
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.

Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;

In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
 It struggles and howls at fits; 20
 Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
 This pilot is guiding me,
 Lured by the love of the genii that move
 In the depths of the purple sea;
 Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills, 25
 Over the lakes and the plains,
 Wherever he dream, under mountain or
 stream,
 The Spirit he loves remains;
 And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
 Whilst he is dissolving in rains. 30

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
 And his burning plumes outspread,
 Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
 When the morning star shines dead;
 As on the jag of a mountain crag, 35
 Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
 An eagle aht one moment may sit
 In the light of its golden wings.
 And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit
 sea beneath,
 Its ardors of rest and of love, 40
 And the crimson pall of eve may fall
 From the depth of Heaven above,
 With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden, 45
 Whom mortals call the Moon,
 Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
 By the midnight breezes strewn;
 And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
 Which only the angels hear, 50
 May have broken the woof of my tent's thin
 roof,
 The stars peep behind her and peer;
 And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
 Like a swarm of golden bees,
 When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas, 56
 Like strips of the sky fallen through me on
 high,
 Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
 And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl; 60
 The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and
 swim

When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
 From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
 Over a torrent sea,
 Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof, — 65
 The mountains its columns be.
 The triumphal arch, through which I march,
 With hurricane, fire, and snow,
 When the Powers of the air are chained to my
 chair,
 Is the million-colored bow; 70
 The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
 While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
 And the nursling of the Sky;
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and
 shores, 75
 I change, but I cannot die.
 For after the rain when with never a stain
 The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
 And the winds and sunbeams with their
 convex gleams
 Build up the blue dome of air, 80
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,¹
 And out of the caverns of rain,
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost
 from the tomb,
 I arise and unbuild it again.
 1820.

To A Skylark

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
 Bird thou never wert,
 That from Heaven, or near it,
 Pourest thy full heart
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art. 5

Higher still and higher
 From the earth thou springest
 Like a cloud of fire;
 The blue deep thou wingest,
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever
 singest. 10

In the golden lightning
 Of the sunken sun,

¹ Monument to the dead, especially where the body is lost or is buried elsewhere. The dome of the blue sky is the empty monument of the vanished cloud.

O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
 Thou dost float and run,
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even 16
 Melts around thy flight;

Like a star of Heaven,
 In the broad daylight
 Thou art unseen, — but yet I hear thy shrill
 delight, 20

Keen as are the arrows
 Of that silver sphere,
 Whose intense lamp narrows
 In the white dawn clear
 Until we hardly see — we feel that it is there;

All the earth and air 26
 With thy voice is loud,
 As, when night is bare,
 From one lonely cloud
 The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven
 is overflowed. 30

What thou art we know not,
 What is most like thee?
 From rainbow clouds there flow not
 Drops so bright to see
 As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden 36
 In the light of thought,
 Singing hymns unbidden,
 Till the world is wrought
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded
 not: 40

Like a high-born maiden
 In a palace-tower,
 Soothing her love-laden
 Soul in secret hour
 With music sweet as love, — which overflows
 her bower: 45

Like a glowworm golden
 In a dell of dew,
 Scattering unbeholden
 Its aerial hue
 Among the flowers and grass which screen it
 from the view: 50

Like a rose embowered
 In its own green leaves,
 By warm winds deflowered,
 Till the scent it gives
 Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy
 winged thieves. 55

Sound of vernal showers
 On the twinkling grass,
 Rain-awakened flowers,
 All that ever was
 Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth
 surpass. 60

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
 What sweet thoughts are thine;
 I have never heard
 Praise of love or wine
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal, 66
 Or triumphal chant,
 Matched with thine, would be all
 But an empty vaunt,
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden
 want. 70

What objects are the fountains
 Of thy happy strain?
 What fields or waves or mountains?
 What shapes of sky or plain?
 What love of thine own kind? what ignorance
 of pain? 75

With thy clear keen joyance
 Languor cannot be;
 Shadow of annoyance
 Never came near thee;
 Thou lovest — but ne'er knew love's sad
 satiety. 80

Waking or asleep,
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream —
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal
 stream? 85

We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not;

Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of
 saddest thought. 90

Yet if we could scorn
 Hate, and pride, and fear;
 If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come
 near. 95

Better than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the
 ground! 00

Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,
 Such harmonious madness
 From my lips would flow
 The world should listen then — as I am
 listening now. 105
 1820.

To Night

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
 Spirit of Night!
 Out of the misty eastern cave,
 Where all the long and lone daylight
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear, 5
 Which make thee terrible and dear, —
 Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
 Star-inwrought!
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day; 10
 Kiss her until she be wearied out;
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
 Touching all with thine opiate wand —
 Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn, 15
 I sighed for thee;

When light rode high, and the dew was
 gone,
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,
 Lingering like an unloved guest, 20
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me?
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noontide bee, 25
 Shall I nestle near thy side?
 Wouldst thou me? — and I replied,
 No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon, 30
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
 I ask of thee, beloved Night, —
 Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon! 35
 1821.

Time

Unfathomable Sea' whose waves are years,
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
 Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and
 flow
 Claspest the limits of mortality, 5
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable
 shore;
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
 Who shall put forth on thee,
 Unfathomable Sea? 10
 1821.

Mutability

The flower that smiles to-day
 To-morrow dies;
 All that we wish to stay,
 Tempts and then flies.

What is this world's delight? s
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

2

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship, how rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss 10
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy and all
Which ours we call.

3

Whilst skies are blue and bright, 15
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou — and from thy sleep 20
Then wake to weep.

1821.

Adonais

*An Elegy on the Death of John Keats,
Author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc.*

PREFACE¹

It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modeled prove, at least, that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of *Hyperion* as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the — of — 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Gestius, and the massy walls and towers, now moldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death,

¹ Two quotations in Greek from Plato and Moschus are omitted here from the beginning of Shelley's preface. Otherwise it is intact.

² When he wrote this preface, Shelley did not know the day and month of Keats's death.

to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, *Pans and Woman* and a *Syrian Tale* and Mrs. Lefanu and Mr. Barrett and Mr. Howard Payne and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who in their venal good nature presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, 'almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend.' Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from 'such stuff as dreams are made of.' His conduct is a

golden augury of the success of his future career - may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!" (Shelley.)

Adonais, like Milton's *Lycidas* and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*, is a pastoral elegy, modeled on the Greek pastorals of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus. It is written in Spenserian stanzas.

1

I weep for Adonais — he is dead!
 Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
 Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a
 head!
 And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
 To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure com-
 peers, 5
 And teach them thine own sorrow, say:
 "With me
 Died Adonais, till the Future dares
 Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
 An echo and a light unto eternity!"

2

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when
 he lay, 10
 When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft
 which flies
 In darkness? where was lorn Urania¹
 When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
 'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
 She sat, while one, with soft enamored
 breath, 15
 Rekindled all the fading melodies,
 With which, like flowers that mock the
 corse beneath,
 He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of
 Death.

3

Oh, weep for Adonais — he is dead!
 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
 Yet wherefore? Quench within their
 burning bed 21
 Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
 Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
 For he is gone where all things wise and
 fair
 Descend. — Oh, dream not that the amo-
 rous Deep 25

¹ The heavenly one, Muse of Astronomy; cf. Milton in *Paradise Lost*.

Will yet restore him to the vital air;
 Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at
 our despair.

4

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
 Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
 Who was the sire¹ of an immortal strain,
 Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's
 pride, 31
 The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
 Trampled and mocked with many a loathed
 rite
 Of lust and blood, he went, unterrified,
 Into the gulf of death, but his clear Sprite
 Yet reigns o'er earth, the third² among the
 sons of light. 36

5

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
 Not all to that bright station dared to
 climb;
 And happier they³ their happiness who
 knew,
 Whose tapers yet burn through that night
 of time 40
 In which suns perished, others more sub-
 lime,
 Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
 Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
 And some yet live, treading the thorny
 road,
 Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's
 serene abode. 45

6

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has
 perished,
 The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
 Like a pale flower by some sad maiden
 cherished
 And fed with true-love tears, instead of
 dew;⁴
 Most musical of mourners, weep anew! 50
 Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
 The bloom, whose petals, nipped before
 they blew,

¹ Milton.

² The other two poets that Shelley had in mind are Homer and Dante.

³ Lesser poets.

⁴ cf. Keats's *Isabella*.

Died on the promise of the fruit, is
waste;
The broken lily lies — the storm is over-
past.

7

To that high Capital,¹ where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest
breath, 57
A grave among the eternal. — Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still 60
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

8

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the
door 60
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and
awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to de-
face 70
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal
curtain draw.

9

Oh, weep for Adonais! — The quick
Dreams,
The passion-winged ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living
streams 75
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he
taught
The love which was its music, wander
not, —
Wander no more, from kindling brain to
brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and
mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their
sweet pain, 80
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a
home again.

¹ Rome.

10

And one with trembling hands clasps his
cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings,
and cries;
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not
dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes, 85
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there
lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his
brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no
stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept
its rain. go

ii

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming
them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and
threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,¹ 94
Which frozen tears instead of pearls
begem;
Another in her willful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to
stem
A greater loss with one which was more
weak;
And dull the barbed fire against his frozen
cheek.

12

Another Splendor on his mouth alit, 100
That mouth whence it was wont to draw
the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the
guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music; the damp
death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips; 105
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night
clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed
to its eclipse.

¹ crown or chaplet.

13

And others came — Desires and Adorations,
 Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
 Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
 Of hopes and fears, and twilight Fantasies;
 And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
 And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
 Of her own dying smile instead of eyes, us
 Came in slow pomp; — the moving pomp
 might seem
 Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

M

All he had loved, and molded into thought
 From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,
 Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
 Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
 Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
 Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
 Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
 Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
 And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

J₅

Lost Echo¹ sits amid the voiceless mountains,
 And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
 And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
 Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
 Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
 Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
 Than those² for whose disdain she pined away
 Into a shadow of all sounds: — a drear
 Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

135

¹ The forest nymph.² of Narcissus — a beautiful youth, who did not return Echo's love.

16

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
 Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
 Or they dead leaves, since her delight is flown,
 For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
 To Phcebus was not Hyacinth¹ so dear
 Nor to himself Narcissus,² as to both
 Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
 Amid the faint companions of their youth,
 With dew all turned to tears, odor, to sighing ruth.

17

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
 Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain,
 Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale Heaven,
 And could nourish in the sun's domain
 Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
 Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
 As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
 Light on his head who³ pierced thy innocent breast,
 And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

18

Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
 But grief returns with the revolving year,
 The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
 The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Season's bier;
 The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
 And build their mossy homes in field and brake;
 And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

¹ The youth whom Phorbus Apollo fell in love with and who, when he died, was transformed into a flower.
² Narcissus fell in love with his own image reflected in a fountain. He, too, was changed into a flower.
³ The author of the reviews mentioned by Shelley in his introduction.

briar.

19

Through wood and stream and field and
 hill and Ocean
 A quickening life from the Earth's heart
 has burst,
 As it has ever done, with change and
 motion, 165
 From the great morning of the world when
 first
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-
 mersed,
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer
 light;
 All baser things pant with life's sacred
 thirst;
 Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's
 delight 170
 The beauty and the joy of their renewed
 might.

10

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit
 tender,
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
 Like incarnations of the stars, when
 splendor
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine
 death 175
 And mock the merry worm that wakes be-
 neath.
 Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone
 which knows
 Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
 By sightless lightning? — the intense atom
 glows
 A moment, then is quenched in a most cold
 repose. 180

ii

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
 Whence are we, and why are we? of what
 scene
 The actors or spectators? Great and mean
 Meet massed in death, who lends what life
 must borrow.¹ 186
 As long as skies are blue and fields are
 green,

¹ Death, not life, is reality.

Evening must usher night, night urge the
 morrow,
 Month follow month with woe, and year
 wake year to sorrow.

12

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless
 Mother, rise 191
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's
 core,
 A wound more fierce than his with tears
 and sighs."
 And all the Dreams that watched Urania's
 eyes,
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's
 song 195
 Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory
 stung,
 From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor
 sprung.

23

She rose like an autumnal Night, that
 springs 199
 Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and
 fear
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania: 204
 So saddened round her like an atmosphere
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
 Even to the mournful place where Adonais
 lay. 207

M

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
 Through camps and cities rough with
 stone, and steel,
 And human hearts, which to her airy tread
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible 211
 Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
 And barbed tongues, and thoughts more
 sharp than they,
 Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
 Whose sacred blood, like the young tears
 of May, 215
 Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving
 way.

25

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living
Might,

Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her
dear delight. 221

"Leave me not wild and drear and comfort-
less,

As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania, her distress
Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and
met her vain caress. 225

26

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again,
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else
survive,

With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part 251
Of thee, my Adonais' I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!

But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence
depart!

27

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of
men 236

Too soon, and with weak hands though
mighty heart

Dare the unpastured dragon¹ in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield,² or scorn the
spear? 240

Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent
sphere,

The monsters of life's waste had fled from
thee like deer.

28

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the
dead; 245

¹ The hard world.

² A reference to the shield of Perseus, which enabled him to kill Medusa without meeting her fatal glance.

The vultures to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion, — how
they fled,

When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian¹ of the age one arrow sped 250
And smiled The spoilers tempt no second
blow,

They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them
lying low.

29

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles
spawn,

He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn, 255
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men.

A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and
when

It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared
its light 260

Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful
night."

30

Thus ceased she, and the mountain shep-
herds came,

Their garlands sere, their magic mantles
rent,

The Pilgrim of Eternity,² whose fame,
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument, 266

Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow, from her wilds lernc' sent

The sweetest lyrist¹ of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from
his tongue. 270

31

Midst others of less note, came one frail
Form,⁵

A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell, he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,

¹ Byron, who with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* slew the critics with one blow, as Apollo did the python.

² Byron, so called because of his *Child Harold*.

³ Ireland. ⁴ Thomas Moore. ⁵ Shelley.

Actscon-hke,¹ and now he fled astray 276
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilder-
ness,

And his own thoughts, along that rugged
way,

Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and
their prey.

32

A pardhke² Spirit beautiful and swift — 280
A Love in desolation masked, — a Power
Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce
uplift

The weight of the superincumbent hour,
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower, ^si

A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak
Is it not broken^ On the withering flower

The killing sun smiles brightly, on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the
heart may break.

33

His head was bound with pansies over-
blown,

And faded violets, white, and pied, and
blue, 290

And a light spear topped with a cypress
cone,

Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses
grew

Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the evcr-bcatmg heart

Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of
that crew 295

He came the last, neglected and apart;

A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's
dart.

34

All stood aloof, and at his partial³ moan
Smiled through their tears, well knew that
gentle band 299

Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land

He sung new sorrow: sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who
art thou?"

He answered not, but with a sudden hand

¹ Aclioi, the hunter, ga/ed upon Diana in bathing
In punishment, he was changed into a Mag, and was
torn to pieces by his own dogs.

² like a leopard. ³ sympathetic.

Made bare his branded and ensanguined
brow, 305
Which was like Cain's or Christ's — oh! that
it should be so!

35

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle
thrown?

What form leans sadly o'er the white death-
bed,

In mockery of monumental stone, 310
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?

If it be He,¹ who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the de-
parted one,

Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

36

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh! 316
What deaf and viperous murderer could
crown

Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself dis-
own,

It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone

Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and
wrong, 321

But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,

Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver
lyre unstrung. 324

37

Live thou,² whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live¹ fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!

But be thyself, and know thyself to be!

And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to
thee, 331

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt
— as now.

¹ Leigh Hunt, who was one of Keats's closest friends.

² f. W. Croker wrote the criticism of Keats in the
Quarterly lot April, 1818 Shelley thought the author
was tin Rev H H. Miham, later professor of poetry
at Oxford. The review gave Keats pain, but did not
cause his death.

38

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream
below; 335

He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead,
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall
flow

Back to the burning fountain whence it
came,

A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably
the same, 341

Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid
hearth of shame.

39

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not
sleep:—

He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife, 'JK'
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's
knife

Invulnerable nothings. — We decay
Like corpses in a charnel, fear and grief

Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within
our living clay. 351

40

He has outsoared the shadow of our night,
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow
stain 356

He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in
vain;

Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to
burn,

With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

41

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead,
not he, 361

Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young
Dawn,

Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;

Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and
thou Air, 366

Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst
thrown

O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it
bare

Even to the joyous stars which smile on its
despair!

42

He is made one with Nature: there is
heard 370

His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet
bird;

He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and
stone,

Spreading itself where'er that Power may
move 375

Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-weaned
love,

Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

43

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely, he doth
bear 380

His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, com-
pelling there

All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks
its flight 384

To its own likeness, as each mass may bear.
And bursting in its beauty and its might

From trees and beasts and men into the
Heaven's light.

44

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not:
Like stars to their appointed height they
climb, 390

And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty
thought

Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it for what

Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live
there 395
And move like winds of light on dark and
stormy air.

45

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond
mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton¹
Rose pale, — his solemn agony had not 400
Yet faded from him, Sidney,² as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose, and Lucan,³ by his death approved,
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing re-
proved 405

46

And many more, whose names on Earth
are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot
die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality. 400
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry,
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has
long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.
Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of
our throng!"

47

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come
forth, 415
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him
aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous
Earth;
As from a center, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference, then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;

¹ "The marvellous boy" (17[^]/2-1770), who at eighteen killed himself, after having written mutations of early English poetry which for a time passed as originals

² Sir Philip Sidney; he died at thirty-two from a wound received in the battle of Zutphen in 1586.

³ The Roman poet, author of the *Pharsalia*, who at twenty-six killed himself to escape being executed by Nero.

And keep thy heart light lest it make thee
sink 422
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee
to the brink.

48

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy, 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there 426
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend, — they borrow
not
Glory from those who made the world their
prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's
decay, 231
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

49

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Para-
dise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered moun-
tains rise, 435
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses
dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the
dead 440
A light of laughing flowers along the grass
is spread;

50

And gray walls moulder round, on which
dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid¹ with wedge sub-
lime,
Pavilining the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand 446
Like flame transformed to marble; and be-
neath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp
of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extin-
guished breath. 450

¹ The tomb of Caius Cestius.

51

Here pause: these graves¹ are all too yodng
 as yet
 To have outgrown the sorrow which con-
 signed
 Its charge to each, and if the seal is set,
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou
 find 155
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter
 wind
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
 What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

52

The One remains, the many change and
 p.iss; \M'
 Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's
 shadows fly,
 Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
 Until Death tramples it to fragments. —
 Die,
 If thou wouldst be with that which thou
 dost seek! 465
 Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure
 sky,
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are
 weak
 The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to
 speak.

53

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,
 my Heart?
 Thy hopes are gone before, from all things
 here 170
 They have departed; thou shouldst now
 depart!
 A light is passed from the revolving year,
 And man, and woman; and what still is
 dear
 Attracts to crush, repels to make thee
 wither.
 The soft sky smiles, — the low wind whis-
 pers near; 475
 'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
 No more let Life divide what Death can
 join together.

¹ Of Keats and of Shelley's son, William.

54

That Light whose smile kindles the Uni-
 verse,
 That Beauty in which all things work and
 move,
 That Benediction which the eclipsing
 Curse 480
 Of birth can quench not, that sustaining
 Love
 Which through the web of being blindly
 wove
 By man and beast and earth and air and
 sea,
 Burns bright or dim, as each arc mirrors
 of
 The fire for which all thirst, now beams on
 me, 485
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

55

The breath whose might I have invoked in
 song
 Descends on me, my spirit's bark is driven
 Far from the shore, far from the trembling
 throng
 Whose sails were never to the tempest
 given, 49<
 The massy earth and sphered skies are
 riven'
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
 Whilst, burning through the inmost veil
 of Heaven,
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,
 Beacons from the abode where the Eternal
 are 405
 1821

The Final Chorus From Hellas

SEMICHORUSI

Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream,
 Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day!
 I saw her, ghastly as a tyrant's dream,
 Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,
 Beneath which earth and all her realms
 pavilioned lay 5
 In visions of the dawning undelight.
 Who shall impede her flight?
 Who rob her of her prey?

Voice without Victory! Victory! Russia's
 famished eagles
 Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's
 light. TO
 Impale the remnant of the Greeks' despoil¹
 Violate! make their flesh cheaper than dust!

SEMICHORUS II

Thou voice which art
 The herald of the ill in splendor hid!
 Thou cdio of the hollow heart 15
 Of monarchy, bear me to thine abode
 When desolation flashes o'er a world de-
 stroyed.
 Oh, bear me to those isles of jagged cloud
 Which float like mountains on the earth-
 quake, mid
 The momentary oceans of the lightning, 20
 Or to some toppling promontory proud
 Of solid tempest, whose black pyramid,
 Riven, overhangs the founts intensely
 bright'ning
 Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire,
 Before their waves expire, 2-5
 When heaven and earth arc light, and only
 light
 In the thunder-night!

Voice without. Victory! Victory! Austria,
 Russia, England,
 And that tame serpent, that poor shadow,
 France,
 Cry peace, and that means death when mon-
 archs speak. 30
 Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen those red
 stakes,
 These chains are light, fitter for slaves and
 prisoners
 Than Greeks Kill! plunder! burn! let none
 remain.

SEMICHORUS I

Alas' for Liberty!
 If numbers, wealth, or unfulfilling years, 35
 Or fate, can quell the free!
 Alas for Virtue! when
 Torments, or contumely, or the sneers
 Of erring judging men
 Can break the heart where it abides' 40
 Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure
 world splendid,

Can change with its false times and tides,
 Like hope and terror, --
 Alas for Love'
 And Truth, who wanderest lone and unbe-
 friended, 45
 If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror
 Before the dazzled eyes of Error,
 Alas for thee! Image of the Above!

SEMICHORUS II

Repulse, with plumes from conquest torn,
 Led the ten thousand from the limits of the
 morn 50
 Through many an hostile Anarchy!
 At length they wept aloud, and cried, "The
 Sea! the Sea!"¹
 Through exile, persecution, and despair,
 Rome was, and young Atlantis- shall
 become
 The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb
 Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in her
 savage lair. 56
 But Greece was as a hermit-child,
 Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were
 built
 To woman's growth, by dreams so mild,
 She knew not pain or guilt, r'o
 And now, O Victory, blush! and Empire,
 tremble,
 When ye desert the free —
 If Greece must be
 A wreck, yet shall its fragments reassemble,
 And build themselves again impregably 65
 In a diviner clime,
 To Amphionic' music on some Cape sublime
 Which frowns above the idle foam of Time.

SEMICHORUS I

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have
 made,
 Let the free possess the Paradise they
 claim, 70
 Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors weighed
 With our ruin, our resistance, and our name!

¹ The cry made famous by Xenophon in his *Anabasis*, in which he recounts vividly the treat of the Greeks, under his command, to the Black Sea (101 B.r.), after their position was made untenable by Aitax rxes.

² '1 he new world, the name is from the mythical island which is supposed to have sunk beneath the ocean, west of the Pillars of Hercuks.

³ Arnphion rebuilt the walls of Thebes by pin) ing on his lyre.

SEMICHORUS II

Our dead shall be the seed of their decay,
 Our survivors be the shadow of their pride,
 Our adversity a dream to pass away — 75
 Their dishonor a remembrance to abide!

Voice without. Victory! Victory! The
 bought Briton sends
 The keys of ocean to the Islamite ^f —
 Now shall the blazon of the cross be veiled,
 And British skill, directing Othman² might,
 Thunder-strike rebel victory. Oh, keep
 holy Ri
 This jubilee of uncrvened blood'
 Kill! crush^f despoil! Let not a Greek escape!

SEMICHORUS I

Darkness has dawned in the East
 On the noon of time; 85
 The death-birds descend to their feast
 From the hungry clime.
 Let Freedom and Peace flee far
 To a sunnier strand,
 And follow Love's folding-star 90
 To the Evening land!

SEMICHORUS II

The young moon has fed
 Her exhausted horn
 With the sunset's fire;
 The weak day is dead, 95
 But the night is not born,
 And, like loveliness panting with wild desire,
 While it trembles with fear and delight,
 Hesperus flics from awakening night,
 And pants in its beauty and speed with
 light 100
 Fast-flashing, soft, and bright.
 Thou beacon of love¹ thou lamp of the free!
 Guide us far, far away,
 To climes where now, veiled by the ardor of
 day,
 Thou art hidden 105
 From waves on which weary Noon
 Faints in her summer swoon,
 Between kingless continents, sinless as
 Eden,
 Around mountains and islands inviolably
 Pranked on the sapphire sea. no

¹ Mohammedan.³ Ottoman, Turkish.

SEMICHORUS I

Through the sunset of hope,
 Like the shapes of a dream,
 What Paradise islands of glory gleam!
 Beneath Heaven's cope,
 Their shadows more clear float by, 115
 The sound of their oceans, the light of their
 sky,
 The music and fragrance their solitudes
 breathe,
 Burst, like morning on dream, or like Heaven
 on death,
 Through the walls of our prison,
 And Greece, which was dead, is arisen! 120

CHORUS

The world's great age begins anew,
 The golden years return,
 The earth doth like a snake renew
 Her winter weeds outworn,
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires
 gleam, 125
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
 From waves scrcner far,
 A new Pncus¹ rolls his fountains
 Against the morning star 130
 Where fairer Tcmpecs² bloom, there sleep
 Young Cyclads³ on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo⁴ cleaves the main,
 Fraught with a later prize,
 Another Orpheus sings again, 135
 And loves, and weeps, and dies.
 A new Ulysses leaves once more
 Calypso⁵ for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
 If earth Death's scroll must be! 140
 Nor mix with Laian⁶ rage the joy
 Which dawns upon the free;

¹ A river in Greece.² Beautiful vales.³ Cyelades, islands in the vEgean.⁴ The ship in which Jason and his Argonauts sailed to Colchis to get the golden fleece.⁵ The nymph who detained Ulysses on her island when he was returning from Troy.⁶ Referring to Lams, King of Ithebes, husband of Jocasta. It was fated that his son CEidipus, who solved the riddle of the Sphinx, should kill him and marry Jocasta.

Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise, 145
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendor of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give. 150

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell,¹ than One² who rose,
Than many unsubdued,³
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers. 156

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy. 160
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last!
1821.

To ———

I
One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair 5
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

2
I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not 10
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not, —
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar 15
From the sphere of our sorrow?

1821.

¹ The old gocls.

³ Christ.

3 heathens.

Lines: When the Lamp is Shattered

I
When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead,
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken, s
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

2
As music and splendor
Survive not the lamp and the lute, 10
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges 15
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

3
When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest,
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed. 20
O Love! who bcwailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

4
Its passions will rock thee, 25
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home 30
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.
1822.

A Dirge

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song,
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long,

Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
 Bare woods, whose branches strain,
 Deep caves and dreary mam, —
 Wail, for the world's wrong!

1822.

A Defense of Poetry

This famous essay was written as a reply to Thomas Love Peacock's *The Four Ages of Poetry*, in which he asserted that poetry was in a decline and would soon be extinct, because thinking men were no longer turning to the harmony and emotion that one finds in verse, but to a consideration of "the great and permanent interests of human society." In its clear thinking, in its eloquence and its vivid images, and in its fervid sincerity, Shelley's *Defense* will remind the reader of Sidney's vindication of poetry in the *clays of Elizabeth*.

The essay falls, roughly, into three parts. The first and last are given in low. The middle portion — an historical survey of poetry from the ancient Greek poets to Milton — is omitted.

According to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced, and the latter as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to color them with its own light, and composing from them, as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity. The one is the *TO TROTEI* or the principle of synthesis, and has for its object those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself, the other is the *TO XOYIFEI*,² or principle of analysis, and its action regards the relations of things simply as relations, considering thoughts not in their integral unity, but as the algebraical representations which conduct to certain general results. Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination",

¹ to make.
² to reason.

and poetry is connate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an *Æolian* lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in a lyre, and produces not melody alone, but harmony, by an internal adjustment of the sounds and motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them. It is as if the lyre could accommodate its chords to the motions of that which strikes them, in a determined proportion of sound, even as the musician can accommodate his voice to the sound of the lyre. A child at play by itself will express its delight by its voice and motions, and every inflection of tone and every gesture will bear exact relation to a corresponding antitype in the pleasurable impressions which awakened it, it will be the reflected image of that impression, and as the lyre trembles and sounds after the wind has died away, so the child seeks, by prolonging in its voice and motions the duration of the effect, to prolong also a consciousness of the cause. In relation to the objects which delight a child, these expressions are what poetry is to higher objects. The savage (for the savage is to ages what the child is to years) expresses the emotions produced in him by surrounding objects in a similar manner, and language and gesture, together with plastic or pictorial imitation, become the image of the combined effect of those objects and his apprehension of them. Man in society, with all his passions and his pleasures, next becomes the object of the passions and pleasures of man, an additional class of emotions produces an augmented treasure of expression, and language, gesture, and the imitative arts, become at once the representation and the medium, the pencil and the picture, the chisel and the statue, the chord and the harmony. The social sympathies, or those laws from which, as from its elements, society results, begin to develop themselves from the moment that two human beings co-exist; the future is contained within the present as the plant within the seed, and equality, diversity,

unity, contrast, mutual dependence, become the principles alone capable of affording the motives according to which the will of a social being is determined to action, inas-
 5 much as he is social, and constitute pleasure in sensation, virtue in sentiment, beauty in art, truth in reasoning, and love in the inter-
 course of kind. Hence men, even in the infancy of society, observe a certain order in
 10 their words and actions, distinct from that of the objects and the impressions represented by them, all expression being subject to the laws of that from which it proceeds. But let
 us dismiss those more general considerations
 15 which might involve an inquiry into the principles of society itself, and restrict our view to the manner in which the imagination is expressed upon its forms.

In the youth of the world, men dance and
 20 sing and imitate natural objects, observing in these actions, as in all others, a certain rhythm or order. And, although all men observe a similar, they observe not the same order in the motions of the dance, in the melody of
 25 the song, in the combinations of language, in the series of their imitations of natural objects. For there is a certain order or rhythm belonging to each of these classes of mimetic representation, from which the hearer and the
 30 spectator receive an intenser and purer pleasure than from any other, the sense of an approximation to this order has been called taste by modern writers. Every man, in the
 35 infancy of art, observes an order which approximates more or less closely to that from which this highest delight results; but the diversity is not sufficiently marked as that its gradations should be sensible, except in those instances where the predominance of this
 40 faculty of approximation to the beautiful (for so we may be permitted to name the relation between this highest pleasure and its cause) is very great. Those in whom it
 45 exists to excess are poets, in the most universal sense of the word, and the pleasure resulting from the manner in which they express the influence of society or nature upon their
 50 own minds, communicates itself to others, and gathers a sort of reduplication from the community. Their language is vitally metaphorical, that is, it marks the before unap-

prehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension, until words, which represent them, become, through time, signs for portions or classes of thought instead of
 5 pictures of integral thoughts, and then, if no new poets should arise to create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganized, language will be dead to all the nobler
 purposes of human intercourse. These similitudes or relations are finely said by Lord Bacon to be "the same footsteps of nature impressed
 10 upon the various subjects of the world"¹ — and he considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge. In the infancy of society
 15 every author is necessarily a poet, because language itself is poetry, and to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful, in a word, the good which exists in the relation
 20 subsisting, first between existence and perception, and secondly between perception and expression. Every original language near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic
 25 poem, the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctions of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the forms of the creations of poetry.

But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only
 30 the authors of language and of music, of the dance, and architecture, and statuary, and painting — they are the institutors of laws, and the founders of civil society, and the inventors
 35 of the arts of life, and the teachers who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true that partial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are
 40 allegorical, or susceptible of allegory, and, like Janus, have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared,
 45 were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators or prophets; a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present
 50 as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and

¹ See *Advancement of Learning*, n, 5.

the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events, such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one, as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of place, are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry; and the choruses of yEschylus, and the Book of Job, and Dante's Paradise, would afford, more than any other writings, examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of music, sculpture, and painting are illustrations still more decisive.

Language, color, form, and religious and civil habits of action, are all the instruments and materials of poetry, they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect as a synonym of the cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty whose throne is curttained within the invisible nature of man. And this springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations, than color, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the control of that faculty of which it is the creation. For language is arbitrarily produced by the imagination, and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments, and conditions of art have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is as a mirror which reflects, the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication. Hence the fame of sculptors, painters, and musicians, although the intrinsic powers of the great masters of these arts may yield in no degree to that of those who have employed

language as the hieroglyphic of their thoughts, has never equalled that of poets in the restricted sense of the term, as two performers of equal skill will produce unequal effects from a guitar and a harp. The fame of legislators and founders of religions, so long as their institutions last, alone seems to exceed that of poets in the restricted sense, but it can scarcely be a question, whether, if we deduct the celebrity which their flattery of the gross opinions of the vulgar usually conciliates, together with that which belonged to them in their higher character of poets, any excess will remain.

We have thus circumscribed the word poetry within the limits of that art which is the most familiar and the most perfect expression of the faculty itself. It is necessary, however, to make the circle still narrower, and to determine the distinction between measured and unmeasured language, for the popular division into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy.

Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thoughts. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a sort of uniform and harmonious recurrence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensable to the communication of its influence than the words themselves without reference to that peculiar order. Hence the vanity of translation, it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its color and odor, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel.

An observation of the regular mode of the recurrence of harmony in the language of poetical minds, together with its relation to music, produced metre, or a certain system of traditional forms of harmony and language. Yet it is by no means essential that a poet should accommodate his language to this traditional form, so that the harmony, which

is its spirit, be observed. The practice is indeed convenient and popular, and to be preferred especially in such composition as includes much action, but every great poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification. The distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error. The distinction between philosophers and poets has been anticipated. Plato was essentially a poet — the truth and splendor of his imagery, and the melody of his language, are the most intense that it is possible to conceive. He rejected the harmony of the epic, dramatic, and lyrical forms, because he sought to kindle a harmony in thoughts divested of shape and action, and he forbore to invent any regular plan of rhythm which would include, under determinate forms, the varied pauses of his style. Cicero sought to imitate the cadence of his periods, but with little success. Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect, it is a strain which distends and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth, but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical, and contain in themselves the elements of verse, being the echo of the eternal mu'ic. Nor are those supreme poets, who have employed traditional forms of rhythm on account of the form and action of their subjects, less capable of perceiving and teaching the truth of things, than those who have omitted that form. Shakespeare, Dante, and Milton (to confine ourselves to modern writers) are philosophers of the very loftiest power.

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no Other connection than time, place, circum-

stance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial, and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature. Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the story of particular facts, stripped of the poetry which should invest them, augments that of poetry, and for ever develops new and wonderful applications of the eternal truth which it contains. Hence epitomes have been called the moths of just history; they cat out the poetry of it. A story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful; poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted.

The parts of a composition may be poetical, without the composition as a whole being a poem. A single sentence may be considered as a whole, though it may be found in the midst of a series of unassimilated portions; a single word even may be a spark of inextinguishable thought. And thus all the great historians, Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, were poets, and although the plan of these writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subjection, by filling all the interstices of their subjects with living images.

Having determined what is poetry, and who are poets, let us proceed to estimate its effects upon society.

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all spirits on which it falls open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors are fully aware of the excellency of poetry, for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future generations to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and

effect in all the strength and splendor of their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame, the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers; it must be impanelled by Time from the selectest of the wise of many generations. A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds, his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. The poems of Homer and his contemporaries were the delight of infant Greece; they were the elements of that social system which is the column upon which all succeeding civilization has reposed. Homer embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character, nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector, and Ulysses, the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism, and persevering devotion to an object, were unveiled to their depths in these immortal creations, the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations, until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration. Nor let it be objected that these characters are remote from moral perfection, and that they are by no means to be considered as edifying patterns for general imitation. Every epoch, under names more or less specious, has deified its peculiar errors, Revenge is the naked idol of the worship of a semi-barbarous age, and Self-deceit is the veiled image of unknown evil, before which luxury and satiety lie prostrate. But a poet considers the vices of his contemporaries as the temporary dress in which his creations must be arrayed, and which cover without concealing the eternal proportions of their beauty. An epic or dramatic personage is understood to wear them around his soul, as he may the ancient armor or modern uniform around his body, whilst it is easy to conceive a dress more graceful than either. The beauty of the internal nature can not be so far concealed by its ac-

cidental vesture, but that the spirit of its form shall communicate itself to the very disguise, and indicate the shape it hides from the manner in which it is worn. A majestic form and graceful motions will express themselves through the most barbarous and tasteless costume. Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendor; and it is doubtful whether the alloy of costume, habit, etc., be not necessary to temper this planetary music for mortal ears.

The whole objection, however, of the immorality of poetry rests upon a misconception of the manner in which poetry acts to produce the moral improvement of man. Ethical science arranges the elements which poetry has created, and propounds schemes and proposes examples of civil and domestic life, nor is it for want of admirable doctrines that men hate, and despise, and censure, and deceive, and subjugate one another. But poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar, it reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it co-exists. The great secret of morals is love, or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively, he must put himself in the place of another and of many others, the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight, which have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and

which form new intervals and interstices whose void for ever craves fresh food. Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb. A poet therefore would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his place and time, in his poetical creations, which participate in neither. By this assumption of the inferior office of interpreting the effect, in which perhaps after all he might acquit himself but imperfectly, he would resign a glory in the participation of the cause. There was little danger that Homer, or any of the eternal poets, should have so far misunderstood themselves as to have abdicated this throne of their widest dominion. Those in whom the poetical faculty, though great, is less intense, as Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser, have frequently affected a moral aim, and the effect of their poetry is diminished in exact proportion to the degree in which they compel us to advert to this purpose.

But let us not be betrayed from a defense into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times.

But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine, as the grounds of this distinction, what is here meant by utility. Pleasure or good, in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a sensitive and intelligent being seeks, and in which, when found, it acquiesces. There are two kinds of pleasure, one durable, universal, and permanent; the other transitory and particular. Utility may either express the means of producing the former or the latter. In the former sense, whatever strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense, is useful. But a narrower meaning may be assigned to the word utility, confining it to express that

which banishes the importunity of the wants of our animal nature, the surrounding men with security of life, the dispersing the grosser delusions of superstition, and the conciliating such a degree of mutual forbearance among men as may consist with the motives of personal advantage.

Undoubtedly the promoters of utility, in this limited sense, have their appointed office in society. They follow the footsteps of poets, and copy the sketches of their creations into the book of common life. They make space and give time. Their exertions are of the highest value, so long as they confine their administration of the concerns of the inferior powers of our nature within the limits due to the superior ones. But whilst the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him spare to deface, as some of the French writers have defaced, the eternal truths charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labor, let them beware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and of want. They have exemplified the saying, "To him that hath, more shall be given, and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away." The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer, and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty.

It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense, the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself, arc often the chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle, tragedy delights by affording a shadow of that pleasure which exists in pain. This is the source

also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth." Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception and still more of the creation of poetry, is often wholly unalloyed.

The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers.

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two, and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burned as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Caldron, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed, if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born, if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated, if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place, if no monuments of ancient sculpture had been handed down to us, and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished together with its belief. The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements, have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself.

We have more moral, political, and historical wisdom than we know how to reduce

into practice, we have more scientific and economical knowledge than can be accommodated to the just distribution of the produce which it multiplies. The poetry in

5 these systems of thought is concealed by the accumulation of facts and calculating processes. There is no want of knowledge respecting what is wisest and best in morals, government, and political economy, or at least what
10 is wiser and better than what men now practice and endure. But we let "*dare not wait upon / would*) like the poor cat in the adage."¹ We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know, we want the
15 generous impulse to act that which we imagine, we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception, we have eaten more than we can digest. The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged
20 the limits of the empire of man over the external world, has, for want of the poetical faculty, proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world, and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a
25 slave. To what but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty, which is the basis of all knowledge, is to be attributed the abuse of all invention for abridging
30 and combining labor, to the exasperation of the inequality of mankind? From what other cause has it arisen that the discoveries which should have lightened, have added a weight to the curse imposed on Adam?
35 Poetry, and the principle of Self of which money is the visible incarnation, are the God and Mammon of the world.

The functions of the poetical faculty are twofold: by one it creates new materials of
40 knowledge, and power, and pleasure, by the other it engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and arrange them according to a certain rhythm and order which may be called the beautiful and the good. The
45 cultivation of poetry is never more to be desired than at periods when, from an excess of the selfish and calculating principle, the accumulation of the materials of external life exceed the quantity of the power of
50 assimilating them to the internal laws of

¹ *Macbeth*, I, 7.

human nature. The body has then become too unwieldy for that which animates it.

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge, it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring, and that which adorns all; and that which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, and withholds from the barren world the nourishment and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things, it is as the odor and the color of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, as the form and splendor of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption. What were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship; what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit, what were our consolations on this side of the grave, and what were our aspirations beyond it — if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar? Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it, for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness, this power arises from within, like the color of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophectic either of its approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results, but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet. I appeal to the greatest poets of the present day whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labor and study. The toil and the delay recommended by critics can be justly interpreted to mean no

more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connection of the spaces between their suggestions by the intertexture of conventional expressions — a necessity only imposed by the limitedness of the poetical faculty itself, for Milton conceived the *Paradise Lost* as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the muse having "dictated" to him the "unpremeditated song." And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the *Orlando Furioso*. Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. The instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty is still more observable in the plastic and pictorial arts' a great statue or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in the mother's womb, and the very mind which directs the hands in formation, is incapable of accounting to itself for the origin, the gradations, or the media of the process.

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling, sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression; so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own, but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the morning calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sand which paves it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions, and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can color

all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world, a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life, and veiling them or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide — abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness, it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes, its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life, it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty which is the spirit of its forms.

All things exist as they are perceived: at least in relation to the percipient.

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.¹

But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitant of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which

obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. It justifies the bold and true word of Tasso: *Non merit a nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poet a.*¹

A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue, and glory, so he ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest, and the most illustrious of men. As to his glory, let time be challenged to declare whether the fame of any other institutor of human life be comparable to that of a poet. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible, the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and, if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men, and the exceptions, as they regard those who possessed the poetic faculty in a high yet inferior degree, will be found on consideration to confirm rather than destroy the rule. Let us for a moment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, and usurping and uniting in our own persons the incompatible characters of accuser, witness, judge, and executioner, let us decide without trial, testimony, or form, that certain motives of those who are "there sitting where we dare not soar,"² are reprehensible. Let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Lord Bacon was a speculator, that Raphael was a libertine, that Spenser was a poet laureate. It is inconsistent with this division of our subject to cite living poets, but posterity has done ample justice to the great names now referred to. Their errors have been weighed and found to have been dust in the balance; if their sins were as scarlet, they are now white as snow, they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer, Time. Observe in what a ludicrous chaos the imputations of real or fictitious crime have been confused

¹ *Paradise Lost*, i, 254-55.

² "No one deserves the name of creator except God and the poet." See *Paradise Lost*, iv, 829.

in the contemporary calumnies against poetry and poets; consider how little is as it appears — or appears as it is; look to your own motives, and judge not, lest ye be judged.

Poetry, as has been said, differs in this 5 respect from logic, that it is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connection with the consciousness or will. It is presumptuous to determine 10 that these are the necessary conditions of all mental causation, when mental effects are experienced insusceptible of being referred to them. The frequent recurrence of the poetical power, it is obvious to suppose, 15 may produce in the mind a habit of order and harmony correlative with its own nature and with its effects upon other minds. But in the intervals of inspiration — and they may be frequent without being durable — a 20 poet becomes a man, and is abandoned to the sudden reflux of the influences under which others habitually live. But as he is more delicately organized than other men, and sensible to pain and pleasure, both his own 25 and that of others, in a degree unknown to them, he will avoid the one and pursue the other with an ardor proportioned to this difference. And he renders himself obnoxious to calumny when he neglects to observe 30 the circumstances under which these objects of universal pursuit and flight have disguised themselves in one another's garments.

But there is nothing necessarily evil in this error, and thus cruelty, envy, revenge, avarice, and the passions purely evil, have never 35 formed any portion of the popular imputations on the lives of poets.

I have thought it most favorable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks 40 according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind, by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of observing the formality of a polemical reply, but if the view which they contain be just, they will be found to involve a refutation of the arguers 45 against poetry, so far at least as regards the first division of the subject. I can readily conjecture what should have moved the gall of some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel with certain versifiers; I, like them,

confess myself unwilling to be stunned by the Theseids of the hoarse Codrus¹ of the day. Bavins and Mamus² undoubtedly arc, as they ever were, insufferable persons. But it belongs to a philosophical critic to distinguish rather than confound.

The first part of these remarks has related to poetry in its elements and principles, and it has been shown, as well as the narrow limits assigned them would permit, that what is called poetry in a restricted sense, has a common source with all other forms of order and of beauty according to which the materials of human life are susceptible of being 15 arranged, and which is poetry in a universal sense.

The second part will have for its object an application of these principles to the present state of the cultivation of poetry, and a defense of the attempt to idealize the modern forms of manners and opinions, and compel them into a subordination to the imaginative and creative faculty. For the literature of England, an energetic development of which has ever preceded or accompanied a great and free development of the national will, has arisen as it were from a new birth. In spite of the low-thoughted³ envy which would undervalue contemporary merit, our own will be a memorable age in intellectual achievements, and we live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty. The most unflinching herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The persons in whom this power resides may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they arc yet

¹ Codrus, a second-rate Latin poet, is said to have read his play about Theseus to anyone who would listen.

² Two insignificant Roman poets.

³ See Milton, *Comus*, 6.

compelled to serve the power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its

manifestations, for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present, the words which express what they understand not, the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

1821.

John Keats • 1795-1811

Born a Cockney in London, where his mother was an innkeeper's daughter and his father the manager of the livery-stable of the inn, Keats grew to be the great apostle of beauty. Unlike Byron and Shelley, with whom his name is forever linked, he had comparatively little schooling. He attended Mr. Clarke's private school in Enfield, where he became strongly attached to the headmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke. When his mother died in 1810 (his father had died in 1804), Keats's guardians took him from school and apprenticed him to a surgeon. For five years he studied surgery, developing more than ordinary skill, and qualifying for the profession by passing the required examinations. But the call of literature was insistent, and the influence of his friend Clarke strong. Through him Keats first came to know Spenser, Chapman, and other poets of the past. He soon became conscious, he tells us in one of his letters, that he was to be a poet. During his apprenticeship as a surgeon, he wrote verses continually. In May, 1816, Leigh Hunt, whom he had met through Clarke, published one of Keats's sonnets in *The Examiner*, a liberal weekly. In Hunt's house in the London suburb of Hampstead he met Shelley; and in December, 1816, Hunt published in *The Examiner* the now famous sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*. Keats's career as a poet was begun. His medical career was definitely at an end.

In 1817, with encouragement from Shelley, Keats published his first small volume, *Poems*. The book caused little stir, except among his friends, and brought him no money. In 1818 he wrote and published *Endymion*. This brought forth several savage and abusive criticisms, most virulent of which were those in *Blackwood's Magazine* and *The Quarterly Review*. The attack did not hurt Keats as deeply as commentators once thought. He knew as well as any one what the faults of the poem were. He had stated them in his preface. The simple fact was that *Endymion* was as good as he could make it at the time; and he thought it better to let the poem go forth as it was, rather than to torture it and himself by trying fruitlessly to improve the form, which he felt had hardened. The reference in the reviews to his being a Cockney, Keats ignored. As a matter of fact, his accent, in all likelihood, was that of a Londoner born within hearing of Bow Bells.

During the composition of this poem, Keats had begun to show the beginnings of tuberculosis, which was prevalent in his family. A vacation trip to the Lakes (where he met Wordsworth) and to Scotland failed to arrest the fever and the hemorrhages. Soon after his return to Hampstead in the fall of 1818, three events happened in quick succession:

the bitter reviews of *Endymion* appeared, Keats met for the first time and fell hopelessly in love with Fanny Brawne, and his brother Tom, whom he devotedly nursed during his illness, died of tuberculosis.

During the next eighteen months, though racked by disease and torn by his love for Fanny Brawne, but tenderly cared for by his friends, Keats did his greatest work, composing most of the poems that have made him immortal. These he published in his third and last volume, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems*, in July, 1810. The best of these, unsurpassed in English literature, are given below and need no comment here.

The nursing and kindness of the Hunts and of Fanny Brawne and her mother, during the summer of 1820, brought Keats much ease and comfort, but no permanent relief. From the letters, recently published, of Fanny to Keats's sister, we know now that Fanny and Keats considered themselves engaged. When Keats set sail in September, with his friend, Severn, the painter, for the milder climate of Italy, the lovers probably knew that they were parting forever. After a valiant struggle, but yearning, towards the end, for death to come, Keats died in Rome, February 13, 1821, and was buried three days later in the Protestant cemetery, near the tomb of Cains Cestius. A well-worn path through the grass takes the visitor to the far corner where he lies.

Keats, like the ancient Greeks, whom he admired and whose spirit he absorbed in an extraordinary way, although he knew no Greek, had a love for, a delight and faith in, sensuous beauty. For him, sensation took on a heightened value when idealized by the imagination. "Heard melodies are sweet," but those which one hears imaginatively, while looking at the pipers on the Grecian urn, are sweeter still. Using his senses was a thrill to Keats, and back of the sensation, the experience, lay for him intuitive, perhaps ultimate, truth. His poems, accordingly, have a higher intellectual quality in them than is generally recognized.

For him, truth was beauty, and beauty produced joy and happiness. Acutely aware of, and pained by, the social ills of his day, he early decided that the creating, and so indirectly the preaching, of beauty was for him the way to produce universal love and brotherhood. Once, in his retelling of Boccaccio's romantic story, called by Keats *Isabella; Or, The Pot of Basil*, he could not keep from crying out in agony at man's inhumanity, when he described the tragic heroine's brothers, who had grown rich on the sweat and tears and blood of common men:

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,
And went all naked to the hungry shark;
For them his ears gushed blood; for them in death
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark
Lay full of daits; for them alone did seethe
A thousand men in troubles wide and elaik:
Half ignorant, they turned an easy wheel,
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

Keats is pre-eminently the artist, seeking perfection of form. In his best poems he achieved it. By the magic of his imagination he produced a world of glamour, but a world that is nevertheless true.

Good one-volume editions of Keats are the Oxford, the Globe, and the Cambridge, which contains the letters. The standard biographies are by Sidney Colvin in the English Men of Letters series and by Amy Lowell (1915). The best edition of the letters is by M. Buxton Forman (1935).

Sonnet

*On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*¹

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
 Round many western islands have I been
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5
 That deep-browed Homer ruled as his
 demesne:

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
 Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
 When a new planet swims into his ken;
 Or like stout Cortez² when with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
 Looked at each other with a wild surmise —
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

1815.

*To My Brothers*³

Small, busy flames play through the fresh laid
 coals,

And their faint cracklings o'er our silence
 creep

Like whispers of the household gods that
 keep

A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.

And while, for rhymes, I search around the
 poles, 5

Your eyes are fixed, as in poetic sleep,

Upon the lore so voluble and deep,

That aye at fall of night our care condoles.

This is your birth-day Tom, — and I rejoice

That thus it passes smoothly, quietly. 10

Many such eves of gently whisp'ring noise

May we together pass, and calmly try

What are this world's true joys, — ere the
 great voice,

From its fair face, shall bid our spirits fly

November 18, 1816.

¹ Written early one autumn morning after sitting up all night leading Chapman's translation of Homer with his friend Clarke.

² It was, of course, Balboa who discovered the Pacific.

³ George, two years younger than the poet, and Thomas, three years younger.

⁴ Thomas, died two years later, December, 1818. Keats nursed him through his illness.

INTRODUCTION TO *Endymion*

This poem is Keats's version of the story of Endymion, the beautiful boy, in love with the goddess of the moon.

BOOK I

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever;
 Its loveliness increases; it will never
 Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet
 breathing. 5

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreath-
 ing

A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
 Made for our searching yes, in spite of all, in
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the
 moon,

Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
 For simple sheep, and such are daffodils 15
 With the green world they live in, and clear
 rills

That for themselves a cooling covert make
 'Gainst the hot season, the mid forest brake,
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose
 blooms:

And such too is the grandeur of the dooms 20
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences 25
 For one short hour; no, even as the trees
 That whisper round a temple become soon
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast, 31
 That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'er-
 cast,

They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I
 Will trace the story of Endymion. 35
 The very music of the name has gone
 Into my being, and each pleasant scene

Is growing fresh before me as the green
 Of our own vallies: so I will begin
 Now while I cannot hear the city's din; 40
 Now while the early budders are just new,
 And run in mazes of the youngest hue
 About old forests; while the willow trails
 Its delicate amber, and the dairy pails
 Bring home increase of milk. And, as the
 year .45
 Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer
 My little boat, for many quiet hours,
 With streams that deepen freshly into bowers.
 Many and many a verse I hope to write,
 Before the daisies, vermeil rimmed and white,
 Hid in deep herbage, and ere yet the bees 51
 Hum about globes of clover and sweet peas,
 I must be near the middle of my story.
 O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
 See it half finished, but let Autumn bold, 55
 With universal tinge of sober gold,
 Be all about me when I make an end.¹
 And now at once, adventuresome, I send
 My herald thought into a wilderness:
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress
 My uncertain path with green, that I may
 speed 61
 Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.
 1817.

"When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be"

When I have fears that I may cease to be
 Before my pen has gleaned my teeming
 brain,
 Before high-piled books, in character,
 Hold like rich garners the full ripened
 grain, 4
 When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
 And think that I may never live to trace
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of
 chance;
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
 That I shall never look upon thee more,
 Never have relish in the faery power 11
 Of unreflecting love; — then on the shore

¹ Keats actually kept to this schedule, beginning the poem late in April and completing it late in November, 1817.

Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
 Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.
 1817.

On Seeing the Elgin Marbles¹

My spirit is too weak — mortality
 Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
 And each imagined pinnacle and steep
 Of godlike hardship, tells me I must die
 Like a sick Eagle looking at the sky. 5
 Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep
 That I have not the cloudy winds to keep,
 Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.
 Such dim-conceived glories of the brain
 Bring round the heart an undescribable
 feud; 10
 So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
 That mingles Grecian grandeur with the
 rude
 Wasting of old Time — with a billowy
 main —
 A sun — a shadow of a magnitude.
 1817.

Robin Hood

To a Friend²

No! those days are gone away,
 And their hours are old and gray,
 And their minutes buried all
 Under the down-trodden pall
 Of the leaves of many years: 5
 Many times have Winter's shears,
 Frozen North, and chilling East,
 Sounded tempests to the feast
 Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
 Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,
 And the twanging bow no more;
 Silent is the ivory shrill³
 Past the heath and up the hill;

¹ The sculptures which formerly adorned the Parthenon in Athens were brought to England in 1803 by Lord Elgin and placed in the British Museum.

² J. H. Reynolds, who had sent him some poems on Robin Hood.
³ ivory whistle.

There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amazed to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest tune of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars¹ to light you,
Or the polar ray* to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;
Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent,⁵
For he left the merry tale,
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
Gone, the song of Gamelyn,⁴
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
Idling in the "grenc shawe,"⁵
All are gone away and past!
And if Robin should be cast
Sudden from his turfed grave,
And if Marian should have
Once again her forest days,
She would weep, and he would craze:
He would swear, for all his oiks,
Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,
Have rotted on the briny seas,
She would weep that her wild bees
Sang not to her — strange! that honey
Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing
Honor to the old bow-string!
Honor to the bugle horn!
Honor to the woods unshorn!
Honor to the Lincoln green!⁶
Honor to the archer keen!
Honor to tight⁷ Little John,
And the horse he rode upon!

Honor to bold Robin Hood,
Sleeping in the underwood!
Honor to Maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood clan!
Though their days have hurried by,
Let us two a burden¹ try.

February, 1818.

Stanzas

i

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them,
With a sleety whistle through them;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

2

In a drear-nighted December
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting²
About the frozen time.

3

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passed joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steel it,
Was never said in rhyme.

1818?

On the Grasshopper and Cricket

This sonnet was written as the result of a wager made with Leigh Hunt.

The poetry of earth is never dead¹

When all the birds are faint with the hot
sun,

¹ bong. ² showing ill-humor.

¹ the Dipper. ² the North Star.

³ in Sherwood Forest.

⁴ An outlaw, hero of a story once supposed to be Chaucer's.

⁵ green wood.

⁶ Cloth made in Lincoln — used by hunters.

⁷ well-built.

And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown
mead,

That is the Grasshopper's — he takes the
lead 5

In summer luxury, — he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with
fmi

He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:

On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove
there shrills n

The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,

The Grasshopper's among some grassy
hills.

December 30, 1816. 1817.

To Leigh Hunt, Esq.

This is the dedication to Keats's first volume of
poems published in 1817.

Glory and loveliness have passed away;
For if we wander out in early morn,
No wreathed incense do we see upborne
Into the east, to meet the smiling day
No crowd of nymphs soft voiced and young,
and gay, 5

In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,¹

Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn
The shrine of Flora in her early May.
But there are left delights as high as these,

And I shall ever bless my destiny, 10
That in a time, when under pleasant trees
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free,

A leafy luxury, seeing I could please
With these poor offerings, a man like thee.
1817.

Lines on the Mermaid Tavern²

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?³

¹ wheat.

² Sent, along with *Robin Hood*, to his friend Reynolds.

³ The famous rendezvous in London of the Elizabethan dramatists and poets.

Have ye tippled drink more fine 5
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise

Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood 10
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse¹ from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till 15
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old-sign
Sipping beverage divine, 20
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern, 25
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
10iB.

Fancy

Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let winged Fancy wander 5
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use, 10
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloyes with tasting: What do then? 15
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled 20
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
¹ drink.

And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
 The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to
 freeze,

Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails: 15
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'nes,¹
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and
 mails.

3
 Northward he turneth througli a little door, /I
 And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden
 tongue ⁷ 20
 Flattered to tears this aged man and poor; /)
 But no - - already had his death-bell rung:)7
 The joys of all his life were said and sung: ,4
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve: t
 Another way he went, and soon among 2=5'
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
 And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to
 grieve.

4
 That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude
 soft;
 And so it chanced, for many a door was
 wide,
 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft, 30
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
 The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
 Stared, where upon their heads the cornice
 rests, 35
 With hair blown back, and wings put cross-
 wise on their breasts.

5
 At length burst in the argent revelry,
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
 Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
 The brain, new-stuffed, in youth, with
 triumphs gay 40
 Of old romance. These let us wish away,
 And turn, sole-thoughtcd, to one Lady
 there,
 Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry
 day,

¹ small chapels; dumb, because the knights and ladies are sculptures.

On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,
 As she had heard old dames full many times
 declare. 45

6
 They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
 Young virgins might have visions of de-
 light,
 And soft adorings from their loves receive
 Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
 If ceremonies due they did aright; 50
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white,
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
 Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
 desire. 54

7
 Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
 The music, yearning like a God in pain,
 She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
 Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping
 train¹
 Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, GO
 And back retired, not cooled by high dis-
 dain,
 But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere,
 She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of
 the year.

8
 She danced along with vague, regardless
 eyes,
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and
 short: 65
 The hallowed hour was near at hand: she
 sighs
 Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
 Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and
 scorn, 69
 Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amot,²
 Save to St. Agnes and her lambs,³ unshorn,
 And all the bliss to be before to-morrow
 morn.

¹ I do not use *tram* for *concourse of passers-by*, but for *skirts sweeping along* the floor. (Keats.) ² dead.

³ On the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Allie, a Roman viigin, two lambs were blessed while tin *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) was sung. The lambs were later shorn and the wool made into cloth by nuns.

9

So, purposing each moment to retire,
 She lingered still. Meantime, across the
 moors,
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on
 fire 75
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
 Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and
 implores
 All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
 But for one moment in the tedious hours,
 That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
 Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in
 sooth such things have been. 81

10

He ventures in. let no buzzed whisper tell:
 All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
 Will storm his heart, Love's fcv'rous cita-
 del:
 For him, those chambers held barbarian
 hordes, 85
 Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
 Whose very dogs would execrations howl
 Against his lineage: not one breast affords
 Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
 Save one old beldame, weak in body and in
 soul. 90

II

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature came,
 Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
 To where he stood, hid from the torch's
 flame,
 Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond 94
 The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
 He startled her, but soon she knew his face,
 And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,
 Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from
 this place,
 They are all here to-night, the whole blood-
 thirsty race!

12

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish
 Hildebrand, 100
 He had a fever late, and in the fit
 He cursed thee and thine, both house and
 land:
 Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a
 whit

More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me!
 flit!

Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip¹
 dear, 105

We're safe enough; here in this armchair sit,
 And tell me how" — "Good Saints! not
 here, not here,
 Follow me, child, or else these stones will be
 thy bier."

13

He followed through a lowly arched way,
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
 And as she muttered "Well-a — well-a-
 day!" III

He found him in a little moonlight room,
 Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
 "Now tell me whete is Madeline," said he,
 "O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom us
 Which none but secret sisterhood may sec,
 When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving,
 piously."

14

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —
 Yet men will murder upon holy days: 119
 Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
 And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
 To venture so: it fills me with amaze
 To sec thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!
 God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
 This very night, good angels her deceive!
 But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle² time to
 grieve." 126

15

Febly she laugheth in the languid moon,
 While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
 Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
 Who keepeth closed a wond'rous riddle-
 book, 130
 As spectactled she sits in chimney nook.
 But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she
 told
 His lady's purpose; and he scarce could
 brook³
 Tears, at the thought of those enchant-
 ments cold,
 And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old. 135

¹ Godmother. ² much.
³ check (used erroneously).

16

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown
 rose,
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
 Made purple not- then doth he propose
 A stratagem, that makes the beldnme start.
 "A cruel man and impious thou art. 140
 Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and
 dream
 Alone with her good angels, far apart
 From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I
 deem
 Thou canst not surely be the same that thou
 didst seem." 144

17

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
 Quoth Porphyro "O may I ne'er find grace
 When my weak voice shall whisper its
 last prayer,
 If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
 Or look with ruffian passion in her face
 Good Angela, believe me by these tears, 150
 Or I will, even in a moment's space,
 Awake, with horrid shout, my focmcn's
 ears,
 And beard them, though they be more fanged
 than wolves and bears."

18

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul
 A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard
 thing, 155
 Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight
 toll,
 Whose prayers for thee, each morn and
 evening,
 Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth
 she bring
 A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
 So woful, and of such deep sorrowing, 160
 That Angela gives promise she will do
 Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or
 woe.

19

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
 Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
 Him in a closet, of such privacy 165
 That he might see her beauty unespied,
 And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,

While legioned faeries paced the coverlet,
 And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
 Never on such a night have lovers met, 170
 Since Merlin paid his Demon¹ all the mon-
 strous debt.

20

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the
 Dame.
 "All cates² and dainties shall be stored
 there
 Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambor
 frame³
 Her own lute thou wilt sec: no time to
 spare, 175
 For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
 On sudi a. catering trust my dizzy head.
 Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel
 in prayer
 The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady
 wed,
 Or may I never leave my grave among the
 dead." 180

21

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
 The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
 The Dame returned, and whispered in his
 ear
 To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
 From fright of dim espial. Safe at last, 185
 Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
 The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed and
 chaste,
 Where Porphyro took covert, pleased
 amain.⁴
 His poor guide hurried back with agues in
 her brain.

22.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade, 190
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
 Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,
 She turned, and down the aged gossip led

¹ Merlin, the son of a demon, was destroyed by Vivien, who used the magic that he had taught her. See Tennyson's *Merlin and Vivien*.

² delicacies.

³ a drum-shaped embroidery frame.

⁴ tremendously.

To a safe level matting.¹ Now prepare, 196
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed,
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove
 frayed² and ilcd.

23

Out went the taper as she hurried in,
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin 201
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side, 205
 As though a tongueless nightingale should
 swell
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled in
 her dell.

24

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-
 grass, 210
 And diamonded with panes of quaint de-
 vice,
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
 As arc the tiger-moth's deep-damasked
 wings;
 And in the mist, 'mong thousand heraldries,
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazomngs,
 A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of
 queens and kings. 216

25

Full on this casement shone the wintry
 moon,
 And threw warm gulcs' on Madeline's fair
 breast,
 As clown she knelt for heaven's grace and
 boon,
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together
 prest, 220
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
 Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew
 faint:
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal
 taint. 225

¹ straw carpet. ² frightened.
¹ reel (a trim in heraldry).

26

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees,
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
 Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm
 is fled. 234

27

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
 Until the popped warmth of sleep oppressed
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away,
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-
 day, 239
 Blissfully havened both from joy and pain,
 Clasped¹ like a missal² where swart Pay-
 nims³ pray;
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
 As though a rose should shut, and be a bud
 again.

28

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress, 245
 And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness,
 Which when he heard, that minute did he
 bless,
 And breathed himself, then from the closet
 crept,
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness, 250
 And over the hushed carpet, silent, stopt,
 And 'tween the curtains peeped, where 101 —
 how fast she slept.

29

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set 254
 A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —
 0 for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,

¹ tightly shut; old books are frequently provided
 with clasps to hold them shut.
³ prayer-book. ³ Pagans.

Affray his ears, though but in dying tone: —
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise
is gone. 261

30

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanched linen, smooth, and Livendered,
While he from forth the closet brought a
heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and
gourd, 265
With jellies soother¹ than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez, and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

31

These dehcatcs he heaped with glowing
hand 271
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume
light. — 275
"And now, my love, my seraph fair,
awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:²
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth
ache." 279

32

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains: - - 'twas a midnight
charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight
gleam, 284
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entailed in woofed phan-
tasies.

33

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, - -
Tumultuous, — and, in chords that ten-
derest be, 290

¹ smoother. ² hermit; here, devoted worshipper.

He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called "La belle dame sans
mercy:"

Close to her ear touching the melody; —
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft
moan:

He ceased — she panted quick — and sud-
denly 295

Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth'
sculptured stone.

34

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh
expelled 300
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many
a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would
keep,
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous
eye, 305
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so
dreamingly.

35

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill,
and drear! 311
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings
dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou dicst, my Love, I know not where
to go." 315

36

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose 320
Blendeth its odor with the violet, —
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind
blows

Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp
sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon
hath set.

37

Tis dark: quick pattrerth the flaw-blown¹
sleet • 325

"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"

Tis dark the iced gusts still rave and beat.

"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!

Porphyro will leave me here to fade and
pine. —

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine, 331

Though thou forsakest a deceived thing, . . .

A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned
wing."

38

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely
bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest? 335

Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and ver-
meil² dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest

After so many hours of toil and quest,

A famished pilgrim, — saved by miracle.

Though I have found, I will not rob thy
nest 340

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou thmk'st
well

.To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

39

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,

Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed: 344

Arise — arise! the morning is at hand: —

The bloated wassailers will never heed: —

Let us away, my love, with happy speed,

There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —

Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy
mead'

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, 350

For o'er the southern moors I have a home
for thee."

40

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,

¹wind-blown. ²vermilion.

At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready
spears —

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they
found. — 355

In all the house was heard no human sound.

A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by
each door,

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and
hound,

Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar,

And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor

41

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide
hall, 361

Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide

Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,

With a huge empty flagon by his side:

The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook
his hide, 365

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:

By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —

The chains he silent on the footworn
stones, —

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges
groans.

42

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago 370

These lovers fled away into the storm

That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,

And all his warrior-guests, with shade and
form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,

Were long bc-nightmared Angela the old

Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face
deform, 376

The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,

For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes
cold.

January, 1819.

Ode

Keats wrote the poem in his copy of Beaumont
and Fletcher, on the blank page before *The Fair
Maid of the Inn*.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?

Yes, and those of heaven commune 5
 With the spheres of sun and moon;
 With the noise of fountains wond'rous
 And the parle¹ of voices thund'rous;
 With the whisper of heaven's trees
 And one another, in soft ease 10
 Seated on Elysian lawns
 Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
 Underneath large blue-bells tented,
 Where the daisies are rose-scented,
 And the rose herself has got 15
 Perfume which on earth is not,
 Where the nightingale doth sing
 Not a senseless, tranced thing,
 But divine melodious truth,
 Philosophic numbers smooth; 20
 Tales and golden histories
 Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
 On the earth ye live again;
 And the souls ye left behind you 25
 Teach us, here, the way to find you,
 Where your other souls are joying,
 Never slumbered, never cloying.
 Here, your earth-born souls still speak
 To mortals, of their little week; 30
 Of their sorrows and delights,
 Of their passions and their spites;
 Of their glory and their shame;
 What doth strengthen and what maim.
 Thus ye teach us, every day, 35
 Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
 Ye have left your souls on earth!
 Ye have souls in heaven too,
 Double-lived in regions new I 40
 1819.

Ode on Indolence

"They toil not, neither do they spin."

I

One morn before me were three figures seen,
 With bowed necks, and joined hands, side-
 faced;
 And one behind the other stepped serene,
 In placid sandals, and in white robes
 graced;
 'talk.

They passed, like figures on a marble urn, 5
 When shifted round to see the other side,
 They came again, as when the urn once
 more
 Is shifted round, the first seen shades return,
 And they were strange to me, as may betide
 With vases, to one deep in Phidian
 lore. 10

2

How is it, Shadows! that I knew ye not?
 How came ye muffled in so hush a mask?
 Was it a silent deep-disguised plot
 To steal away, and leave without a task
 My idle days? Ripe was the drowsy hour, 15
 The blissful cloud of summer-indolence
 Benumbed my eyes; my pulse grew less
 and less,
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no
 flower:
 O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense
 Unhaunted quite of all but — nothing.
 ness? 26

3

A third time passed they by, and, passing,
 turned
 Each one the face a moment whiles to me,
 Then faded, and to follow them I burned
 And ached for wings because I knew the
 three,
 The first was a fair Maid, and Love her
 name, 25
 The second was Ambition, pale of cheek,
 And ever watchful with fatigued eye;
 The last, whom I love more, the more of
 blame
 Is heaped upon her, maiden most un-
 meek, —
 I knew to be my demon Poesy. 30

4

They faded, and, forsooth! I wanted wings:
 O folly! What is love! and where is it?
 And for that poor Ambition! it springs
 From a man's little heart's short fever-fit;
 For Poesy! — no, — she has not a joy, — 35
 At least for me, — so sweet as drowsy
 noons,
 And evenings steeped in honied indo-
 lence;

O, for an age so sheltered from annoy,
 That I may never know how change the
 moons,
 Or hear the voice of busy common-
 sense! 40

5

And once more came they by, — alas! where-
 fore?

My sleep had been embroidered with dim
 dreams;

My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er
 With flowers, and stirring shades, and
 baffled beams'

The morn was clouded, but no shower fell, 45
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of
 May,

The open casement pressed a new-lc,ivcd
 vine,

Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay,
 O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid farewell'
 Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of
 mine. 50

6

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise
 My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;
 For I would not be dieted with praise,

A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!

Fade softly from my eyes, and be once
 more 55

In masque-like figures on the dreamy urn,
 Farewell! I yet have visions for the
 night,

And for the day faint visions there is store,
 Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my idlespngh, t,
 Into the clouds, and never more return'

1819. 1848.

Ode on a Grecian Urn

No one has succeeded in identifying the particu-
 lar Greek urn that Keats may have had in mind.
 The designs on it may well be of his own imag-
 inings.

I

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,

Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express

A flowery tale more sweetly than our
 rhyme:

What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy
 shape 5

Of deities or mortals, or of both,

In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?

What men or gods are these? What maidens
 loth?

What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?

What pipes and timbrels? What wild
 ecstasy? 10

2

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play
 on;

Not to the sensual¹ car, but, more endeared,
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not
 leave 15

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare,

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,

Though winning near the goal -- yet, do not
 grieve,

She cannot fade, though thou hast not
 thy bliss,

For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! 20

3

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu,

And, happy melodist, unwearied,

For ever piping songs for ever new.

More happy love! more happy, happy love!

For ever warm and still to be enjoyed, 26

For ever panting, and for ever young;

All breathing human passion far above,

That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and
 cloyed,

A burning forehead, and a parching
 tongue. 30

4

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,

And all her silken flanks with garlands
 drest?

What little town by river or sea shore, 35

Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore

¹ of the senses; sensuous.

Will silent be; and not a soul to tell 39
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

5

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede¹
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed,
 Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of
 thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral! 4s
 When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou
 say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty," — that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to
 know. 50

1819.

Ode to a Nightingale

I

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock² I had
 drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had
 sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
 But being too happy in thine happiness, —
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the
 trees,

In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

2

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been II
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt
 mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,³
 With beaded bubbles winking at the
 brim,

And purple-stained mouth;

¹ braid, embroidery. * poison.

³ The Muses' fountain on Helicon.

That I might drink, and leave the world
 unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest
 dim: 20

3

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never
 known,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other
 groan,

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray
 hairs, 25

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin,
 and dies,

Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,

Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous
 eyes,

Or new Love pine at them beyond to-
 morrow. 30

4

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,¹
 But on the viewless² wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and re-
 tards:

Already with thcc' tender is the night, 3s
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her
 throne,

Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes
 blown

Through verdurous glooms and winding
 mossy ways. 40

5

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the
 Boughs,

But, in embalmed³ darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglan-
 tine; 46

Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves,
 And mid-May's eldest child,

¹ leopards. ² invisible. ³ fragrant.

The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer
eves. 50

6

Darkling I listen, and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul
abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in
vain —
To thy high requiem become a sod. Co

7

Thou wast not born for death, immortal
Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown. 64
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick
for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn,¹
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the
foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

8

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole
self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75
Past the near meadows, over the still
stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried
deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: — Do I wake or
sleep? 80
May, 1819.

¹ Sec Ruth, II.

Ode on Melancholy

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous
wine,
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Prosperpine,¹
Make not your rosary of yew-berries, 5
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche,² nor the downy
owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the
soul. 10

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud,
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose, 15
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies,
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must
die; 21
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu, and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight 25
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose
strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine,
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung. 30
1819-

To Autumn

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch
eaves run;

¹ Queen of the lower regions.

² The soul, often symbolized by the butterfly.

To bend with apples the mossed cottage-
trees, 5
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel
shells
With a sweet kernel, to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-budded their clammy
cells. 11

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing
wind, 15
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while
thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined
flowers:
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost
keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook; 20
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by
hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where
are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music
too, —
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying
day, 25
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy
hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
mourn
Among the river willows,¹ borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or
dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly
bourn; 30
Hedge-crickets sing, and now with treble
soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the
skies.

1819.

¹ willows.
¹ country.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

Keats took the title of the poem, "The Beautiful Lady without Pity," from an old French poem by Alain Chaitie, which he probably knew through a translation that was once ascribed to Chaucer. The two poems are alike only in title.

"Ah, what can all thee, Knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

"Ah, what can ail thee, Knight-at-arms, 5
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

"I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew, 10
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful — a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15
And her eyes were wild.

"I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan. 20

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

"She found me roots of relish sweet, 25
And honey-wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed full sore, 30
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes —
With kisses four.

"And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed — ah! woe betide! —
The latest dream I ever dreamed 35
On the cold hill's side.

"I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried -- 'La belle Dame sans Mcrci
Hath thee in thrall!' 40

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

"And this is why I sojourn here 45
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing."
April-May, 1819.

Two Sonnets on Fame

1

Fame, like a wayward Girl, will still be coy
To those who woo her with too slavish
knees,

But makes surrender to some thoughtless Boy,
And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;
She is a Gipsy, will not speak to those 5
Who have not learned to be content with-
out her;

A Jilt, whose car was never whispered close,
Who thinks they scandal her who talk
about her,

A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,¹
Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar,² 10

Ye love-sick Bards, repay her scorn for scorn,
Ye Artists lovelorn, madmen that ye arc!
Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,
Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

2.

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too." — *Proverb*.
How fevered is the man, who cannot look 15
Upon his mortal days with temperate
blood,

Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,
And robs his fair name of its maidenhood;
It is as if the rose should pluck herself,
Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom, 20
As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,

¹ Gypsies were supposed to come from Egypt.

² One of Pharaoh's officers, whose wife loved Joseph.

Should darken her pure grot with muddy
gloom;
But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,
For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,
And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire, 25
The undisturbed lake has crystal space;
Why then should man, teasing the world
for grace,
Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscrce?
1819.

To Sleep

O soft cmbalmer of the still midnight,
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the
light,

Enshaded in forgetfulncss divine:

O soothest¹ Sleep' if so it please thee, close 5
In midst of this thine hymn my willing
eyes,

Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities.
Then save me, or the passed day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, — 10
Save me from curious Conscience, that still
lords

Its strength for darkness, burrowing Ifke a
mole;

Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
And seal the hushed Casket of my Soul.
1819.

Sonnet

To a Young Lady Who Sent Me a Laurel Crown

Fresh morning gusts have blown away all
fear

From my glad bosom, — now from gloom-
iness

I mount for ever — not an atom less
Than the proud laurel shall content my bier.
No! by the eternal stars! or why sit here 5
In the Sun's eye, and 'gainst my temples
press

Apollo's very leaves, woven to bless
By thy white fingers and thy spirit clear.
¹ most soothing.

Lo! who dares say, "Do this?" Who dares
 call down
 My will from its high purpose? Who say,
 "Stand," 10
 Or "Go?" This mighty moment I would
 frown
 On abject Caesars — not the stoutest hand
 Of mailed heroes should tear off my crown'
 Yet would I kneel and kiss thy gentle hand!
 1819?

Lamia

Keats himself added the following quotation
 from Burton as a note to the poem:

"Philostratus, in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii*,
 hath a memorable instance in this kind, which
 I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius' a young
 man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt
 Cenrhreas and Connth, met such a phantasm in
 the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which, taking
 him by the hand, carried him home to her house,
 in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a
 Phoenician by birth, and if he would tany with
 her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink
 such wine as never any drank, and no man should
 molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would
 live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to
 behold. The young man, a philosopher, other-
 wise, staid and discreet, able to moderate his pas-
 sions, though not this of love, tarred with her a
 while to his great content, and at last married her,
 to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came
 Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures,
 found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all
 her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described
 by Homer, no substance but mere illusions.
 When she saw herself descried, she wept, and de-
 sired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be
 moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all
 that was in it, vanished in an instant: many thou-
 sands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the
 midst of Greece." (Burton's *Anatomy of Melan-
 choly*, Part 3. Sect. 2. Memb. 1. Subs. 1.)

PART I

Upon a time, before the faery broods
 Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous
 woods,
 Before king Oberon's bright diadem,
 Sceptre, and mantle, clasped with dewy
 gem,
 Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns 5
 From rushes green, and brakes, and cow-
 slipped lawns,
 The ever-smitten Hermes empty left

His golden throne, bent warm on amorous
 theft:
 From high Olympus had he stolen light,
 On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the
 sight 10
 Of his great summoner, and made retreat
 Into a forest on the shores of Crete.
 For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt
 A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt,
 At whose white feet the languid Tritons
 poured 15
 Pearls, while on land they withered and
 adored.
 Fast by the springs where she to bathe was
 wont,
 And in those meads where sometime she might
 haunt,
 Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,
 Though Fancy's casket were unlocked to
 choose. 20
 Ah, what a world of love was at her feet'
 So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat
 Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,
 That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,
 Blushed into roses 'mid his golden hair, 2'
 Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders
 bare.

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he
 flew,
 Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,
 And wound with many a river to its head,
 To find where this sweet nymph prepared her
 secret bed: 30
 In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be
 found,
 And so he rested, on the lonely ground,
 Pensive, and full of painful jealousies
 Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.
 There as he stood, he heard a mournful
 voice, 35
 Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys
 All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake:
 "When from this wreathed tomb shall I
 awake!
 When move in a sweet body fit for life,
 And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife 40
 Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!"
 The God, dove-footed, glided silently
 Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his
 speed,

The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,
 Until he found a palpitating snake, 45
 Bright, and cirque-couchant¹ in a dusky
 brake.

She was a gordian² shape of dazzling hue,
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;
 Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard, 49
 Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barred;
 And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,
 Dissolved, or brighter shone, or inter-
 wrathcd

Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries —
 So rainbow-sided, touched with miseries,
 She seemed, at once, some penanced lady
 elf, 55

Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.
 Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire
 Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar'
 Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet'
 She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls
 complete: 60

And for her eyes: what could such eyes do
 there

But weep, and weep, that they were born so
 fair?

As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.
 Her throat was serpent, but the words she
 spake

Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's
 sake, 65

And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,
 Like a stooped falcon ere he takes his prey.

"Fair Hermes, crowned with feathers,
 fluttering light,

I had a splendid dream of thee last night:
 I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, 70
 Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,
 The only sad one; for thou didst not hear
 The soft, lute-fingered Muses chaunting clear,
 Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,
 Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long
 melodious moan. 75

I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,
 Break amorous through the clouds', as morn-
 ing breaks,

And, swiftly as a bright Phcebean¹ dart,
 Strike for the Cretan isle, and here thou art!
 Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the
 maid?" 80

Whereat the star of Lethe² not delayed
 His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:
 "Thou smooth-lipped serpent, surely high
 inspired!

Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy
 eyes,

Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise, 85
 Telling me only where my nymph is fled, —
 Where she doth breathe!" "Bright planet,
 thou hast said,"

Returned the snake, "but seal with oaths,
 fair God!"

"T swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent rod,³
 And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown!"
 Light flew his earnest words, among the
 blossoms blown. 91

Then thus again the brilliance feminine:
 "Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph of
 thine,

Free as the air, invisibly, she strays
 About these thornless wilds, her pleasant
 days 95

She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet
 Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet,
 From weary tendrils, and bowed branches
 green,

She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen:
 And by my power is her beauty veiled 100
 To keep it unaffronted, unassailed

By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,
 Of Satyrs, Fauns, and bleared Silenus⁴ sighs.
 Pale grew her immortality, for woe

Of all these lovers, and she grieved so 105
 I took compassion on her, bade her steep
 Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep
 Her loveliness invisible, yet free
 To wander as she loves, in liberty.

Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,
 If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my
 boon!" in

Then, once again, the charmed God began
 An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran
 Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.

¹ coiled.

³ like the Gordian Knot.

³ The tiara of the seven stars, given to Ariadne by Bacchus, which later became a constellation.

¹ of Apollo.

² i.e., Hermes, who guided souls to Hades.

³ See note, page 227.

⁴ Oldest and most jovial of the satyrs.

Ravished, she lifted her Circean head, 115
 Blushed a live damask, and swift-lipping said,
 "I was a woman, let me have once more
 A woman's shape, and charming as before.
 I love a youth of Corinth — O the bliss!
 Give me my woman's form, and place me
 where he is. 120
 Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,
 And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even
 now."

The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,
 She breathed upon his eyes, and swift was seen
 Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on
 the green. 125

It was no dream; or say a dream it was,
 Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly
 pass

Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.
 One warm, flushed moment, hovering, it
 might seem

Dashed by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he
 burned; 130

Then, lighting on the printless verdure,
 turned

To the swooned serpent, and with languid
 'arm,

Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean¹
 charm.

So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent
 Full of adoring tears and blandishment, i'
 And towards her stcpt: she, like a moon in
 wane,

Faded before him, cowered, nor could restrain
 Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower
 That faints into itself at evening hour:

But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140
 She felt the warmth, her eyelids opened bland,
 And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,
 Bloomed, and gave up her honey to the lees.
 Into the green-recessed woods they flew;
 Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do. 145

Left to herself, the serpent now began
 To change; her elfin blood in madness ran,
 Her mouth foamed, and the grass, therewith
 besprent,²
 Withered at dew so sweet and virulent;

¹ The staffer wand of Hrmifs (Mercury) was called a c. iduceus. "Lithe" suggests the snakes that entwined the staffer.
² sprinkled.

Her eyes in torture fixed, and anguish drear,
 Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all
 sear, 151

Flashed phosphor and sharp sparks, without
 one cooling tear.

The colors all inflamed throughout her train,
 She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet
 pain:

A deep volcanian yellow took the place 155
 Of all her milder-mooned body's grace;
 And, as the lava ravishes the mead,
 Spoil all her silver mail, and golden brede;
 Made gloom of all her frecklmg's, streaks and
 bars,

Eclipsed her crescents, and licked up her stars:
 So that, in moments few, she was undrest 161
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,
 And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.
 Still shone her crown, that vanished, also she
 Melted and disappeared as suddenly; 166
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,
 Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!" — Borne
 aloft

With the bright mists about the mountains
 hoar

These words dissolved: Crete's forests heard
 no more. 170

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,
 A full-born beauty new and exquisite?
 She fled into that valley they pass o'er
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas shore;
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills, 175
 The rugged founts of the Perxan rills,
 And of that other ridge whose barren back
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood,
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread, 181
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned
 To see herself escaped from so sore ills,
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius! — for she was a maid
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid, 186
 Or sighed, or blushed, or on spring-flowered
 lea

Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
 A virgin purest lipped, yet in the lore
 Of Jove deep learned to the red heart's core:

Not one hour old, yet of scintial brain 191
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbor pain;
 Define their pettish limits, and estrange
 Their points of contact, and swift counter-
 change,
 Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart
 Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art; 196
 As though in Cupid's college she had spent
 Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,¹
 And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so faerily 200
 By the wayside to linger, we shall see,
 But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse
 And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,
 Of all she list, strange or magnificent:
 How, ever, where she willed, her spirit went;
 Whether to faint Elysium, or where 206
 Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids
 fair
 Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly
 stair;
 Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine.
 Stretched out, at ease, beneath a glutinous
 pine; 210
 Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine²
 Mulciber's³ columns gleam in far piazzian
 line.
 And sometimes into cities she would send
 Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;
 And once, while among mortals dreaming
 thus, 215
 She saw the young Corinthian Lycius
 Charioting foremost in the envious race,
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,
 And fell into a swooning love of him. 219
 Now on the moth-time of that evening dim
 He would return that way, as well she knew,
 To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew
 The eastern soft wind, and his galley now
 Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow
 In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle 225
 Fresh anchored, whither he had been awhile
 To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there
 Waits with high marble doors for blood and
 incenserare. 228
 Jove heard his vows, and bettered his desire;
 For by some freakful chance he made retire
 From his companions, and set forth to walk,
 Perhaps grown weaned of their Corinth talk:

¹ blameless. ² palatial. ³ Vulcan's.

Over the solitary hills he fared,
 Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star ap-
 peared 234
 His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,
 In the calmed twilight of Platonic shades.¹
 Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near - -
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,
 Her silent sandals swept the mossy green,
 So neighbored to him, and yet so unseen 240
 She stood he passed, shut up in mysteries,
 His mind wrapped like his mantle, while her
 eyes
 Followed his steps, and her neck regal white
 Turned—syllabing thus, "Ah, Lycius bright,
 And will you leave me on the hills alone? 245
 Lycius, look back! and be some pity shown."
 He did; not with cold wonder fearmgly,
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice,
 For so delicious were the words she sung,
 It seemed he had loved them a whole summer
 long: 250
 And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,
 Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,
 And still the cup was full, — while he,
 afraid
 Lest she should banish ere his lip had paid
 Due adoration, thus began to adore, 255
 Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain
 so sure:
 "Leave thee alone! Look back! Ah, God-
 dess, see
 Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee!
 For pity do not this sad heart belie —
 Even as thou vanishest so shall I die. 260
 Stay! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay!
 To thy far wishes will thy streams obey:
 Stay! though the greenest woods be thy do-
 main,
 Alone they can drink up the morning rain:
 Though a descended Pleiad, will not one 265
 Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune
 Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?
 So sweetly to these ravished ears of mine
 Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst
 fade
 Thy memory will waste me to a shade: — 270
 For pity do not melt!" - - "If I should stay,"
 Said Lamia, "here, upon this floor of clay,

¹ A reference to Plato's belief that our world is not reality, but a shadow; and that reason is not the chief means to knowledge.

And pain my steps upon these flowers too
 rough, 273
 What canst thou say or do of charm enough
 To dull the nice remembrance of my home?
 Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam
 Over these hills and vales, where no joy is, —
 Empty of immortality and bliss!
 Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know
 That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280
 In human climes, and live: Alas! poor youth,
 What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe
 My essence? What serener palaces,
 Where I may all my many senses please,
 And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts
 appease? 285
 It cannot be — Adieu!" So said, she rose
 Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to
 lose
 The amorous promise of her lone complain,
 Swooned, murmuring of love, and pale with
 pain.
 The cruel lady, without any show 290
 Of sorrow for her tender favorite's woe,
 But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,
 With brighter eyes and slow amenity,
 Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh
 The life she had so tangled in her mesh: 295
 And as he from one trance was wakening
 Into another, she began to sing,
 Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every
 thing,
 A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,
 While, like held breath, the stars drew in
 their panting fires. 300
 And then she whispered in such trembling
 tone,
 As those who, safe together met alone
 For the first time through many anguished
 days,
 Use other speech than looks; bidding him
 raise
 His drooping head, and clear his soul of
 doubt, 305
 For that she was a woman, and without
 Any more subtle fluid in her veins
 Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same
 pains
 Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.
 And next she wondered how his eyes could
 miss 310
 Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,

She dwelt but half retired, and there had led
 Days happy as the gold coin could invent
 Without the aid of love; yet in content 314
 Till she saw him, as once she passed him by,
 Where 'gainst a column he lent thoughtfully
 At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heaped
 Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reaped
 Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before
 The Adonian feast;¹ whereof she saw no more,
 But wept alone those days, for why should
 she adore? 321

Lycius from death awoke into amaze,
 To sec her still, and singing so sweet lays,
 Then from amaxe into delight he fell
 To hear her whisper woman's lore so well, 325
 And every word she spake enticed him on
 To unperplexed delight and pleasure known.
 Let the mad poets say whate'er they please
 Of the sweets of Faeries, Pens, Goddesses,
 There is not such a treat among them all, 330
 Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,
 As a real woman, lineal indeed
 From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.
 Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,
 That Lycius could not love in half a fright, 335
 So threw the goddess off, and won his heart
 More pleasantly by playing woman's part,
 With no more awe than what her beauty gave,
 That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.
 Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340
 Marrying to every word a twmborn sigh;
 And last, pointing to Corinth, asked her
 sweet,

If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.
 The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness
 Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease
 To a few paces; not at all surmised 346
 By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised.
 They passed the city gates, he knew not how,
 So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350
 Throughout her palaces imperial,
 And all her populous streets and temples lewd,
 Muttered, like tempest in the distance brewed,
 To the wide-spread night above her towers.
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,

¹ In honor of Adonis, the beautiful boy beloved of Venus.

² According to legend, Pyrrha and her husband Deucalion, after the flood, scattered pebbles, from which the new race of man grew.

Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,
 Companioned or alone, while many a light
 Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,
 And threw their moving shadows on the
 walls, 359
 Or found them clustered in the corniced shade
 Of some arched temple door, or dusky colon-
 nade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,
 Her fingers he pressed hard, as one came near
 With curled gray beard, sharp eyes, and
 smooth bald crown, 361

Slow-stepped, and robed in philosophic gown:
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,
 While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said
 he,

"Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?
 Why does your tender palm dissolve in
 dew?" — 370

"I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who
 Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind
 His features: — Lycius! wherefore did you
 blind

Yourselves from his quick eyes?" Lycius re-
 plied,

"Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide 375
 And good instructor, but to-night he seems
 The ghost of folly haunting my sweet
 dreams."

While yet he spake they had arrived before
 A pillared porch, with lofty portal door,
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor
 glow 380

Reflected in the slabbed steps below,
 Mild as a star in water; for so new,
 And so unsullied was the marble's hue,
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine
 Could e'er have touched there. Sounds
 yEolian¹ 386

Breathed from the hinges, as the ample span
 Of the wide doors disclosed a place unknown
 Some time to any, but those two alone,
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same year
 Were seen about the markets: none knew
 where 391

They could inhabit; the most curious

¹ As if from an /Eolian harp, played by the wind.

Were foiled, who watched to trace them to
 their house:

And but the flutter-winged verse must tell,
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,
 Twould humor many a heart to leave them
 thus, 396

Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

PART n

Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
 Is — Love, forgive us! — cinders, ashes, dust;
 Love in a palace is perhaps at last
 More grievous torment than a hermit's fast: —
 That is a doubtful tale from faery land, 5
 Hard for the non-elect to understand.

Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,
 He might have given the moral a fresh frown,
 Or clenched it quite: but too short was their
 bliss

To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft
 voice hiss. 10

Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,
 Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,
 Hovered and buzzed his wings, with fearful
 roar,

Above the lintel of their chamber door,
 And down the passage cast a glow upon the
 floor. 15

For all this came a ruin: side by side
 They were enthroned, in the even tide,
 Upon a couch, near to a curtaining
 Whose airy texture, from a golden string,
 Floated into the room, and let appear 20
 Unveiled the summer heaven, blue and clear,
 Betwixt two marble shafts: — there they
 reposed,

Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids
 closed,

Saving a tithe which love still open kept,
 That they might see each other while they
 almost slept, 25

When from the slope side of a suburb hill,
 Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a
 thrill

Of trumpets — Lycius started — the sounds
 fled,

But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.
 For the first time, since first he harbored in 30
 That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,
 His spirit passed beyond its golden bourn

Into the noisy world almost forsworn.
 The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,
 Saw this with pain, so arguing a want 35
 Of something more, more than her empery
 Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh
 Because he mused beyond her, knowing well
 That but a moment's thought is passion's
 passing bell.

"Why do you sigh, fair creature?" whispered
 he: jo

"Why do you think?"³ⁿ returned she tenderly:
 "You have deserted me, — where am I now?
 Not in your heart while care weighs on your
 brow.

No, no, you have dismissed me; and I go
 From your breast houseless, ay, it must be
 so." 45

He answered, bending to her open eyes,
 Where he was mirrored small in paradise,
 "My silver planet, both of eve and morn!
 Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,
 While I am striving how to fill my heart 50
 With deeper crimson, and a double smart?
 How to entangle, trammel up and snare
 Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there
 Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?
 Ay, a sweet kiss — you see your mighty
 woes. 55
 My thoughts' shall I unveil them? Listen
 then!

What mortal hath a prize, that other men
 May be confounded and abashed withal,
 But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,
 And triumph, as in thec I should rejoice 60
 Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.
 Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,
 While through the thronged streets your
 bridal car
 Wheels round its dazzling spokes."—The
 lady's cheek

Trembled, she nothing said, but, pale and
 meek, 65

Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
 Of sorrows at his words, at last with pain
 Beseeching him, the while his hand she
 wrung,

To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,
 Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70
 Her wild and timid nature to his aim:
 Besides, for all his love, in self despite,
 Against his better self, he took delight

Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.
 His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue 75
 Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible
 In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.
 Fine was the mitigated fury, like
 Apollo's presence when in act to strike
 The serpent — Ha, the serpent¹ certes, she 80
 Was none. She burnt, she loved the tyranny,
 And, all subdued, consented to the hour
 When to the bridal he should lead his para-
 mour.

Whispering in midnight silence, said the
 youth,

"Sure some sweet name thou hast, though,
 by my truth, 85

I have not asked it, ever thinking thee
 Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,
 As still I do. Hast any mortal name,
 Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?
 Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90
 To share our marriage feast and nuptial
 mirth?"

"I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not
 one;

My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:
 My parents' bones are in their dusty urns
 Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,
 Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save
 me, 96

And I neglect the holy rite for thee.
 Even as you list invite your many guests;
 But if, as now it seems, your vision rests
 With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100
 Old Apollomus — from him keep me hid."
 Lycius, perplexed at words so blind and blank,
 Made close inquiry; from whose touch she
 shrank,

Feigning a sleep, and he to the dull shade
 Of deep sleep in a moment was betrayed. 105

It was the custom then to bring away
 The bride from home at blushing shut of day,
 Veiled, in a chariot, heralded along
 By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage
 song,

With other pageants: but this fair unknown
 Had not a friend So being left alone, 111
 (Lycius was gone to summon all his km)
 And knowing surely she could never win
 His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,
 She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress

The misery in fir magnificence. 116
 She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence
 Came, and who were her subtle servitors.
 About the halls, and to and from the doors,
 There was a noise of wings, till in short space
 The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-
 arched grace. 121

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone
 Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan
 Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might
 fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade 125
 Of palm and plantain,¹ met from either side,
 High in the midst, in honor of the bride:
 Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,
 From either side their stems branched one to
 one

All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130
 There ran a stream of lamps straight on from
 wall to wall,

So canopied, lay an untasted feast
 Teeming with odors. Lamia, regal drest,
 Silently paced about, and as she went,
 In pale contented sort of discontent, 135

Missioned her viewless servants to enrich
 The fretted splendor of each nook and niche.
 Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,
 Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst
 Forth creeping imagery of sligher trees, 140
 And with the larger wove in small intricacies.
 Approving all, she faded at self-will,
 And shut the chamber up, close, hushed and
 still,

Complete and ready for the revels rude,
 When dreadful guests would come to spoil her
 solitude. 145

The day appeared, and all the gossip rout.
 O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout
 The silent-blessing fate, warm cloistered
 hours,

And show to common eyes these secret
 bowers?

The herd approached; each guest, with busy
 brain, 150

Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,
 And entered marveling: for they knew the
 street,

Remembered it from childhood all complete

¹ A doppelgänger, in its shape and in its, fruit something like a banana tree.

Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen
 That royal porch, that high-built fair de-
 mesne,¹ 155

So in they hurried all, mazed, curious and
 keen:

Save one, who looked thereon with eye
 severe,

And with calm-planted steps walked in aus-
 tere,

'Twas Apollonius: something too he laughed,
 As though some knotty problem, that had
 daft 160

His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,
 And solve and melt. — 'twas just as he fore-
 saw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule
 His young disciple. " 'Tis no common rule,
 Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest 165
 To force himself upon you, and infest
 With an unbidden presence the bright throng
 Of younger friends, yet must I do this wrong,
 And you forgive me." Lycius blushed, and
 led

The old man through the inner doors broad-
 spread; 170

With reconciling words and courteous mien
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,
 Filled with pervading brilliance and perfume
 Before each lucid pannel fuming stood 175
 A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,
 Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,
 Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon the
 soft

Wool-woofed carpets fifty wreaths of smoke
 From fifty censers their light voyage took 180
 To the high roof, still mimicked as they rose
 Along the mirrored walls by twin-clouds
 odorous.

Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats insphered,
 High as the level of a man's breast reared
 On libbard's² paws, upheld the heavy gold 185
 Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told
 Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine
 Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.
 Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,
 Each shrining in the midst the image of a
 God. 190

¹ i.e., domain, estate.

³ leopard's.

When in an antechamber every guest
 Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure
 pressed,
 By mimst'ring slaves, upon his hands and
 feet,
 And fragrant oils with ceremony meet
 Poured on his hair, they all moved to the
 feast 195
 In white robes, and themselves in order placed
 Around the silken couches, wondering
 Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of
 wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,
 While fluent Greek a voweled undersong 200
 Kept up among the guests, discoursing low
 At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;
 But when the happy vintage touched their
 brains,
 Louder they talk, and louder come the strains
 Of powerful instruments: — the gorgeous
 dyes, 205
 The space, the splendor of the draperies,
 The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,
 Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,
 Now, when the wine has done its rosy
 deed,
 And every soul from human trammels freed,
 No more so strange, for merry wine, sweet
 wine, 2n
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too
 divine.
 Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;
 Flushed were their cheeks, and bright eyes
 double bright:
 Garlands of every green, and every scent 215
 From vales deflowered, or forest-trees branch-
 rent,
 In baskets of bright osicred gold were
 brought
 High as the handles heaped, to suit the
 thought
 Of every guest; that each, as he did please,
 Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillowed at
 his ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia? What for Lycius?
 What for the sage, old Apollonius?
 Upon her aching forehead be there hung
 The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue;¹
¹ a fern.

And for the youth, quick, let us strip for
 him 223
 The thyrsus,¹ that his watching eyes may
 swim
 Into forgetfulness; and, for the sage,
 Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage
 War on his temples. Do not all charms fly
 At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230
 There was an awful rainbow once in heaven
 We know her woof, her texture, she is given
 In the dull catalogue of common things.
 Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
 Conquer all mysteries by rule and line, 2'
 Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine -
 Unweave a rainbow, as it erewlnle made
 The tender-personcd Lamia melt into a shade-

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,
 Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240
 Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took
 Full brimmed, and opposite sent forth a look
 'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance
 From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,
 And pledge him. The bald-head philoso-
 pher 245
 Had fixed his eye, without a twinkle or stir
 Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,
 Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her
 sweet pride.
 Lycius then pressed her hand, with devout
 touch,
 As pale it lay upon the rosy couch: 250
 'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins,
 Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains
 Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.
 "Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost
 thou start?
 Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia
 answered not. 255
 He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot
 Owned they the lovelorn piteous appeal:
 More, more he gazed: his human senses reel
 Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs,
 There was no recognition in those orbs. 260
 "Lamia!" he cried — and no soft-toned reply.
 The many heard, and the loud revelry
 Grew hush, the stately music no more
 breathes;
 The myrtle sickened in a thousand wreaths.

¹ The wanc, entwined with ivy and vine-leaves,
 carried by Bacchus and his followers.

By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure
ceased; 265

A deadly silence step by step increased,
Until it seemed a horrid presence there,
And not a man hut felt the terror in his hair.
"Lamia!" he shrieked, and nothing but the
shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break. 270
"Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing again
In the bride's face, where now no azure vein
Wandered on fair-spaced temples; no soft
bloom

Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine
The deep-recessed vision: -- all was blight;
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly
white. 276

"Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruth-
less man!

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban
Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images
Here represent their shadowy presences, 280
May pierce them on the sudden with the
thorn

Of painful blindness, leaving thee forlorn,
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright
Of conscience, for their long offended might,
For all thine impious proud-heart sophis-
tries, 285

Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.
Corinthians! look upon that grey-beard
wretch!

Mark how, possessed, his lashless eyelids
stretch

Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!
My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290
"Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone
Gruff with contempt, which a death-nighing
moan

From Lycius answered, as heart-struck and
lost,

He sank supine beside the aching ghost.
"Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes
Still 2c;5

Relented not, nor moved, "from every ill
Of life have I preserved thee to this day,
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"

Then Lamia breathed death-breath; the
sophist's eye, 299

Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly,
Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging: she, as well
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,
Motioned him to be silent, vainly so,
He looked and looked again a level — No!

"A serpent!" echoed he, no sooner said, 305
Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same
night.

On the high couch he lay! — his friends came
round —

Supported him — no pulse, or breath they
found, 310

And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body
wound.

July -September, 1819.

Sonnet

This sonnet, probably the next to the last poem
that Keats wrote, was composed aboard the boat
carrying him to Italy, after the ship had stopped
for a short time on the coast of Dorsetshire.

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou
art —

Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,

Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task 5
Of pure ablution round earth's human
shores,

Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the
moors —

No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening
breast, 10

To feel forever its soft fall and swell,

Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

September, 1819.

Walter Savage Landor • 1775-1864

Walter Savage Landor, the son of a prominent physician, was born at Warwick in 1775. He was educated at Rugby, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. There he was known as a Jacobin because of his sympathy with the French Revolution, his admiration for Washington, and approval of the republican form of government. He was suspended from the university in consequence of shooting into a neighbor's shutters, in disapproval of a noisy party. His politics led to a quarrel with his father, and for some years he lived in retirement in Wales, reading and writing poetry. On his father's death in 1805, he inherited a large fortune. Three years later he went to Spain, as a volunteer in the revolt against Napoleon. After his return he bought Llanthony Abbey and made an ill advised marriage, which led to long continued quarrels with his wife and children. He went to Italy in 1814, and lived there for twenty years, chiefly in the villa at Fiesole, above Florence, said to be the scene of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. After another stay in England, he returned to Florence, where he was loved and honored by the Brownings and Swinburne, poets of a later generation. He died in Florence in 1864.

Landor was a contemporary of the Lake Poets, one of whom, Southey, was his intimate friend. He published a volume of poetry in 1793, and in 1798 his long poem *Gcbir*, a tale in blank verse of "a Spanish prince who invaded Egypt and died because of his love for the queen." This story of Gothic violence and sorcery was a sign of the pervading romantic spirit no less striking than *Lyrtcal Ballads*, published in the same year. A poetic tragedy, *Count Julian*, appeared in 1811, and other tragedies followed much later, based on Neapolitan history. Indeed, Landor in his early writings, as well as in his personal behavior, caricatured by Dickens as Mr. Boythorn in *Bleak House*, was a romantic. On the other hand, he had an absorbing interest in Greek and Roman life and character. His love of freedom and justice, his sympathy with revolution everywhere, whether in France or America, showed a disposition in keeping with his admiration for the patriots and tyrannicides of Greece and Rome. He cultivated a style of classical distinction. He translated *Gcbir* into Latin, and in connection with a book of Latin verse, the *Idyllia Heroica*, he published an essay advocating the use of that language for literary purposes — a proposal which has its romantic aspect. In fact, with Landor the Romantic Movement may be said to have absorbed the classical past.

Landor's best known verse is in the form of quatrains, distinguished for their extreme compression and precision. Although he worked much in drama, his power was not dramatic. He excelled rather in placing characters before the reader in a single significant moment, static and sculpturesque. An illustration is *A Ftesolan Idyl*. That he recognized this limitation is shown by a couplet in his own *Agamemnon and Iphigcnia*:

Far from the footstool of the tragic throne
I am tragedian in that scene alone.

It was therefore in accordance with his genius to revive the classical form of the dialogue. His most important work is the *Imaginary Conversations* which appeared in five successive volumes between 1824 and 1846. These number nearly one hundred and fifty, dealing with classical, medieval, and modern themes. They may be divided into "dramatic," those which are tense with action to follow, such as *Henry VIII* and *Anne Boleyn*, and the non-dramatic, which are mainly reflective. The latter contain Landor's own opinions, his

scorn of pretentious philosophy in the dialogue between Diogenes and Plato, his criticism of English politics in *General Lacy and Cura Merino*, his high, serious view of life in *Marcus Tullius and Quintus Cicero*. Extensions of the method of the *Conversations* are *The Pentameron*, a five-day discussion between Petrarch and Boccaccio, in which Lander's depreciation of Dante appears, and the *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*, on the legendary charge of deer-stealing. A further extension of the method may be seen in *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836), which consists of letters dealing with the life of Athens in the period of its glory.

In these works Landor made little effort to imitate the actual speech of his characters. He was concerned with ideas, and with presenting them in a style of lucidity, precision, and balance, which are themselves classical attributes. For the many who do not know the classics at first hand the reading of Landor's prose is especially valuable, as giving through historical imagination and elevation of style a true and noble rendering of the civilization of the past.

Landor's complete works are edited by T. Earle Welby (1927). A selection of the *Imaginary Conversations* with an introduction by Ernest de Selincourt is contained in *The World Classics* (1918). A selection of the poems in *The Golden Treasury* series was made by Sir Sidney Colvin (1890), who wrote the life of Landor in *The English Men of Letters* series (1881). There are essays by Edward Dowden (in *Studies in Literature*), A. C. Swinburne (in *Miscellanies*), and J. R. Lowell (in *Among My Books*).

Iphigenia and Agamemnon

The priest Gale has just ordered Agamemnon to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia in order that the Greeks may appease Artemis, and the fleet be allowed to leave Aulis for Troy. Note the dramatic force of the last line.

Iphigenia, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the King
Had gone away, took his right hand, and said,
"O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Cilchas heard 5
Distinctly what the Goddess spake. Old-age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew
My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood
While I was resting on her knee both arms
And hitting it to make her mind my words,
And looking in her face, and she in mine, n
Might he not also hear one word amiss,
Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus?"
The father placed his cheek upon her head,
And tears dropped down it, but the king of
men 15
Replied not. Then the maiden spake once
more.
"O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st thou
not
Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,

Listened to fondly, and awakened me
To hear my voice amid the voice of birds, 20
When it was inarticulate as theirs,
And the down deadened it within the nest?"
He moved her gently from him, silent still,
And this, and this alone, brought tears from
her, 24
Although she saw fate nearer: then with sighs,
"I thought to have laid down my hair¹ before
Benignant Artemis, and not have dimmed
Her polished altar with my virgin blood,
I thought to have selected the white flowers
To please the Nymphs, and to have asked of
each 30
By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
Whether, since both my parents willed the
change,
I might at Hymen's² feet bend my clipped
brow;
And (after those who mind us girls the most,)
Adore our own Athena,³ that she would 35
Regard me mildly with her azure eyes.
But father! to see you no more, and see
Your love, O father! go ere I am gone."

¹ A rite performed before marriage.

² God of marriage.

³ Chief goddess of Argos, Agamemnon's kingdom.

Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
 Bending his lofty head far over hers, 40
 And with dark depths of nature heaved and
 burst.

He turned away; not far, but silent still.
 She now first shuddered, for in him, so nigh,
 So long a silence seemed the approach of
 death, 44
 And like it. Once again she raised her voice.
 "O father! if the ships are now detained,
 And all your vows move not the Gods above,
 When the knife strikes me there will be one
 prayer

The less to them: and purer can there be
 Any, or more fervent than the daughter's
 prayer 50

For her dear father's safety and success?"
 A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.
 An aged man now entered, and without
 One word, stepped slowly on, and took the
 wrist 54

Of the pale maiden. She looked up and saw
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes
 Then turned she where her parent stood, and
 cried

"O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail."
 Pub. 1846.

Rose Aylmer

Landor wrote this poem after the death of the
 daughter of his friend, Baron Aylmer.

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
 Ah, what the form divine!

What every virtue, every grace!

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes 5

May weep, but never see,

A night of memories and of sighs

I consecrate to thee.

Pub. 1846.

A Fiesolan Idyl

Here, where precipitate Spring with one light
 bound

Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires,
 And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
 Soft airs that want the lute to play with 'em,

And softer sighs that know not what they
 want, s

Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,
 Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier
 ones

Of sights in Fiesole right above,
 While I was gazing a few paces off
 At what they seemed to show me with their
 nods, 10

Their frequent whispers and their pointing
 shoots,

A gentle maid came down the garden-steps
 And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.
 I heard the branches rustle, and stepped forth
 To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat, —
 Such I believed it must be. How could I 16
 Let beast o'erpower them? when hath wind or
 rain

Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,
 And I (however they might bluster round)
 Walkt off? "Twere most ungrateful; for sweet
 scents 20

Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory
 That would let drop without them her best
 stores.

They bring me talcs of youth and tones of love,
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way 25
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die
 (Whene'er their Genius bids their souls de-
 part)

Among their kindred in their native place.
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head 29
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
 And not reproacht me; the ever-sacred cup
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands
 Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.

I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
 More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit; 36

I saw the foot that, although half-erect
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her up
 To what she wanted. I held down a branch
 And gathered her some blossoms, since their
 hour 40

Was come, and bees had wounded them, and
 flies

Of harder wing were working their way
 through

And scattering them in fragments under foot.
 So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved;

Others, ere broken off, fell into shells, 45
 Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
 And like snow not seen through, by eye or

sun,

Yet every one her gown received from me
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not so,
 But so she praised them to reward my care.
 I said, "You find the largest." "This in-
 deed," 51
 Cried she, "is large and sweet." She held
 one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take
 She knew not, nor did I; but taking it
 Would best have solved (and this she felt)
 her doubt. 55

I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom, with a touch
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back
 The boon she tendered, and then, finding not
 The ribbon at her waist to fix it in, 61
 Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

1831; pub. 1846.

Various the Roads of Life

Various the roads of life, in one
 All terminate, one lonely way.

We go; and "Is he gone?"

Is all our best friends say.

Pub. 1846.

Why Do Our Joys Depart

Why do our joys depart
 For cares to seize the heart?

I know not. Nature says,
 Obey, and Man obeys.

I see, and know not why,
 Thorns live and roses die.

Pub. 1853.

On His Seventy-Fifth Birthday 45

I strove with none, for none was worth my
 strife,

Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
 I warmed both hands before the fire of life, 50
 It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

FROM Imaginary Conversations

1814-1853

Marcellus and Hannibal

1828

Marcellus was placed in command of the Roman army in the Second Punic War after the overwhelming defeat of the Romans at Cannae (216 B.C.). He defeated Hannibal several times thereafter, but was mortally wounded in a skirmish at Venusia, 208 B.C. Hannibal (247-183 B.C.) was the Carthaginian general, victor at Cannae.

Hannibal. Could a Numidian horseman ride no faster? Marcellus' ho! Marcellus! He moves not — he is dead. Did he not stir his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers — wide, forty paces — give him air — bring water — halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the rest, growing under the brushwood — unbrace his armor Loose the helmet first — his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed on me — they have rolled back again Who presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse? 25 It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no man mount him. Ha! ha' the Romans, too, sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

Gaulish Chieftain. Execrable thief! The 30 golden chain of our king under a beast's grinders! The vengeance of the gods hath overtaken the impure——

Hannibal. We will talk about vengeance when we have entered Rome, and about purity among the priests, if they will hear us. 35 Sound for the surgeon That arrow may be extracted from the side, deep as it is — The conqueror of Syracuse lies before me. — Send a vessel off to Carthage Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome — Marcellus, who stood 40 alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I would rejoice and cannot. — How awfully serene a countenance! Such as we hear are in the islands of the Blessed And how glorious a form and stature! Such too was theirs! They also once lay thus upon the earth wet with their blood — few other enter there. And what plain armor!

Gaulish Chieftain. My party slew him — indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the chain: it belongs to my king; the glory of Gaul

requires it. Never will she endure to see another take it.

Hannibal. My friend, the glory of Marcellus did not require him to wear it. When he suspended the arms of your brave king in the temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he battered down, the breast-plate he pierced with his sword — these he showed to the people and to the gods; hardly his wife and little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

Gaulish Chieftain. Hear me, O Hannibal!

Hannibal. What! when Marcellus lies before me? when his life may perhaps be recalled? when I may lead him in triumph to Carthage? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia, wait to obey me? Content thee! I will give thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

Gaulish Chieftain. For myself?

Hannibal. For thyself.

Gaulish Chieftain. And these rubies and emeralds, and that scarlet——

Hannibal. Yes, yes.

Gaulish Chieftain. O glorious Hannibal! unconquerable hero! O my happy country! to have such an ally and defender. I swear eternal gratitude — yes, gratitude, love, devotion, beyond eternity.

Hannibal. In all treaties we fix the time: I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy station. — I would see what the surgeon is about, and hear what he thinks. The life of Marcellus! the triumph of Hannibal! what else has the world in it? Only Rome and Carthage, these follow.

Marcellus. I must die then? The gods be praised! The commander of a Roman army is no captive.

Hannibal (to the Surgeon). Could not he bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

Surgeon. He expires that moment.

Marcellus. It pains me: extract it.

Hannibal. Marcellus, I see no expression of pain on your countenance, and never will I consent to hasten the death of an enemy in my power. Since your recovery is hopeless, you say truly you are no captive.

(To the Surgeon). Is there nothing, man, that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

Marcellus. Hannibal, give me thy hand — thou hast found it and brought it me, compassion.

(To the Surgeon.) Go, friend; others want thy aid, several fell around me.

Hannibal. Recommend to your country, O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconciliation and peace with me, informing the Senate of my superiority in force, and the impossibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let me take off this ring — try to write, to sign it, at least. Oh, what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

Marcellus. Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Minos say to me, "Marcellus, is this thy writing?"

Rome loses one man — she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

Hannibal. Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately, too, the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge: the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

Marcellus. Hannibal, thou art not dying.

Hannibal. What then? What mean you?

Marcellus. That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend. I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me: mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent, and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's?

I have spoken too much, let me rest, this mantle oppresses me.

Hannibal. I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

Marcellus. Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn off in desperation that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last, in thy prosperous (Heaven grant it may shine upon thee in some other country!) it will rejoice thee to protect them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

Hannibal. What?

Marcellus. This body.

Hannibal. Whither would you be lifted? Men are ready.

Marcellus. I meant not so. My strength is falling. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said — This body, when a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine, but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

Hannibal. You would ask something else I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

Marcellus. Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

Hannibal. Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

Marcellus. Hast thou any prisoners from my escort?

Hannibal. A few dying lie about — and let them lie — they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them — he appeared a Roman — a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away,

spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus. why think about them? or dost aught else disquiet your thoughts?

Marcellus. I have suppressed it long enough. My son — my beloved son!

Hannibal. Where is he? Can it be? Was he with you?

Marcellus. He would have shared my fate — and has not. Gods of my country! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surpassingly beneficent: I render you, for the last time, thanks.

Leofric and Godiva

18x9

Leofric, the Saxon earl, is riding into Coventry with his young bride, Godiva. The story is a famous one, told among others by Tennyson, The time is before the Nonnan Conquest.

Godiva. There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor, pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way, and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they, and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farmyard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness, or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odor.

Leofric. And now, Godiva, my darling,

thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry, or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

Godtva. Leofnc, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage. They, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

Leofnc. O light, laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray, and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straight-way to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

Godtva. I would do the same, O Leofnc! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish — what he can do like God?

Leofnc. How! what is it?

Godtva. I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

Leofnc. Unhappy! is that all?

Godiva. Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! -- Shall none enjoy them; not even we, my Leofnc? The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofnc, on your anger. These are not my words: they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness muttering them?

Leofnc. Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

Godtva. They have, then, drawn the sword against you? Indeed, I knew it not.

Leofnc. They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

Godtva. If they were starving, as they said they were——

Leofnc. Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

Godiva. Enough! O God! too much! too much! May you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofnc, Leofnc! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst, and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul, for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family!

Leofnc. We must hold solemn festivals.

Godiva. We must, indeed

Leofnc. Well, then?

Godiva. Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? — are maddening songs, and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-colored coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us, or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden, and do not throb with joy. But, Leofnc, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving, it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival, the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofnc, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven, and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here abundantly.

Leofnc. Thou art wild.

Godtva. I have, indeed, lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate, I dare not.

Leofric. We may think upon it.

Godiva. O never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; 5 us never, never afterward.

Leofnc. Here comes the Bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honor and rank among men are humbled by 10 this. Earl Godwin will hear of it. Up! up! the Bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward. Dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

Godiva. Never, no, never will I rise, O 15 *Leofric*, until you remit this most impious task — this tax on hard labor, on hard life.

Leofric. Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, 20 slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages. — Up' up' for shame! 25 They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir Bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

Godiva. My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

Leofnc. Sir Bishop! I could not think you 30 would have seen her in this plight Will I pardon? Yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets!

Godiva. O my dear, cruel *Leofric*, where is 35 the heart you gave me? It was not so: can mine have hardened it?

Bishop. Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale, and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee. 40

Godiva. Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my Lord's cruel word?

Bishop. I did, lady.

Godiva. Will you remember it, and pray 45 against it.

Bishop. Wilt thou forget it, daughter?

Godiva. I am not offended.

Bishop. Angel of peace and purity!

Godiva. But treasure it up in your heart: 50 deem it an incense, good only when it is con-

sumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And, now, what was it?

Bishop. Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

Godiva. Did he swear an oath?

Bishop. He sware by the holy rood.

Godiva. My Redeemer, thou hast heard it! save the city!

Leofnc. We are now upon the beginning of the pavement- these are the suburbs. Let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward; to-morrow we shall rest.

Godiva. No judgments, then, to-morrow, *Leofric*?

Leofnc. None: we will carouse.

Godiva. The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence, my prayers are heard, the heart of my beloved is now softened.

Leofnc. Ay, ay.

Godiva. Say, dearest *Leofric*, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

Leofnc. I have sworn. Beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime

Godiva. I have blushed too, *Leofric*, and was not rash nor obdurate.

Leofnc. But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing: there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair. Take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it minglcth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown of wonderment. — I will say it — now, then, for worse — I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and living eyes, before the 50 people.

Godiva. To-morrow you shall kiss me, and

they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

Leoftrc. I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

Godiva (to herself). God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O *Leofnc!* could my name be forgotten, and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach; and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me? Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah! when will the morning come? Ah! when will the noon be over?

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always much interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the square pool at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence, he began to scoff at the subject; and, on his reaching the last line, his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entertained and implored my friend *not to tell the tale*, so heart-strickenly and desperately was I shamed. The verses are these, if any one else should wish another laugh at me:

In every hour, in every mood,
O lady, it is sweet and good
To bathe the soul in prayer;
And, at the close of such a day,
When we have ceased to bless and pray,
To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place! (Landor.)

Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

1814

Henry VIII divorced Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn in 1533. Three years later he divorced her on the grounds of adultery and incest. This conversation is supposed to take place in 1536 before the trial of the Queen.

Henry. Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. (*Sprinkling water over her.*) Hast had water enough upon thee? Take that, then: art thyself again?

Anne. Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth? Do I behold my beloved lord — in peace — and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss? it was his voice. I cannot see him: why cannot I? Oh why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed?

Henry. Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that. Nanny, thou art a sweet slut. Thou groanest, wench: art in labor? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

Anne. God preserve your Highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy, I fell asleep while I was reading. I did not know of your presence at first; and, when I did, I could not speak. I strove for utterance: I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

Henry. My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! Thou wert reading, and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and — what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

Anne. I had no other fruit to offer your Highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? We shall have fresh next month.

Henry. Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

Anne. Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried. I am weak, and liable to swoons.

Henry. Thou hast, however, thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression; but, now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy?

Anne. The Father is yours and mine — He who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

Henry. Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive, there was no baptism.

Anne. I thought only of our loss: my senses are confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often

fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

Henry. No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

Anne. Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

Henry. Well, since thou really and truly sleepest, what didst dream of?

Anne. I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

Henry. Ha! false one — never two sentences of truth together! But come, what didst think about, asleep or awake?

Anne. I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto Him.

Henry. And nothing more?

Anne. That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing: the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

Henry. Vexatious little devil! She says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness. Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery?

Anne. If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon; but, if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

Henry. Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton; hast thou not?

Anne. He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your Highness.

Henry. And Brereton and Norris — what have they taught thee?

Anne. They are your servants, and trusty ones.

Henry. Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee?

Anne. Yes; and —

Henry. What didst thou?

Anne. I defied him.

Henry. Is that all?

Anne. I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then, indeed, I should have incurred more justly the re-

proaches of your Highness: I should have smiled.

Henry. We have proofs abundant: the fellows shall one and all confront thee. — Ay, clap thy hands and kiss thy sleeve, harlot!

Anne. Oh, that so great a favor is vouchsafed me! My honor is secure, my husband will be happy again; he will see my innocence.

Henry. Give me now an account of the moneys thou hast received from me within these nine months. I want them not back: they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking, what hast done with it, wanton?

Anne. I have regularly placed it out to interest.

Henry. Where? I demand of thee.

Anne. Among the needy and ailing. My Lord Archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly. I also had a copy myself; those who took away my papers may easily find it, for there are few others, and they lie open.

Henry. Think on my munificence to thee; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost?

Anne. I do, indeed.

Henry. I never thought thee ambitious; but thy vices creep out one by one.

Anne. I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one; nor that my innocence is called in question by those who never knew me, but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation check them when they speak about me, and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion is my accuser.

Henry. Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

Anne. This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness — not, perchance, doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honored and served faith-

fully; that, indeed, I did not look for nor think of; but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone, but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband! it is so heavenly a thing——

Henry. To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

Anne. I said not so; but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping, and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows

Henry. I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain, it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read anything but Bible and history — the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behooves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink — of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt — greatly more doth it behoove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will, we must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

Anne. O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing, indeed, that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive any one? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

Henry. Resemble God perfectly and easily! Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

Anne. No, Henry, when his creatures talk

thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good, they love him, and, when they love him, they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and King! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous, on this, surely, we must think alike.

Henry. And what, then? Speak out; again I command thee, speak plainly! thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? Must I waft?

Anne. If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business: should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding — do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

Henry. What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

Anne. My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your Highness may determine.

Henry. Yet thou appearest hale and resolute and (they tell me) smirkest and snulest to everybody.

Anne. The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it, and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart, indeed, is now sustained strangely, it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! How gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not Queen of England.

Henry. Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

Anne. God be praised!

Henry. Learned saint! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver, of them.

Anne. Which may it be, my liege?

Henry. Which may it be? Pestilence!
marvel that the walls of this tower do not
crack around thee at such impiety.

Anne. I would be instructed by the wisest
of theologians such is your Highness.

Henry. Arc the sins of the body, foul
as they arc, comparable to those of the
soul?

Anne. When they are united, they must be
worse.

Henry. Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own
breast against the sword. God hath deprived
thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I
must hear more: proceed, I charge thee.

Anne. An aptitude to believe one thing
rather than another, from ignorance or weak-
ness, or from the more persuasive manner of
the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from
the strong impression of a particular text at a
particular time, and various things beside,
may influence and decide our opinion, and
the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will
fall gently on human fallibility.

Henry. Opinion in matters of faith! rare
wisdom! rare religion! Troth, Anne! thou
hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly
and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the
holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much
longer. Nay, do not start; I tap it for the last
time, my sweetest. If the Church permitted
it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long jour-
ney with the eucharist between thy teeth,
however loath.

Anne. Love your Elizabeth, my honored
lord, and God bless you! She will soon for-
get to call me. Do not chide her: think how
young she is.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it
would comfort my heart — or break it.

Bossuet and the Duchess de Fontanges

1818

This conversation is supposed to occur about
1680. The Duchess de Fontanges was a mistress
of Louis XIV; Landon quotes a remark of the
Abbe du Choisy, that she was *belle comme un ange*,
rnais sotte (omne un fmnur ("beautiful as an angel,
but stupid as a post" — literally, basket). Jacques
Benigne Bossuet (1627-1704) was Bishop of Meaux,
and a famous pulpit orator.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, it is the King's
desire that I compliment you on the elevation
you have attained.

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I know very
well what you mean. His Majesty is kind
and polite to everybody. The last thing he
said to me was, "Angehque! do not forget to
compliment Monseigneur the Bishop on the
dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner
to the Dauphness. I desired the appoint-
ment for him only that he might be of rank
sufficient to confess you, now you are Duchess.
Let him be your confessor, my little girl.
He has fine manners."

Bossuet. I dare not presume to ask you,
mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply
to the condescension of our royal master.

Fontanges. Oh! yes, you may! I told him
I was almost sure I should be ashamed of
confessing such naughty things to a person
of high rank, who writes like an angel.

Bossuet. The observation was inspired,
mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

Fontanges. You are so agreeable a man,
monseigneur, I will confess to you directly, if
you like.

Bossuet. Have you brought yourself to a
proper frame of mind, young lady?

Fontanges. What is that?

Bossuet. Do you hate sin?

Fontanges. Very much.

Bossuet. Are you resolved to leave it off?

Fontanges. I have left it off entirely since
the King began to love me. I have never said
a spiteful word of anybody since.

Bossuet. In your opinion, mademoiselle,
are there no other sins than malice?

Fontanges. I never stole anything; I never
committed adultery, I never coveted my neigh-
bor's wife; I never killed any person, though
several have told me they should die for me.

Bossuet. Vain, idle talk! Did you listen to it?

Fontanges. Indeed I did, with both ears,
it seemed so funny.

Bossuet. You have something to answer
for, then.

Fontanges. No, indeed, I have not, monsei-
gneur. I have asked many times after them and
found they were all alive, which mortified me.

Bossuet. So, then! you would really have
them die for you?

Fontanges. Oh, no, no' but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest, or told me fibs, for, if they told me libs I would never trust them again. I do not care about them, for the King told me I was only to mind *him*. 5

Boswet. Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

Fontanges. I am sure he has mine; so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber, by degrees I cared little about the matter; and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is? 15

Bossuet. We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

Fontanger. A good deal of it; all Picardy, for example, and all Solognc; nothing is uglier - and, oh, my life! What frightful men and women! 20

Bossuet. I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the Devil

Fontanges. Who does not hate the Devil? 25 If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so. — I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of. 30

Bossuet. Mademoiselle Marie-Angelique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchess de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

Fontanges. Myself! does any one hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst 35 thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

Bossuet. To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies, if we would save our souls.

Fontanges. That is hard; how can I do it? 40 I see nothing so detestable in mine! Do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me; but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I? 45 Beside, it was he who made the King to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while his Majesty loves me, and 50 calls me his Angelique They make people

more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold; on the contrary, she told me what a fine color and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the King gave you your choice?

Bossuet. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

Fontanges. I am in earnest, as you see.

Bossuet. Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms, you will be commended for excellences which do not belong to you, and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it, you are unhappy; if you accept it, you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

Fontanges. There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly: it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned — what was it? my intellect. 30 He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel; worth (let me whisper it in your ear — do I Jean too hard?) a thousand Montespans.¹ But his Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable!* (what is that?) and that he adored me, holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

Bossuet. I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

Fontanges. You may do anything with me but convert me, you must not do that; I am Catholic born. M. de Turenne² and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics; you did

¹ The Marquise de Montcspan (1641-1707) was the mistress of Louis XIV, to whom she bore eight children.

² Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne (1611-75), grandson of the Prince of Orange, entered the French service, and became the most brilliant of the generals of Louis XIV. He was converted in 1668.

right there. The King told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly — did not you? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the Litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when every one is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so, for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

Bossuet. It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

Fontanges. I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turcne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

Bossuet. To what do you refer, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. That you have overcome Quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that?

Bossuet. By the grace of God.

Fontanges. Yes, indeed, but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

Eos suet. It has appeared among us but lately.

Fontanges. Oh, dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

Bossuet. Really! I never heard so.

Fontanges. I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

Bossuet. In what, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. In Quietism;¹ that is, when I fell

asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fenelon¹ should incline to it, as they say he does.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

Fontanges. Is not then M. de Fenelon thought a very pious and learned person?

Bofmet. And justly.

Fontanges. I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The King says there are many such about his court, but I never saw them nor heard of them before. The Marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold, and I got through, I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto, I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays de d'Auns*, where the King has promised him a famous *bcretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature: he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honor of absolving you, it would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labors.

Fontanges. You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The King assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

Bossuet. That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven —

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I always did so — every time but once. You quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my lord, you compose such pretty funeral sermons, I hope I shall

¹ The opinion of Molinos on Mysticism and Quietism had begun to spread abroad: but Fenelon, who had acquired already a very high celebrity for eloquence, had not yet written on the subject. We may well suppose that Bossuet was among the earliest assailants of a system which he afterwards attacked so vehemently. The stormier superstition swept away the more vapory. (Landor.)

¹ Francois de Salignac de la Mothe-Fenelon (1651-1715), Archbishop of Cambrai, author of *TiUmaque*. The rival of Bossuet.

have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

Bossuet. Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence!¹ May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age; you are a child.

Fontanges. Oh, no! I am seventeen.

Bossuet. I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been. There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

Fontanges. I never minded them: I like peaches better, and one day is quite enough for me

Bossuet. We say that our days are few, and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angelique, we have but one. the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it, the next moment may strike it off from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broke and fall between us.² The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and color, without admirer, friend,

¹ Bossuet was in his fifty-fourth year, Mile, de Fontanges died in child-bed the year following; he survived her twenty-three. (Landor)

² Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct towards Fénélon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough, who said to the Archbishop that, if he was sorry he had not taken Ombay, it was chiefly because he lost for a tune the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward. (Landor.)

companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

Fontanges. O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck; take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

Bossuet. Never mind it: leave it there; I pray you, I implore you, madame!

Fontanges. Why do you rise? Why do you run? Why not let me? I am nimbler. So your ring fell from your hand, my Lord Bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

Bossuet. Madame is too condescending; had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shriveled, the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition; a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

Fontanges. It pleases me vastly; I admire rubies. I will ask the King for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes in from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him; but that is impossible, you know, for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself, he said but yesterday, "Such a sweet creature is worth a world," and no actor on the stage was more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch; and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him, he looks so close at things.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

Fontanges. Well, I think so too, though I

did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

The Empress Catharine and Princess Dashkof

1829

Catharine the Great (1725-96), who married the Czar Peter III in 1745, and procured his deposition shortly after his accession. Czar Peter III was assassinated on July 17, 1762. Lander notes. "It is unnecessary to inform the generality of readers that Catharine was not present at the murder of her husband . . . our business is character."

Catharine Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes, we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes, hark! they heard me they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed, indeed, is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

Dashkof I hear nothing.

Catharine. My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come. — Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There! — there again! The drops are now like lead! every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress. — How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! the creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

Dashkof Oh, heavens!

Catharine. Are you afraid?

Dashkof. There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

Catharine. You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

Dashkof I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of

these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife! — I saw not into my heart, I looked not into it, and it chastises me.

Catharine. Dashkof, are you then really unwell?

Dashkof. What will Russia, what will Europe, say?

Catharine. Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence, but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

Dashkof God grant —

Catharine I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant, forsooth! He has granted all we wanted from him at present — the safe removal of this odious Peter.

Dashkof. Yet Peter loved you; and even the worst husband must leave, surely, the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort, at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

Catharine Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the Stoic school? Arc not they, rather, the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamast¹ from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

Dashkof It is not his death that shocks me.

Catharine. I understand you. beside, you said as much before.

Dashkof. I fear for your renown.

Catharine And for your own good name — ay, Dashkof!

Dashkof He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

Catharine. You hated him.

¹ maker of a marriage-ode.

Dashkof. Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

Catharine. Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary, that my own life was in danger; that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms; and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

Dashkof. Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped

Catharine. She shall be both, God willing.

Dashkof. The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

Catharine. The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine?

Dashkof. I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment, particularly, if any one in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honor, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all: that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

Catharine. True; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power, but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

Dashkof. Truly, then, may I congratulate

you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

Catharine. I know and feel it.

Dashkof. I wish you always may.

Catharine. I doubt not the stability of power: I can make constant both fortune and love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit: she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend, even the autocracy.

Dashkof. Indeed I do, and most heartily.

Catharine. How!

Dashkof. I know very well what those intended who first composed the word; but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself -- of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

Catharine. The members of the council board did not sit *at it*, but *upon it*, and their tactics were performed crosslegged. What partisans arc to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

Dashkof. Peter was not insensible to glory; few men arc. but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardor to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated; but it is beyond the power of fortune, or even of genius, to exalt us above the dust.

Catharine. Dashkof, you are a sensible, sweet creature, but rather too romantic on principle, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat*. Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it in one another, in women it renders them what they would fain call scornful (vain assumption of high prerogative!), and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation,

which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis; a watch-chain, Venus, a ring, Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

Dashkof. He was Frederick's.

Catharine. I shall be the *Pucelle*¹ of Russia. 10
No! I had forgotten; he has treated her scandalously.

Dashkof. Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation; who 15
crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV, and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled, with every indignity and indecency, the woman who rescued France, and who alone, of all that 20
ever led the armies of that kingdom, made its conquerors — the English — tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them 25
back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted; they would not fight against 30
God.

Catharine. Fools and bigots!

Dashkof. The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The Maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: 35
her life asserted it; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr, the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and 40
savior of her country.

Cathanne. Be it so; but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent, troublesome qualms.

Dashkof. If Deism had been prevalent in 45
Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity; and if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one: for

he gives no one hope. He may amuse dullness itself must be amused, indeed, by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

Catharine. While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble, 5
This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

Dashkof. Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

Catharine. I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney.¹ I detest him as 15
much as you do, but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really, then, fancy that people care for truth! Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is 20
nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? Or, rather, can you mention to me any one who has not been in raptures when he could communicate 25
such glad tidings? The gouticest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men in general are 30
so weak in truth that they are obliged to put their bravery under it to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many degrees less courageous than a mastiff-bitch 35
in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof, do not 40
begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I cannot always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do; none shall refuse me at ninety — Paphos or Tobolsk.² 45

Have not you a song for me?

Dashkof. German or Russian?

Catharine. Neither, neither. Some fright-

¹ Voltaire's place of residence.

¹ Voltaire had written the Epic of *La Pucelle* (the Maid of Orleans).

³ They may choose the home of Venus or exile in Siberia.

ful word might drop — might remind me — no, nothing shall remind me. French, rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

Dashkof. It is rather in streaks and mottles; 5
excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

Catharine. I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. Was it so strong? What 10
am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then*; and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite 15
of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet, and 20
we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! — how stupid and tiresome. I wish all things 25
of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth: I am courageous, but I am 30

full of weaknesses. I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and — to a friend I may say it — the most amiable part of women. Ho, ho! at last you smile: now your thoughts upon that.

Dashkof. I have heard fifty men swear it.

Catharine. They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talking of the sad necessity. — Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *profit*, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be despatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle, in short, at the fire of the sentry. But not now — another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me, then, give it me. I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.

Charles Lamb • 1775-1834

Charles Lamb was born in London, February 10, 1775. His father was clerk to Samuel Salt, a barrister, who had his rooms in the Inner Temple where the Lamb family lived. Charles was sent to Christ's Hospital, where Coleridge was also a pupil. At the age of fifteen he obtained a position in the South Sea House, and later at the East India House. There was a hereditary taint of insanity in the family; Charles was confined for a few weeks in a madhouse, and later his sister Mary in a fit of madness killed her mother and wounded her father. Against this tragic background, Lamb developed a humorous appreciation of the world and of himself, which seems to be what a psychoanalyst would call a kind of defense mechanism. He and Mary lived together in various lodgings, which became places of resort for Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey on their visits to London, and for Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and Keats, of the "Cockney School." Hazlitt has left us a picture of Lamb as host in his essay: "Of Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen." After his retirement from the India House in 1825, he and his sister lived in the suburbs of Enfield and Edmonton until his death in 1834.

Lamb was drawn to literature partly through his association with literary men. He began with poetry, contributing four sonnets to Coleridge's volume in 1796. Two years later he published a story, *Rosamund Gray*. Then he turned to drama, *John Woodvile*, a tragedy, never acted, and *Mr II—*, a farce which was hissed off the stage. At last he found his true form in the personal essays, which over the pen name of Elia, began to appear in *The London Magazine* in 1810. A collection of twenty-five was published in 1813, followed ten years later by *The Last Essays of Elia*. Lamb also took part in the chief enterprise of the romantic critics, the recovery of the half-forgotten writers of the seventeenth century. His *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (1808) is made up of short selections, with incisive impressionistic comment. His *Tales from Shakespeare*, written with Mary Lamb, is still a classic among children's books.

Lamb was a romanticist of a different type from that of the romantic poets. He was denied the escape in nature of the Lake Poets, or in the romantic exile of Byron and Shelley. It was perhaps with something of bravado that he wrote, quite in the temper of Dr. Johnson, to his friend, Manning: "London, whose dirtiest drab-frequented alley, and her lowest-bowing tradesman, I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O' her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardware men, pasury-cooks, St. Paul's churchyard, Charing Cross, with the man upon a black horse. . . . All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least, I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal — a mind that loves to be at home in crowds."

But in this acceptance of enforced surroundings there is evidence of the romantic temperament. He realized, as did Stevenson, that in the real world we are in the midst of romance. He was always on the lookout for the strange and extraordinary, even in the trivial and matter-of-fact. His preoccupation was to avoid the commonplace. Both in literature and in life he sought the subtle, elusive, suggestive. His essay on *Imperfect Sympathies* is highly characteristic, for him the obvious was the odious. His humor, moreover, was not the dry wit of classical satirists, who look at the follies and faults of men and women from outside, objectively. Lamb saw the world as a medley of inconsistencies, of which he himself was not the least amusing. As might be expected, he proved to be one of the best letter-writers in English.

The Errayr of Elia extended the range of the English essay. In contrast to Bacon's sententious advice on the conduct of life, Addison's social comment, and Dr. Johnson's ponderous moralizing, Lamb wrote with no high purpose. He chose his subject matter from his own experience, his surroundings, and his friends, all touched with imagination. His approach is always personal, and the gradual self-revelation is a source of constant delight. He learned much in method as well as in style from the subjective essayists of the early seventeenth century. He is of the school of writers who give themselves freely to their readers in personal intercourse, Goldsmith and Sterne are his predecessors, Thackeray and Stevenson his followers. More than any other writer in English literature he has communicated to future generations his personal quality, his tastes and his prejudices, his whimsical humor, which delights in the oddities of people and the incongruities of events, his tenderness toward suffering — all those traits which made him lovable to his friends are preserved to make him beloved of his readers.

The works of Charles and Mary Lamb, edited by H. V. Lucas, in seven volumes (1912), are supplemented by *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb* edited by Percy Fitzgerald, 6 volumes (1914). *The Essays of Elia*, *Tales from Shakespeare*, and the *Letters*, two volumes,

arc in Everyman's Library. An excellent life is that by Alfred Amger in the English Men of Letters series (1882.). A fuller biography is that by E. V. Lucas (1921). An essay by Walter Pater is included in *Appreciations*, and one by Augustin Birrel in *Obiter Dicta*.

The Old Familiar Faces

Where are they gone, the old familiar faces?

I had a mother, but she died, and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors¹ —
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-
days — 6
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom
cronies —
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces. 10

I loved a love once,² fairest among women.
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see
her —
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend,³ a kinder friend has no man.
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly, 15
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my
childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom/ thou more than a
brother! 20
Why wert not thou born in my father's
dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

For some they have died, and some they have
left me,

Lamb's mother was killed by his sister Mary during a fit of insanity (1796). ² Ann Simmons.

³ Charles Lloyd, with whom Lamb published in 1798 a volume, *Blank Verse*, in which the present poem appeared.

⁴ Coleridge, with whom Lamb published some verses in 1796.

*And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces. 25*
1798.

Essays of Elia

Chrnt's Hospital Five and Thirty Yeart Ago

1810

Published in the *London Magazine*, November, 1820, with the signature "Klia." The opening sentence leads to an earlier essay on the subject published under Lamb's name. Christ's Hospital was an endowed school for poor boys which Lamb and Coleridge entered at the same time, at the ages of seven and ten respectively. It is the situation of Coleridge, far from home and friends, which Lamb in part assumes.

In Mr Lamb's *Works*, published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,¹ such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his, and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L.² at school, and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand, and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf — our *crug* — moistened with attenuated small

¹ *Recollections of Christ's Hospital*.

² Lamb's family lived near the school, and could bring him delicacies.

beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant — (we had three banyan¹ to four meat days in the week) — was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*²) with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth — our scanty mutton crags on Fridays — and rather more savory, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) — he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bnnnger; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it, and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew

tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the livelong day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes. — How merrily we would sally forth into the fields, and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams, getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them! — How faint and languid, finally we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement, or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to

¹ A name given to days on which sailors received no allowance of meat.

² horse flesh.

the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower — to whose levee, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor¹ (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. — The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and under the crudest penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——,² who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered——at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts,——some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the

leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion,¹ could he have kept his own counsel — but, foohsher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below, and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield, but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practiced in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verno, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies, and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled, and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation.——suffered under the imputation.

——'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh.

¹ Samuel Salt, the employer under whose roof John Lamb and his family lived.

² Hodges. (Name supplied by Lamb.)

¹ The Emperor Caligula appointed a horse as chief consul.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bedside. None saw when he ate them. It was rumored that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spoke to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his schoolfellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of —, an honest couple come to decay, — whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young

stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! — The governors on this occasion, much to their honor, voted a present relief to the family of —, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to —, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. — I had left school then, but I well remember —. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad, and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. — As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little square, Bedlam cells,¹ where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him*; — or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude: — and here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.² This was the penalty for the second

¹ Bedlam was a corruption of Bethlehem. The hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem was used as an asylum for the insane.

² One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with. — This fancy

offence. — Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fe*,¹ arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late, "watchet weeds"² carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante³ had seized upon him. In this disfigurement he was brought into the hall (L.'s *favonte state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his schoolfellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion, and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors, two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia*;⁴ not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The licitor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made

of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saving the reverence due to holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue. (Lamb.) John Howard (1726-90), was active in prison reform.

¹ act of faith; the occasion on which heretics were burned at the stake.

² blue uniforms.

³ Cf. *Inferno*, cantos xxvIII-xxx.

⁴ extreme punishments.

over, in his *San Benito*,¹ to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod, and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will — holding it "like a dancer." It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority, and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often stayed away whole days from us, and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greece or haughty Rome," that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Ad-

¹ Garments of the same cut as those woven by the monks of St. Benedict, worn by victims of an *auto da fe*,

ventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue-Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operation, making little sundials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradhs*; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game "French and English," and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke¹ chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levee, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phasdrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite,² we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us

to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle,¹ while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*,² and caught glances of Tartarus. B was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.³ — He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex'* — or at the *trstts septenas in vultu*,⁵ or *inspicere in patinas*,⁶ of Terence — thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had vis⁷ enough to move a Roman muscle. — He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh-powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discolored, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. — J. B. had a heavy hand. I have

¹ Cf. Judges vi, 36-38.

² The howling damned souls in Dante's *Inferno*. See *xxix*, 46-51.

³ In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of *Vertumnus and Pomona*, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. — B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*. (Lamb.)

⁴ Horace, *Satires*, I, 7, 35.

⁵ sad severity of countenance. (Terence, *Andna*, v, ii, 16.)

⁶ to look into the platter. (Terence, *Adelphi*, III, iii, 74.)

power.

¹ Both were exponents of a natural system of education.

² Pythagoras enjoined upon his pupils silence in regard to their own conclusions until they had listened to his lectures for five years.

known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?"—Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, Sirrah" (his favorite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you," — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context), drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell — "*and I WILL too*" — In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor*¹ was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W——having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *be dtd not know that the thing had been forewarned*. This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the oral or declaratory struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the *Country Spectator* doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C. — when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed —

¹ raging madness.

"Poor J. B.! — may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

5 Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. — First Grecian¹ of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——.²
10 What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors! — You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it
15 convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces³ also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the
25 *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate! — Co-Grecian with S. was Th——,⁴ who has since executed Arith ability various diplomatic functions at
30 the Northern Courts. Th——was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. — Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He
35 has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. — M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas*⁵ (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility
40 quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker⁶ might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the

¹ Grecians were scholars recommended each year to Cambridge University.

² Trollope, who succeeded Boyer as head master.

³ The bundle of rods carried by the Roman lictors, or guards. The word is the root of Fascism.

⁴ Thornton. ⁵ newness of the rule.

⁶ John Jewel (1522-71), Bishop of Salisbury, and Richard Hooker (1553-1600), a celebrated divine, author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.

church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming. — Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems: a pale, studious Grecian. — Then followed poor S——,^x ill-fated M——!² of these the Muse is silent,

Finding some of Edward's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee — the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*),³ to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus⁴ (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar — while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy*! Many were the "wit-combats" (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——,⁵ "which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."⁶

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou

¹ Scott died in Bedlam. (Lamb.)

² Maunde, dismissed school. (Lamb.)

³ Giovanni Pico delle Mirandola (1463-94), Italian humanist.

⁴ Jamblichus and Plotinus were neo-Platonists of the fourth and third centuries respectively.

⁵ Chailrs Valentine Le Gnce (1773-1858), clergyman and minor poet, who contributed reminiscences of Coleridge and Lamb.

⁶ From Fuller's accounts of the combats of wit between Jonson and Shakespeare.

wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Ntreus formosus** of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible "bl——," for a gentler greeting — "bless thy handsome face!"

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F——,² who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp, perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca: — Le G—— sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——,³ the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——,* mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

35 Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist

1821

Published in the *London Magazine*, February, 1821. It has been conjectured that the original of Mrs. Battle was Sarah Burncy, wife of Rear Admiral James Burney, with whom Lamb often played whist.

⁴⁴ A clear fire, a clean hearth,⁵ and the rigor of the game." This was the celebrated wish of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who,

¹ Handsome Nireus, most beautiful of the Greek warriors against Troy.

³ Favell.

³ Frederick William Franklin.

⁴ Marmaduke Thompson.

⁵ This was before the introduction of rugs, Reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinders betwixt your foot and the marble. (Lamb.)

next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another, that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no, and will desire an adversary who has slipt a wrong card, to take it up and play another.¹ These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favors. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight—cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favorite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuffbox when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game, or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards, and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candor, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recre-

ations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favorite author: his *Rape of the Lock* her favorite work. She once did me the favor to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem, and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradnille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant, and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles;¹ but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille²—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone;—above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prtndre Volc'*—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivity to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *sohder* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, re-

¹ William Lisle Bowles, who published an edition of Pope in 1807.

² ace of spades.

³ In ombre, played by four, one may take a partner or play alone (*sans prendre*). *Vole* is to take all the tricks.

¹ Ah if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next. (Lamb.)

minded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connections, bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational, antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favorite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes* — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up: — that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and color, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism, as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colors of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit for dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stript it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colors, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

"But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your Quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room,

you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly, killing sables — the 'hoary majesty of spades' — Pam¹ in all his glory! —

"All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab paste-board, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished forever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in! — Exchange those delicately turned ivory markers — (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)² — exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate!" —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic, and to her approbation of my arguments on her favorite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (Old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated)³ brought with him from Florence: this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say — disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce "#<?", or "*that's a*

¹ knave of clubs.

³ Acts xix, 24.

¹ In *The South Sea House*.

go." She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring "*two for his heels*." There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms — such as pique repique — the capot — they savored (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus: — Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight: with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*^ or for your play. — Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cnbbage, without league or alliance, or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradnllle. But in square games (*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honor, common to every species — though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participant. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold — or even an interested — by-stander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph

for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified, which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. — By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favorite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue — and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion! — chance is nothing but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious, that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending? — Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number — and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? — Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit — his memory, or combination-faculty rather — against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. — She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance — the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with unsufferable horror and enui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles, and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced, and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and color. A pencil and dry slate (she used to

say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other: —that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion, in truth, a mere drama; for we do but play at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we are as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting, much ado, great battling, and little blood shed, mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *Barnes* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such. —

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards for *nothing* has even been very agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet for *love* with my cousin Bridget — Bridget Ella.¹

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache or a sprained ankle — when you are subdued and humble — you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*. —

I grant it is not the highest style of man — I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize. —

At such times those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. — I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted¹ her) — (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted forever, though we gained nothing,

¹ Mary Lamb

² won all the tricks.

and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly forever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

Imperfect Sympathies

1821

Published in the *London Magazine*, August, 1821.

15 It was originally entitled "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and Other Imperfect Sympathies."

I am of (a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathieth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with P^{er}dice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch. (*Religio Medici*.)

That the author of the *Religio Medici*, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences, in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animal he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself — earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,

35 Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices — made up of liking[^] and dislikings — the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning.

I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or fellow. I cannot like all people alike.¹

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me — and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them — a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure — and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning.

¹ I would be understood as confining myself to the subjects of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct *antipathy*. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

—We by proof find there should be
Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
That though he can show no just reason why
For any former wrong or injury,
Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Hey wood's *Hierarchic of Angels*, and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

—The cause to which that act compelled him
Was, he ne'er loved him since he first beheld him

(Lamb.)

ing. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath — but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born manfully. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth — if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unloads his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian — you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. — He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox — he has no doubts. Is he an infidel — he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him — for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions.

There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!" — said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to *John Buncle*¹ — "did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. —. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends) — when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. — Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth — which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son — when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily con-

¹ The title of a book by Thomas Amory (1691-1788).

finest the passage to the margin.¹ The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another! — In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses"; and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him, — Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory² and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. — Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's *History* compared with his *Continuation* of it. What if the historian had continued *Humphry Clinker*?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln.³ Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side — of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run

¹ There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. — *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation*. (Lamb.)

² Roderick Random in Smollett's novel of that name.

³ A well-known legend of the ritualistic murder of a Christian child by the Jews. See the ballad of *Hugh of Lincoln* (pp. 196-97), and Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*, pp. 106-09.

clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candor, liberality, the light of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change — for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If they are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing — Christians judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of——Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea"! The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble² delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they? — but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a

man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them. — Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it — but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces — or rather masks — that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller¹ beautifully calls — these "images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them — because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to Jive with them." I am all over sophisticated — with humors, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whims, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn)² Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity.

¹ John Braham (1774-1856), a popular tenor of the day.

² John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), the chief Shakespearean actor of this time.

¹ Thomas Fuller (1608-61), the author of *The Worthies of England*.

² John Evelyn (1620-1706), an antiquarian and diarist.

A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notions of two kinds of truth — the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed — and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness — if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. "You will never be the wiser, if I sit

here answering your questions till midnight," said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. "Thereafter as the answers may be," retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances. — I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it — so much for tea — I, in humble imitation, tendering mine — for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible — and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious people for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sat as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbor, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

Witches and Other Night-Fears

18xi

Published in the *London Magazine*, October, 1821.

We are too hasty when we set down our
 ancestors in the gross for fools, for the mon-
 strous inconsistencies (as they seem to us)
 involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the
 relations of this visible world we find them
 to have been as rational, and shrewd to de-
 tect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But
 when once the invisible world was supposed
 to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad
 spirits assumed, what measures of probability,
 of decency, of fitness, or proportion — of that
 which distinguishes the likely from the pal-
 pable absurd — could they have to guide them
 in the rejection or admission of any particular
 testimony? — That maidens pined away,
 wasting inwardly as their waxen images con-
 sumed before a fire — that corn was lodged,
 and cattle lamed — that whirlwinds up tore
 in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forests —
 or that spits and kettles only danced a fearful-
 innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen
 when no wind was stirring — were all equally
 probable where no law of agency was under-
 stood. That the prince of the powers of
 darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of
 the earth, should lay preposterous siege to
 the weak fantasy of indigent eld — has
 neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori*
 to us, who have no measure to guess at his
 policy, or standard to estimate what rate
 those anile souls may fetch in the Devil's
 market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly
 symbolized by a goat, was it to be wondered
 at so much, that *he* should come sometimes
 in that body, and assert his metaphor. —
 That the intercourse was opened at all be-
 tween both worlds was perhaps the mistake
 — but that once assumed, I see no reason for
 disbelieving one attested story of this nature
 more than another on the score of absurdity.
 There is no law to judge of the lawless, or
 canon by which a dream may be criticised.

I have sometimes thought that I could not
 have existed in the days of received witch-
 craft; that I could not have slept in a village
 where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our
 ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst

the universal belief that these wretches were
 in league with the author of all evil, holding
 hell tributary to their muttering, no simple
 Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled
 issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a
 warrant upon them — as if they should
 subpoena Satan! — Prospero in his boat,
 with his books and wand about him, suffers
 himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of
 his enemies to an unknown island. He might
 have raised a storm or two, we think, on the
 passage. His acquiescence is an exact analogy
 to the non-resistance of witches to the con-
 stituted powers. — What stops the Fiend in
 Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces — or
 who had made it a condition of his prey, that
 Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait —
 we have no guess. We do not know the laws
 of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely in-
 quisitive about witches and witch-stones.
 My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied
 me with good store. But I shall mention the
 accident which directed my curiosity origi-
 nally into this channel. In my father's book-
 closet, the *History of the Eibh'* by Stack-
 house, occupied a distinguished station. The
 pictures with which it abounds — one of the
 ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's
 temple, delineated with all the fidelity of
 ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had
 been upon the spot — attracted my childish
 attention. There was a picture, too, of the
 Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that
 I had never seen. We shall come to that
 hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes
 — and there was a pleasure in removing
 folios of that magnitude, which, with in-
 finite straining, was as much as I could man-
 age, from the situation which they occupied
 upon an upper shelf. I have not met with
 the work from that time to this, but I re-
 member it consisted of Old Testament stories,
 orderly set down, with the *objection* appended
 to each story, and the *solution* of the objection
 regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was
 a summary of whatever difficulties had been
 opposed to the credibility of the history, by
 the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidel-
 ity, drawn up with an almost complimentary
 excess of candor. The *solution* was brief,

modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be an end forever. The dragon lay dead for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But — like as was rather feared than realized from that slain monster in Spenser — from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself to vanquish. The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but — the next thing to that — I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling! — I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric — driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds — the elephant, and the camel — that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me. — But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously. — That detestable picture!

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life — so far as memory serves in things so long ago — without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel — (O that old man covered with a mantle¹) I owe — not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy — but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow — a sure bed-fellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. — Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm — the hoping for a familiar voice — when they wake screaming — and find none to soothe them -- what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called — would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution. — That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams — if dreams they were — for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other —

Headless bear, black man, or ape —

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form. — It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T. H.¹ who

¹ Thornton, the son of Leigh Hunt.

of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition — who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story — finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*,¹ in his own "thick-coming fancies"; and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimaeras — dire stones of Celieno and the Harpies — may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition — but they were there before. They are transcripts, types — the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all? — or

— Names, whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not?

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such subjects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury? — O, least of all! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body — or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, denned devils in Dante — tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons — are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit uncmbodied following him —

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.²

That the kind of fear here treated is purely spiritual — that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth — that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy — are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-

¹ from outside,

² Mr. Coleridge's *Ancient Manner*. (Lamb.)

mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional nightmare; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I light and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings — cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Pans, Lisbon — their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight — a maplike distinctness of trace — and a day-light vividness of vision, that was all but being awake. — I have formerly travelled among the Westmoreland fells — my highest Alps — but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Mcthought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

Where Alph, the sacred river, runs,

to solace his night solitudes — when I cannot muster a riddle. Barry Cornwall has his tri-⁴⁰ tons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune — when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light — it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humor my folly in a sort of dream that

very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary tram sounding their conchs before me (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*), and jollyly we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth Palace.

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waiting. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humorist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be — "Young man, what sort of dreams have you?" I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.

Dream Children: A Reverie

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Published in the *London Magazine* for January, 1822. Canon Ainger identifies Alice W——n with Anna Simmons, a girl Lamb had known when visiting his grandmother in Hertfordshire. Bartram was in fact the name of her husband.

Children love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk¹ (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene —

¹ Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, for fifty years housekeeper at Blakesware, in Hertfordshire.

so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. 5 Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish neb 10 person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how 15 religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she 20 might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county, but still she Jived in 25 it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried 30 away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C's tawdry gilt drawing- 35 room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament 45 besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was, and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right 50 foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the

best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain, but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house, and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm", and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she — and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Caesars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I be turned into marble with them, how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out — sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at — or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me — or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their

impertinent friskings — I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here \$ John shyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——,¹ because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out — and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries — and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially, and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy — for he was a good bit older than me — many a mile when I could not walk for pain; — and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we

¹ Charles Lamb's brother, John.

quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stones about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was, and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech, "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing, less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name" — and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side — but John L. (or James Elia) was gone forever.

In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers

1811

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1822.

I like to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown sweeper — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigrity, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding

like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sunrise?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks — poor blots — innocent blacknesses —

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *faucis Averni*¹ — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! — to shudder with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost forever!" — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly, not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth*, where the "Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels² (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.³

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes

¹ jaws of Hades.

² with chilblains.

³ sixpence.

a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage," on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*¹ — I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the olfactorys constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odor to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savory mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as ex-

¹ Saloop was an herb drink, similar to sassafras tea.

tremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labors of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honors of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet rummaged kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odors. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapors in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendant over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) — so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-mgredientcd soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularities of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, point-

ing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth¹——but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pieman——there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last forever——With such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth——for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it——that I could have been content, if the honor of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket, presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct, a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:——and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticeships of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions, the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these

young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact, the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu¹ be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless defoliations.

10 In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since——under a ducal canopy——(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)——encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets interwoven——folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascamus²——was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitation to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.——But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty, as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions——is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting

¹ William Hogarth (1697-1764), an English painter and engraver. The March to Finchley was the subject of one of his prints.

¹ Kdward Wortlry Montagu ran away from Westminster School to become for a time a chimney-sweeper. ² The son of Hector, put to death after the fall of Troy.

to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was but now creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*¹ and resting-place. — By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturesome, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WiiiTE² was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolises, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at, but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment, but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity, but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savor. JAMES

WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table: and myself, with our trusty companion BiooD,¹ ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, 5 you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honor the 10 company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon 15 her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable youngkers 20 lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of 25 some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating" — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender 30 juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not gooc¹ 35 he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts — "The King," — the "Cloth," — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and 40 flattering; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did 50 not do to be squeamish on these occasions)

¹ cradle clothes.

² A schoolfellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital.

¹ Otherwise John Fenwick, Editor of *Albion*.

indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savoriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust —

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithneld departed forever.

A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig

1822.

Published in the *London Magazine*, September, 18th/2. The tradition as to the origin of cooking was communicated to Lamb by his friend, Thomas Manning, a traveler in China and Thibet.

Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his *Mundane Mutations*^A where he designates a kind of golden age by the term *Cho-fang*, literally the Cook's Holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian makeshift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine

in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from? — not from the burnt cottage — he had smelt that smell before — indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted — *crackling*. Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious, and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His

father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what — what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste — O Lord" — with such-hke barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a prentence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti

to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given — to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision, and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.—

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibiths*,¹ I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *prtncpr obsomorum*.²

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and pork — those hobble-dehoys — but a young and tender suckling — under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor im-mundttiaj'* the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner or *fraludium*, of a grunt.

lie must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling* as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna — or, rather, fat, and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian re-suit, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string' — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars. —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how

¹ world of eatables. ' prince of viands.

³ love of the unclean.

meek he lieth! — wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and in-docihty which too often accompany maturer swinchood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care —

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curs-eth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coal-heaver bolteth him in recking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Savors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and ex-conateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she bitcth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate — she mcdclth not with the appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the cnticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and weakling refubeth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably inter-twisted, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine

own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavors, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. -- It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction, but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew, and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another — would eat her nice cake — and what should I say to her the next time I saw her — how naughty I was to part with her pretty present! — and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure, and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last — and I blamed my im-

pertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards interenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto. —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's,¹ and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavor of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per jlagellatomm extrtmam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make, them stronger than they are — but consider, he is a weakling — a flower.

Poor Relations

1823

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1823. Its style, in parts, is an excellent imitation of the character writing of the seventeenth century.

A poor Relation — is the most irrelevant thing in nature, — a piece of impertinent

¹ A Roman Catholic college in France for English boys.

correspondency, - - an odious approximation, — a haunting conscience, — a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity, — an unwelcome remembrancer, — a perpetually recurring mortification, — a drain on your purse, — a more intolerable dun upon your pride, — a drawback upon success, — a rebuke to your rising, — a stain in your blood, — a blot on your 'scutcheon, — a rent in your garment, — a death's head at your banquet, — Agathocles' pot,¹ — a Mordecai in your gate, — a Lazarus at your door, — a lion in your path, — a frog in your chamber, — a fly in your ointment, — a mote in your eye, — a triumph to your enemy, an apology to your friends, — the one thing not needful, — the hail in harvest, — the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That is Mr.——." A rap, between familiarity and respect, that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling and — embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and — draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time — when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company, but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr.——will drop in to-day." He remembereth birthdays — and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small — yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think "they have seen him before." Every one speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be — a tide waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own.

¹ Agathocles was the son of a potter. He became the ruler of Sicily.

He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had Jess diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent, with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent — yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanor, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table, refuseth on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up he proffers to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather, and will thrust in some mean and quite unimportant anecdote of — the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations to institute what he calleth — favorable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture: and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle — which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carnage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet, and did not know, till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable, his compliments perverse, his talk a trouble, his stay pertinacious, and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is — a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other, you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. "He is an old humorist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No

woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes — *ahquando sufflammandus erat** — but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped — after the gentlemen. Mr.——requests the honor of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former — because he does. She calls the servant Sir; and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq.,² in the play, is a noticeable instance of the disadvantages to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to an acquaintance*³ may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who, wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W——³ was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride, but its quality was inoffensive, it was not of that sort

which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W——went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion to the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom.¹ He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer² must have walked erect; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no commendable vanity. In the depths of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W——had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the

¹ Sometimes he had to be restrained. Ben Jonson, in his famous comment upon Shakespeare, used this Latin phrase in characterizing the great dramatist's power of imagination.

² In Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy*.

³ Favcll, referred to in *Chrnt's Hospital*. "Favcll left Cambridge because he was ashamed of his father who was a house-painter there." (Lamb.)

¹ A reference to "the shirt of Nessus," by which Hercules was poisoned.

² Hugh Latimer (1485-1555), a leading Reformer, Bishop of Worcester, who was burned at the stake.

young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits forever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called — the trading part of the latter especially — is earned to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown — insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of —— college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him — finding him in a better mood — upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, "knew his mounted sign — and fled." A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.¹

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful, but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter for tragic as

¹ In the siege by Wellington in 1813.

well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so — for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined — and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive — a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses.¹ My father had been a leading Mountaineer, and would still main-

¹ Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), a Dutch jurist, expert in international law.

tain the general superiority, in skill and hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic — the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out — and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remembered with anguish the thought that came over me: "Perhaps he will never come here again." He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused with a resistance amounting to rigor, when my aunt — an old Lincolman, but who had something of this in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season — uttered the following memorable application — "Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day." The old gentleman said nothing at the time — but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it — "Woman, you are superannuated." John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (*anno* 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escritoire after his decease, left the world, blessing

God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was — a Poor Relation.

A Character of the Late Elia

By a Frtend

1813

This bit of self-portraiture was published in the *London Alagazme* for Januaiy, 1823, shortly after the publication of the fiist collection of *Essays of Elm*. In abbreviated form it was used as a preface to the volume, *Last Essays of Eha*, in 1833.

This gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the *London Magazine* will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H., and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan C.,¹ nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a *Tale of Lyddalcross*.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humor of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted, and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you — a sort of unhecked, incondite things — villainously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such, and better it is, that a writer should be natural in 2 self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called)

¹ Allan Cunningham (1784 1842), a Scotch poet.

that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) — where under the *first person* (his favorite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connexions — in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another — making himself many, or reducing many unto himself — then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. — He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *pent* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen

him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stanger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken) which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested. — Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune, and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados* — to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the color, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him — but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry — as the friendly vapor ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statish!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan

¹ intimates.

or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shackwell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. "They take me for a visiting governor," he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis*¹ never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export department of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous

tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his folio printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system; but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with." He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe and Wisscott, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet); and Hoole, who translated Tasso; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God assoil him therefor!) modernized Walton; and sly, warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South-Sea House), and little Eyton (said to be a facsimile of Pope — he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him, and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone — for aught I know, to be re-united with them — and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words only! His Essays found some favorers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies."

PHIL-ELIA.

¹ the Roman dress of manhood.

William Hazlitt • 1778-1830

William Hazlitt was a quarrelsome man, but a brilliant essayist, with a keen intellect. His father was a Unitarian clergyman, settled for a time at Maidstone, in Kent, where in 1778 William, his second son, was born. The family moved to the United States in 1783, but returned to England in 1786. William was sent to a theological college at Hackney, but most of his education was the result of his own reading. In 1798, when the Hazlitts were living at Wem, in Shropshire, began his connection with Coleridge, narrated in *First Acquaintance with Poets*. He spent some time in Paris, 1800-03, trying to become a painter. Returning to London, he wrote on philosophy, politics, economics, and grammar. In 1808 he married Sarah Stoddard, who had a small estate at Winterslow near Salisbury, where they spent a number of years. In 1812, Hazlitt delivered a series of lectures on modern philosophy, but soon turned his attention to literature and dramatic criticism. He became dramatic critic of *The Morning Chronicle*, and delivered series of lectures on Shakespeare's characters and the *Dramatic literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, as well as on *The English Poets* and *The English Comic Writers*. His enduring fame, however, rests on the essays which he wrote for Hunt's *Examiner*, *The London Magazine*, and other periodicals, later collected under the titles, *The Round Table*, *Table Talk*, *The Plain Speaker*. A series of criticisms on leading contemporary figures, called *The Spirit of the Age*, appeared in 1825. He also published a *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1828-30. He died in London, in 1830, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Anne's, Soho.

Hazlitt was a friend of Charles Lamb, and a member of his circle, but no two men could have been more opposed in character and attitude toward life. Lamb was kindness itself, a perfect friend, drawing men to himself and to each other. Hazlitt was harsh and bitter, quarreling fiercely with his many enemies and sometimes with his few friends. As the result of his youth within a small dissenting body, and his irregular education, he felt a sense of exclusion from normal society. This became real when he espoused the cause of the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte, with whom his country was at war. He is said to have been one of four men in London to whom the British victory of Waterloo was a tragedy. His pro-French views were the cause of bitter hostility of the Tory reviews, the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's*, which attacked his literary work without mercy. He responded with the ferocious *Letter to William Gifford*, of the *Quarterly*, and an essay in *The Spirit of the Age*. He seems an Ishmaehte, whose hand was against every man and every man's against him. In a letter to Leigh Hunt, after many reproaches and accusations against both Hunt and Lamb, he concluded. "I want to know why everybody has such a dislike to me."

Hazlitt suffered keenly from social maladjustment which he carried off with a defiant Bohemianism. Nevertheless his essays on *The Look of a Gentleman* and *The Conduct of Life* show how deep was his preoccupation with forms and graces which were not of his sharing. Especially in affairs of the heart he was unfortunate. An unhappy marriage was followed by a separation. Later he had a tempestuous affair with the daughter of his landlady, and published an account of his passion in *Liber Amoris*, in which his lover's pain and despair are exhibited to the scornful mirth of the world.

Hazlitt was a sensitive spirit, and sensibility is a chief quality in his criticism. His early education as a painter gave him a range of subject matter and a technique which made him one of the earliest aesthetic critics. Frankness was another trait which endeared him to a

later group of Bohemians, Stevenson and Henley. He felt keenly both beauty and deformity and expressed his feeling with gusto. He was an impressionist, concerned primarily with his own reactions to literature, painting, and acting, but these reactions were usually sound and just. It is noteworthy that in a romantic age he could appreciate Pope. His inimitable gusto appears also in his essays upon life, such as *On Going a Journey*, or *The Fight*. But with Hazlitt, life and literature were not separate. His reading and his writing were important parts of his experience, and hence his attitude toward literature, whether critical or creative, remains extraordinarily vital.

Hazlitt's works have been collected in twelve volumes edited by Waller and Glover, with an introductory essay by William Ernest Henley (1901-04). *Memoirs of William Hazlitt* (1867) and *Lamb and Hazlitt* (1900), both by his grandson, W. C. Hazlitt, are first-hand sources of information. A short biography by Augustine Birrell (1912), in the English Men of Letters series, and a very complete life by P. P. Howe (1911), both partake of the interest of their subject. A volume of selections is edited by Arthur Beatty.

My First Acquaintance With Poets

18x3

This essay appeared in *The Liberal*, in 1823. Its substance was given in a letter in *The Examiner* in 1817. It throws light on the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Nether Stowey described in *Biographia Literaria*, chap. x. (See page 89.)

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W——m¹ in Shropshire, and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the "dreaded name of Demogorgon"²) Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid, nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good

town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there, "fluttering the proud Salopians" like an eagle in a dove-cote"; and the Welsh mountains
5 that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

High-born Hoc's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay!

10 As we passed along between W——m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the roadside, a sound was in my ears as of a
15 Siren's song, I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep, but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into
20 my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the wayside, crushed, bleeding, lifeless, but now, bursting from the deadly bands that bound
25 them,

With Styx nine times round them,

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light
30 of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay,

¹ people of Shropshire.

¹ Wem.

² *Paradise Lost*, n, 964.

has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to, but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr. Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighborhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the *Agamemnon* of Eschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor, but in the meantime I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. *// y a des impressions que m le terns m les circonstances peuvent effacer* *Dusse-je vivre des siecles entiers, le doux terns de ma jeunesse ne peut renaitre pour mot, m s'effacer jamais dans ma memotre.*¹ When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE." As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed

to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state — not their alliance, but their separation — on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made a poetical and pastoral excursion, — and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, "as though he should never be old," and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an ale-house, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

Such were the notes our once-loved poet sung.

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together. Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still laboring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*,¹ and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned everything into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of *Jus DiviNUM*² on it:

Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.

¹ There are impressions which neither time nor circumstances (an efface. If I should live entire centuries, the sweet time of youth cannot return or efface itself from my memory.

¹ The cause of freedom, emphasised by the French Revolution.

² Divine right (of kings).

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. "For those two hours," he afterwards was pleased to say, "he was conversing with W. H.'s forehead!" His appearance was different from what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright —

As arc the children of yon azure sheen.

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. "A certain tender bloom his face o'erspread," a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humored and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing — like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, "somewhat fat and pursy." His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven's, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different color) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart, and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up forever, and disappearing, like vaporish bubbles, in the human breast' After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators — huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did he pore on these from morn to night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather brocoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)? Here were "no figures nor no fantasies" — neither poetry nor philosophy — nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough)

on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation' there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple; questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things, the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of nondescript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlor, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy!¹ Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wollstonecraft and Mackintosh.² The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindicta Gallica* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man — a master of the topics,

¹ My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantries, I have never seen them equalled. (Hazlitt.)

² Mary Wollstonecraft and Sir James Mackintosh were both sympathizers with the French Revolution. The former married William Godwin and was the mother of Mary Godwin, the wife of Shelley. Mackintosh answered Burke's attack on the French Revolution in *Vindicta Gallica* (1793).

— or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to commonplaces. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavor imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them — "He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin¹ had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge told him — "If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wollstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He replied, that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high² (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wollstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-

¹ William Godwin (1756-1836), a radical, author of *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793).

² He complained in particular of the presumption of attempting to establish the future immortality of man, "without" (as he said) "knowing what Death was or what Life was" — and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both. (Hazlitt.)

making. We talked a little about Holcroft.¹ He had been asked if he was not much struck *with* him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck *by* him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of even the commonest word, exclaiming, "What do you mean by a *sensation*. Sir? What do you mean by an *ideal*?" This, Coleridge said, was barricading the road to truth: — it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember, but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150 a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from the dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, Mr. Coleridge, *Nether Stoway, Somersetshire*; and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come halfway to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in Cassandra) when he sees a thunderbolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as

¹ Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), a dramatist and novelist, also one of the radicals of the time.

I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

—sounding on his way.¹

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the footpath to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He seemed unable to keep on in a straight line. He spoke slightly of Hume (whose *Essay on Miracles* he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's sermons — *Credat Judaea Apella!*²) I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical choke-fears, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candor. He, however, made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision* as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's *Theory of Matter and Spirit*, and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge drew

¹ Ila/htt confuses Chaucer's word "sownim*," inclining to, with Wordsworth's use of "sounding," *Klucun>ion*, Hl, 71: Went sounding on, a dirn and perilous way.

² Let the Jew Apclla believe it.

Horace, *Satires*, i, 5, 100.

a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection) between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine. He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher. He considered Bishop Butler as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading, the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*) — and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped halfway down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labor in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a

Sonnet to the Road between W——m and Shrewsbury, and immortalize every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all us pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that "the fact of his work on *Moral and Political Philosophy* being made a textbook in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character." We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward, pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honored ever with suitable regard." He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with anything at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleyan Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's *Vision of Judgment*,¹ and also from that other *Vision of Judgment*, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junto,² has taken into his especial keeping!

¹ Southey's *Vision of Judgment* was an untimely poem celebrating the reception of George III into heaven. Byron's satire upon it appeared in the *Liberal*.

² Murray was Byron's publisher, and also of the *Tory Quarterly Review*. His office was in Bridge Street, London.

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy. I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me halfway on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sunsets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the spring*. This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increased my ardor. In the meantime I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery, and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptized in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untired feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones¹ and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read *Paul and Virginia*. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behavior of the heroine in the last fatal scene,

¹ In Fielding's *Tom Jones*, book x, chap. v.

who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in *Paul and Virginia*. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Even the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose in his mind, for whatever he added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment. I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read *Camilla*.¹ So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted everything!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the seashore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest, Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's

¹ A novel by Frances Burney, 1796.

poems, the *Lyrical Ballads*, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sibylline Leaves*.¹ I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I and II and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

—hear the loud stag speak.

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fulness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been!*

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted. But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

In spite of pride, in ening reason's spite,

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry

¹ Coleridge published a volume of verse under this title in 1817.

came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring:

While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed.

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to believe in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-factness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence.

His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air, it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the goldfinch sang. He said, however (if I remember right), that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the universe like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was more gaunt and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the costume of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell.¹ There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants

¹ The hero of Wordsworth's poem by this name, published in 1819.

the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*¹ is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre*,* by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum** merit was, however, by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sunset stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this

ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copse-wood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a straight gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighborhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbor made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole,¹ sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Ger-

¹ Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846), a painter, introduced a portrait of Wordsworth into an historical picture on this subject.

A drama produced in 1797, by M. G. Lewis (1775-1818), whose earlier tale, *The Monk*, had given him the nickname.

s power of captivating.

¹ A friend of Coleridge who was responsible for his settlement at Nether Stowey.

many, where the Kantean philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Caspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march — (our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue) — through Mmehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Manner*. At Linton the character of the seacoast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull forever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fret-work of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*. A thunderstorm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bareheaded to enjoy the

commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*,¹ but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlor, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the beehives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's *Georgics*, but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant. It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a window seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, "*That is true fame!*" He said Thomson was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted, totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II. Some comparison was introduced between Shakespeare and Milton. He said "he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespeare appeared to him a mere stripling in the art; he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man's estate; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster." He spoke with contempt of Gray, and with intolerance of Pope. He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that "the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages." He thought little of Junius as a writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; and

¹ By the Swiss poet Salomon Gessner (1730-1788), published in 1758.

a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. He liked Richardson, but not Fielding, nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.¹ In short, he was profound and discriminating with respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the "ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said "he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest anything to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

¹ He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffalmacco and others; of one in particular where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time. (Hazlitt)

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmm of Taunton. I asked him if he had prepared anything for the occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him, — this was a fault, — but we met in the evening at Bndgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of *Remorse*; which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston and the Drury-lane boards, Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,

And give those scenes thine everlasting life.

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a commonplace-book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best — *Man as he was, or man as he is to be*. "Give me," says Lamb, "man as he is *not* to be." This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues. — Enough of this for the present.

But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second talc.

On Going a Journey 1812.

First published in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1822. It was reprinted in *Table Talk* (1821-22).

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself.

¹ Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), a favorite actor.

I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

The fields his study, nature was his book.

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude, nor do I ask for

— a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired,

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner — and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasures," burst upon my eager

sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff o' the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others, to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's,⁵ that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it,

⁵ William Cobbett (1766-1835), a political writer whose *Weekly Political Register* was an important critical journal.

it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the syncretical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is shortsighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the color of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humor. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you — these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation, and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it ?n understanding, but no tongue." My old friend C——S however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale,

¹ Coleridge.

a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had"; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:

—~ Here be woods as green

As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled steeam, \With flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as (hoiee as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbors o'crgrown with woodbine, caves and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a glove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brothel's light,
To kiss her sweetest. (*Faithful Shepherdess.*)

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds; but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot: I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. L—— is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to

¹ Charles Lamb.

enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea —

The cups that theci, but not inebriate¹ —

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper — eggs and a rasher, «i rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho² in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel, and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen. — *Procul, O procul este prof ant.*" These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place, he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously

between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits, or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges — "lord of one's self, uncumbered with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion — to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties — to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening — and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlor!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed commonplaces that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns — sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas — at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot³ (I think it was) where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons,² into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me

¹ Cowper, *The Task*, iv, 39, 40.

² Santho Pan/a in *Don Quixote*.

³ *Avaunt! avaunt! ye unhallowed!*

Virgil, *Æneid*, vi, 258.

¹ A small town near Peterborough.

³ Raphael's cartoons.

over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight--at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day, and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the xoth of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Prucx describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche*¹ to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighborhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham, and on passing a certain point you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

The beautiful is vanished, and retains not.

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot, but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could

¹ tidbit.

hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and mcorngible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the shortsightedness or capaciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas, nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again, but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our pour of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopphng Flutter, "all is a desert."¹ All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast, — the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single

¹ From Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676).

glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression— we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years, but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten! — To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honors indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *eclat* — shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned —

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges — was at home in the Bodleian, and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. — As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech, and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. — Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbor, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied, for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people! — There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else;

but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity, and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump"¹ all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings:

Out of my country and myself I go.

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them, but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could any where borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

The Fight

1811

The Fight was published in the *Ncu Monthly Magazine* for February, 1822. The famous battle had occurred on December 11, 1821.

—*The fight, the fight's* the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

Where there's a will, there's a way. — I said so to myself, as I walked down Chancery-lane, about half-past six o'clock on Monday the loth of December, to inquire at Jack

¹ risk.

Randall's where the fight the next day was to be, and I found "the proverb" nothing "musty" in the present instance. I was determined to see this fight, come what would, and see it I did, in great style. It was my *first fight*, yet it more than answered my expectations. Ladies! it is to you I dedicate this description; nor let it seem out of character for the fair to notice the exploits of our brave. Courage and modesty are the old English virtues, and may they never look cold and askance on one another! Think, ye fairest of the fair, loveliest of the lovely kind, ye practisers of soft enchantment, how many more ye kill with poisoned baits than ever fell in the ring, and listen with subdued air and without shuddering, to a tale tragic only in appearance, and sacred to the Fancy!¹

I was going down Chancery-lane, thinking to ask at Jack Randall's where the fight was to be, when looking through the glass-door of the *Hole m the Wall*, I heard a gentleman asking the same question at Mrs. Randall, as the author of *Waverley* would express it. Now Mrs. Randall stood answering the gentleman's question, with the authenticity of the lady of the Champion of the Light Weights. Thinks I, I'll wait till this person comes out, and learn from him how it is. For to say a truth, I was not fond of going into this house of call for heroes and philosophers, ever since the owner of it (for Jack is no gentleman) threatened once upon a time to kick me out of doors for wanting a mutton chop at his hospitable board, when the conqueror in thirteen battles was more full of *blue rum* than of good manners. I was the more mortified at this repulse, inasmuch as I had heard Mr. James Simpkins, hosier in the Strand, one day when the character of the *Hole in the Wall* was brought in question, observe—"The house is a very good house, and the company quite genteel: I have been there myself!" Remembering this unkind treatment of mine host, to which mine hostess was also a party, and not wishing to put her in unquiet thoughts at a time jubilant like the present, I waited at the door, when, who should issue forth but my

¹ A slang term for the followers of the sport of pugilism.

friend Joe Toms, and turning suddenly up Chancery-lane with that quick jerk and impatient stride which distinguishes a lover of the Fancy, I said, "I'll be hanged if that fellow is not going to the fight, and is on his way to get me to go with him." So it proved in effect, and we agreed to adjourn to my lodgings to discuss measures with that cordiality which makes old friends like new, and new friends like old, on great occasions. We are cold to others only when we are dull in ourselves, and have neither thoughts nor feelings to impart to them. Give a man a topic in his head, a throb of pleasure in his heart, and he will be glad to share it with the first person he meets. Toms and I, though we seldom meet, were an *alter idem* on this memorable occasion, and had not an idea that we did not candidly impart; and "so carelessly did we fleet the time," that I wish no better, when there is another fight, than to have him for a companion on my journey down, and to return with my friend Jack Pigott, talking of what was to happen or of what did happen, with a noble subject always at hand, and liberty to digress to others whenever they offered. Indeed, on my repeating the lines from Spenser in an involuntary fit of enthusiasm,

What more felicity can fall to creature,
Than to enjoy delight with liberty?

my last-named ingenious friend stopped me by saying that this, translated into the vulgate, meant "*Going to see a fight.*"

Joe Toms and I could not settle about the method of going down. He said there was a caravan, he understood, to start from Tom Belcher's at two, which would go there *night* out and back again the next day. Now I never travel all night, and said I should get a cast to Newbury by one of the mails. Joe swore the thing was impossible, and I could only answer that I had made up my mind to it. -In short, he seemed to me to waver, said he only came to see if I was going, had letters to write, a cause coming on the day after, and faintly said at parting (for I was bent on setting out that moment) — "Well, we meet at Philippi!" I made the best of my way to Piccadilly. The mail-

coach stand was bare. "They are all gone," said I — "this is always the way with me — in the instant I lose the future - if I had not stayed to pour out that last cup of tea, I should have been just in time" - and cursing my folly and ill-luck together, without inquiring at the coach-office whether the mails were gone or not, I walked on in despite, and to punish my own dilatoriness and want of determination. At any rate, I would not turn back: I might get to Hounslow, or perhaps farther, to be on my road the next morning. I passed Hyde Park Corner (my Rubicon), and trusted to fortune. Suddenly I heard the clattering of a Brentford stage, and the fight rushed full upon my fancy. I argued (not unwisely) that even a Brentford coachman was better company than my own thoughts (such as they were just then), and at his invitation mounted the box with him. I immediately stated my case to him — namely, my quarrel with myself for missing the Bath or Bristol mail, and my determination to get on in consequence as well as I could, without any disparagement or insulting comparison between longer or shorter stages. It is a maxim with me that stage-coaches, and consequently stage-coachmen, are respectable in proportion to the distance they have to travel, so I said nothing on that subject to my Brentford friend. Any incipient tendency to an abstract proposition, or (as he might have construed it) to a personal reflection of this kind, was however nipped in the bud, for I had no sooner declared indignantly that I had missed the mails, than he flatly denied that they were gone along, and lo! at the instant three of them drove by in rapid, provoking, orderly succession, as if they would devour the ground before them. Here again I seemed in the contradictory situation of the man m Dryden who exclaims,

I follow Fate, which docs too hard pursue!

If I had stopped to inquire at the White Horse Cellar, which would not have taken me a minute, I should now have been driving down the road in all the dignified unconcern and *ideal* perfection of mechanical conveyance. The Bath mail I had set my mind

upon, and I had missed it, as I missed every thing else, by my own absurdity, in putting the will for the deed, and aiming at ends without employing means. "Sir," said he of the Brentford, "the Bath mail will be up presently, my brother-in-law drives it, and I will engage to stop him if there is a place empty." I almost doubted my good genius; but, sure enough, up it drove like lightning, and stopped directly at the call of the Brentford Jehu. I would not have believed this possible, but the brother-in-law of a mail-coach driver is himself no mean man. I was transferred without loss of time from the top of one coach to that of the other, desired the guard to pay my fare to the Brentford coachman for me as I had no change, was accommodated with a greatcoat, put up my umbrella to keep off a drizzling mist, and we began to cut through the air like an arrow. The mile-stones disappeared one after another, the rain kept off, Tom Turtle,¹ the trainer, sat before me on the coach-box, with whom I exchanged civilities as a gentleman going to the fight; the passion that had transported me an hour before was subdued to pensive regret and conjectural musing on the next day's battle, I was promised a place inside at Reading, and upon the whole, I thought myself a lucky fellow. Such is the force of imagination! On the outside of any other coach on the loth of December, with a Scotch mist drizzling through the cloudy moonlight air, I should have been cold, comfortless, impatient, and, no doubt, wet through, but seated on the Royal mail, I felt warm and comfortable, the air did me good, the ride did me good, I was pleased with the progress we had made, and confident that all would go well through the journey. When I got inside at Reading, I found Turtle and a stout valetudinarian, whose costume bespoke him one of the Fancy, and who had risen from a three months' sick bed to get into the mail to see the fight. They were intimate, and we fell into a lively discourse. My friend the trainer was confined in his topics to fighting dogs and men, to bears and badgers; beyond this he was "quite chap-fallen," had not a word to throw at a dog, or indeed very

wisely fell asleep, when any other game was started. The whole art of training (I, however, learnt from him) consists in two things, exercise and abstinence, abstinence and exercise, repeated alternately and without end. A yolk of an egg with a spoonful of rum in it is the first thing in a morning, and then a walk of six miles till breakfast. This meal consists of a plentiful supply of tea and toast and beefsteaks. Then another six or seven miles till dinner-time, and another supply of solid beef or mutton with a pint of porter, and perhaps, at the utmost, a couple of glasses of sherry. Martin trains on water, but this increases his infirmity on another very dangerous side. The Gas-man takes now and then a chirping glass (under the rose) to console him, during a six weeks' probation, for the absence of Mrs Hickman — an agreeable woman, with (I understand) a pretty fortune of two hundred pounds. How matter presses on me! What stubborn things are facts! How inexhaustible is nature and art! "It is well," as I once heard Mr. Richmond observe, "to see a variety." He was speaking of cockfighting as an edifying spectacle. I cannot deny but that one learns more of what is (I do not say of what *ought to be*) in this desultory mode of practical study, than from reading the same book twice over, even though it should be a moral treatise. Where was I? I was sitting at dinner with the candidate for the honors of the ring, "where good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both." Then follows an hour of social chat and native glee; and afterwards, to another breathing over heathy hill or dale. Back to supper, and then to bed, and up by six again — Our hero

Follows so the ever-running sun
With profitable *ardor*——

to the day that brings him victory or defeat in the green fairy circle. Is not this life more sweet than mine? I was going to say; but I will not libel any life by comparing it to mine, which is (at the date of these presents) bitter as coloquintida and the dregs of aconitum!

The invalid in the Bath mail soared a pitch above the trainer, and did not sleep so

¹ John Thurtell, to wit. (Hazlitt.)

sound, because he had "more figures and more fantasies." We talked the hours away merrily. He had faith in surgery, for he had had three ribs set right, that had been broken in a *turn-up* at Belcher's, but thought physicians old women, for they had no antidote in their catalogue for brandy. An indigestion is an excellent commonplace for two people that never met before. By way of ingratiating myself, I told him the story of my doctor, who, on my earnestly representing to him that I thought his regimen had done me harm, assured me that the whole pharmacopeia contained nothing comparable to the prescription he had given me; and, as a proof of its undoubted efficacy, said, that, "he had had one gentleman with my complaint under his hands for the last fifteen years." This anecdote made my companion shake the rough sides of his three great coats with boisterous laughter; and Turtle, starting out of his sleep, swore he knew how the fight would go, for he had had a dream about it. Sure enough the rascal told us how the three first rounds went off, but "his dream," like others, "denoted a foregone conclusion." He knew his men. The moon now rose in silver state, and I ventured, with some hesitation, to point out this object of placid beauty, with the blue serene beyond, to the man of science, to which his ear he "seriously inclined," the more as it gave promise *d'un beau jour* for the morrow, and showed the ring undrenched by envious showers, arrayed in sunny smiles. Just then, all going on well, I thought on my friend Toms, whom I had left behind, and said innocently, "There was a blockhead of a fellow I left in town, who said there was no possibility of getting down by the mail, and talked of going by a caravan from Belcher's at two in the morning, after he had written some letters." "Why," said he of the lapells, "I should not wonder if that was the very person we saw running about like mad from one coach-door to another, and asking if any one had seen a friend of his, a gentleman going to the fight, whom he had missed stupidly enough by staying to write a note." "Pray, Sir," said my fellow-traveller, "had he a plaid cloak on?" — "Why, no," said I, "not at the time

I left him, but he very well might afterwards, for he offered to lend me one." The plaid cloak and the letter decided the thing. Joe, sure enough, was in the Bristol mail, which preceded us by about fifty yards. This was droll enough. We had now but a few miles to our place of destination, and the first thing I did on alighting at Newbury, both coaches stopping at the same time, was to call out, "Pray, is there a gentleman in that mail of the name of Toms?" "No," said Joe, borrowing something of the vein of Gilpin, "for I have just got out." "Well!" says he, "this is lucky; but you don't know how vexed I was to miss you, for," added he, lowering his voice, "do you know when I left you I went to Belcher's to ask about the caravan, and Mrs. Belcher said very obligingly, she couldn't tell about that, but there were two gentlemen who had taken places by the mail and were gone on in a landau, and she could frank us. It's a pity I didn't meet with you; we could then have got down for nothing. But *mum's the word*." It's the devil for any one to tell me a secret, for it's sure to come out in print. I do not care so much to gratify a friend, but the public ear is too great a temptation to me.

Our present business was to get beds and a supper at an inn; but this was no easy task. The public-houses were full, and where you saw a light at a private house, and people poking their heads out of the casement to see what was going on, they instantly put them in and shut the window, the moment you seemed advancing with a suspicious overture for accommodation. Our guard and coachman thundered away at the outer gate of the Crown for some time without effect — such was the greater noise within; — and when the doors were unbarred, and we got admittance, we found a party assembled in the kitchen round a good hospitable fire, some sleeping, others drinking, others talking on politics and on the fight. A tall English yeoman (something like Matthews in the face, and quite as great a wag) —

A lusty man to ben an abbot able —

was making such a prodigious noise about rent and taxes, and the price of corn now and

formerly, that he had prevented us from being heard at the gate. The first thing I heard him say was to a shuffling fellow who wanted to be off a bet for a shilling glass of brandy and water—"Confound it, man, don't be *mstptd*!" Thinks I, that is a good phrase. It was a good omen. He kept it up so all night, nor flinched with the approach of morning. He was a fine fellow, with sense, wit, and spirit, a hearty body and a joyous mind, free-spoken, frank, convivial—one of that true English breed that went with Harry the Fifth to the siege of Harfleur—"standing like greyhounds in the slips," &c. We ordered tea and eggs (beds were soon found to be out of the question) and this fellow's conversation was *sauce Iptquante*. It did one's heart good to see him brandish his oaken towel and to hear him talk. He made mince-meat of a drunken, stupid, red-faced, quarrelsome, frowsy farmer, whose nose "he moralized into a thousand similies," making it out a firebrand like Bardolph's.¹ "I'll tell you what my friend," says he, "the landlady has only to keep you here to save fire and candle. If one was to touch your nose, it would go off like a piece of charcoal." At this the other only grinned like an idiot, the sole variety in his purple face being his little peering grey eyes and yellow teeth; called for another glass, swore he would not stand it; and after many attempts to provoke his humorous antagonist to single combat, which the other turned off (after working him up to a ludicrous pitch of choler) with great adroitness, he fell quietly asleep with a glass of liquor in his hand, which he could not lift to his head. His laughing persecutor made a speech over him, and turning to the opposite side of the room, where they were all sleeping in the midst of this "loud and furious fun," said, "There's a scene, by G—d, for Hogarth to paint. I think he and Shakespeare were our two best men at copying life." This confirmed me in my good opinion of him. Hogarth, Shakespeare, and Nature, were just enough for him (indeed for any man) to know. I said, "You read Cobbett,

don't you? At least," says I, "you talk just as well as he writes." He seemed to doubt this. But I said, "We have an hour to spare: if you'll get pen, ink, and paper, and keep on talking, I'll write down what you say; and if it doesn't make a capital *Political Register*,¹ I'll forfeit my head. You have kept me alive to-night, however. I don't know what I should have done without you."

He did not dislike this view of the thing, nor my asking if he was not about the size of Jem Belcher; and told me soon afterwards, in the confidence of friendship, that "the circumstance which had given him nearly the greatest concern in his life, was Cnbb's beating Jem after he had lost his eye by racket-playing." — The morning dawns; that dim but yet clear light appears, which weighs like solid bars of metal on the sleepless eyelids; the guests drop down from their chambers one by one — but it was too late to think of going to bed now (the clock was on the stroke of seven), we had nothing for it but to find a barber's (the pole that glittered in the morning sun lighted us to his shop), and then a nine miles' march to Hungerford. The day was fine, the sky was blue, the mists were retiring from the marshy ground, the path was tolerably dry, the sitting-up all night had not done us much harm — at least the cause was good; we talked of this and that with amicable difference, roving and sipping of many subjects, but still invariably we returned to the fight. At length, a mile to the left of Hungerford, on a gentle eminence, we saw the ring surrounded by covered carts, gigs, and carriages, of which hundreds had passed us on the road; Toms gave a youthful shout, and we hastened down a narrow lane to the scene of action.

Reader, have you ever seen a fight? If not, you have a pleasure to come, at least if it is a fight like that between the Gas-man and Bill Neate. The crowd was very great when we arrived on the spot; open carriages were coming up, with streamers flying and music playing, and the country-people were pouring in over hedge and ditch in all directions, to see their hero beat or be beaten. The odds were still on Gas, but only about

¹ In Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, Part i, where Falstaff compares Bardolph's nose to a ship's lantern, a ball of wildfire, "an everlasting bon-fire light."

¹ A periodical published by William Cobbett.

five to four. Gully had been down to try Neate, and had backed him considerably, which was a damper to the sanguine confidence of the adverse party. About two hundred thousand pounds were pending. The Gas says, he has lost three thousand pounds which were promised him by different gentlemen if he had won. He had presumed too much on himself, which had made others presume on him. This spirited and formidable young fellow seems to have taken for his motto the old maxim, that "there are three things necessary to success in life — *Impudence! Impudence! Impudence!*" It is so in matters of opinion, but not in the *Fancy* which is the most practical of all things, though even here confidence is half the battle, but only half. Our friend had vaped and swaggered too much, as if he wanted to grin and bully his adversary out of the fight. "Alas! the Bristol man was not so tamed!" — "This is *the grave-digger*" (would Tom Hickman exclaim in the moments of intoxication from gin and success, shewing his tremendous right hand), "this will send many of them to their long homes; I haven't done with them yet!" Why should he — though he had licked four of the best men within the hour, yet why should he threaten to inflict dishonorable chastisement on my old master Richmond, a veteran going off the stage, and who has borne his sable honors meekly? Magnanimity, my dear Tom, and bravery, should be inseparable. Or why should he go up to his antagonist, the first time he ever saw him at the Fives Court, and measuring him from head to foot with a glance of contempt, as Achilles surveyed Hector, say to him, "What, are you Bill Neate? I'll knock more blood out of that great carcase of thine, this day fortnight, than you ever knock'd out of a bullock's!" It was not manly, 'twas not fighter-like. If he was sure of the victory (as he was not), the less said about it the better. Modesty should accompany the *Fancy* as its shadow. The best men were always the best behaved. Jem Belcher, the Game Chicken (before whom the Gas-man could not have lived) were civil, silent men. So is Cribb, so is Tom Belcher, the most

elegant of sparrers, and not a man for every one to take by the nose. I enlarged on this topic in the mail (while Turtle was asleep), and said very wisely (as I thought) that impertinence was a part of no profession. A boxer was bound to beat his man, but not to thrust his fist, either actually or by implication, in every one's face. Even a highwayman, in the way of trade, may blow out your brains, but if he uses foul language at the same time, I should say he was no gentleman. A boxer, I would infer, need not be a black-guard or a coxcomb, more than another. Perhaps I pressed this point too much on a fallen man — Mr. Thomas Hickman has by this time learnt that first of all lessons, "That man was made to mourn." He has lost nothing by the hue fight but his presumption, and that every man may do as well without! By an over-display of this quality, however, the public had been prejudiced against him, and the *knoivmg-ones* were taken in. Few but those who had bet on him wished Gas to win. With my own possessions on the subject, the result of the nth of December appeared to me as fine a piece of poetical justice as I had ever witnessed. The difference of weight between the two combatants (14 stone to 12) was nothing to the sporting men. Great, heavy, clumsy, long-armed Bill Neate kicked the beam in the scale of the Gas-man's vanity. The amateurs were frightened at his big words, and thought that they would make up for the difference of six feet and five feet nine. Truly, the *fancy* are not men of imagination. They judge of what has been, and cannot conceive of any thing that is to be. The Gas-man had won hitherto; therefore he must beat a man half as big again as himself — and that to a certainty. Besides, there are as many feuds, factions, prejudices, pedantic notions in the *fancy* as in the state or in the schools. Mr. Gully is almost the only cool, sensible man among them, who exercises an unbiased discretion, and is not a slave to his passions in these matters. But enough of reflections, and to our tale. The day, as I have said, was fine for a December morning. The grass was wet, and the ground miry, and ploughed up with multitudinous feet, except

that, within the ring itself, there was a spot of virgin-green closed in and unprofaned by vulgar tread, that shone with dazzling brightness in the mid-day sun. For it was now noon, and we had an hour to wait. This is the trying time. It is then the heart sickens, as you think what the two champions are about, and how short a lime will determine their fate. After the first blow is struck, there is no opportunity for nervous apprehensions; you are swallowed up in the immediate interest of the scene — but

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream.

I found it so as I felt the sun's rays clinging to my back, and saw the white wintry clouds sink below the verge of the horizon. "So, I thought, my fairest hopes have faded from my sight! — so will the Gas-man's glory, or that of his adversary, vanish in an hour." The *swells* were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the *cockneys* had been distanced by the sixty-six miles), the time drew near, I had got a good stand, a bustle, a buzz, ran through the crowd, and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose greatcoat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk, and, with a modest cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring. He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress, when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the-walk. He strutted about more than became a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of super-erogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax, to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day. By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, "with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear" the pugilistic reputa-

tion of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed, light, vigorous, elastic, and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther's hide. There was now a dead pause — attention was awe-struck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short — did not feel his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the *scratch* — shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds, three first, and then following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout, and I said, "There is no standing this." Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man's blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body. They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledgehammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard — they struck mutually and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored — the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how it would end. This was the only moment in which opinion was divided, for, in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck, with his right hand, and falling from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted a tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow, and made a red rum of that side of his face. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout — a roar of triumph as the waves of fortune rolled tumultuously from side to side. This was a settler.

Hickman got up, and "grinned horrible a ghastly smile," yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself; it was the first time he had ever been so punished; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened, — his blows could not tell at such a distance, — he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his feet; and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring — no half-hits — no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-matfreship* of the art — they were almost all knock-down blows: — the fight was a good stand-up fight. The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover strength and resolution; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their bodies; and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand steady to inflict or receive mortal offense, and rush upon each other "like two clouds over the Caspian" — this is the most astonishing thing of all: — this is the high and heroic state of man! From this time forward the event became more certain every round; and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me; but in the scuffle, he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky. I never saw anything more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from

him. His face was like a human skull, a death's head, spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was not like an actual man, but like a preternatural, spectral appearance, or like one of the figures in Dante's *Inferno*. Yet he fought on after this for several rounds, still striking the first desperate blow, and Neate standing on the defensive, and using the same cautious guard to the last, as if he had still all his work to do, and it was not till the Gas-man was so stunned in the seventeenth or eighteenth round, that his senses forsook him, and he could not come to time, that the battle was declared over.¹ Ye who despise the Fancy, do something to shew as much *pluck*, or as much self-possession as this, before you assume a superiority which you have never given a single proof of by any one action in the whole course of your lives! — When the Gas-man came to himself, the first words he uttered were, "Where am I? What is the matter?" "Nothing is the matter, Tom, — you have lost the battle, but you are the bravest man alive." And Jackson whispered to him, "I am collecting a purse for you, Tom." — Vain sounds, and unheard at that moment! Neate instantly went up and shook him cordially by the hand, and seeing some old acquaintance, began to flourish with his fists, calling out, "Ah, you always said I couldn't fight — What do you think now?" But all in good humor, and without any appearance of arrogance, only it was evident Bill Neate was pleased that he had won the fight. When it was over, I asked Cnbb if he did not think it was a good one? He said, "Pretty well!" The carrier-pigeons now mounted into the air, and one of them flew with the news of her husband's victory to the bosom of Mrs. Neate. Alas, for Mrs. Hickman!

Mais au revoir, as Sir Fopling Flutter says.

¹ Scroggim said of the Gas-man, that he thought he was a man of that courage, that if his hands were cut off, he would still fight on with the stumps — like that of Widringtoll,

— in doleful dumps,
Who, when his legs were smitten off
Still fought upon his stumps.
(Hazlitt.)

I went down with Toms; I returned with Jack Pigott, whom I met on the ground. Toms is a rattle brain; Pigott is a sentimentalist. Now, under favor, I am a sentimentalist too — therefore I say nothing, but that the interest of the excursion did not flag as I came back. Pigott and I marched along the causeway leading from Hungerford to Newbury, now observing the effect of a brilliant sun on the tawny meads or moss-colored cottages, now exulting in the fight, now digressing to some topic of general and elegant literature. My friend was dressed in character for the occasion, or like one of the *Fancy*; that is, with a double portion of great-coats, clogs, and overhauls: and just as we had agreed with a couple of country-lads to carry his superfluous wearing-apparel to the next town, we were overtaken by a return post-chaise, into which I got, Pigott preferring a seat on the bar. There were two strangers already in the chaise, and on their observing they supposed I had been to the fight, I said I had, and concluded they had done the same. They appeared, however, a little shy and sore on the subject, and it was not till after several hints dropped, and questions put, that it turned out that they had missed it. One of these friends had undertaken to drive the other there in his gig: they had set out, to make sure work, the day before at three in the afternoon. The owner of the one-horse vehicle scorned to ask his way, and drove right on to Dagshot, instead of turning off at Hounslow: there they stopped all night, and set off the next day across the country to Reading, from whence they took coach, and got down within a mile or two of Hungerford, just half an hour after the fight was over. This might be safely set down as one of the miseries of human life. We parted with these two gentlemen who had been to see the fight, but had returned as they went, at Wollhampton, where we were promised beds (an irresistible temptation, for Pigott had passed the preceding night at Hungerford as we had done at Newbury), and we turned into an old bow-windowed parlor with a carpet and a snug fire; and after devouring a quantity of tea, toast, and eggs, sat down to consider, during an hour of

philosophic leisure, what we should have for supper. In the midst of an Epicurean deliberation between a roasted fowl and mutton chops with mashed potatoes, we were interrupted by an inroad of Goths and Vandals — *0 procul este profant!*¹ — not real flash-men, but interlopers, noisy pretenders, butchers from Tothill-fields, brokers from White-chapel, who called immediately for pipes and tobacco, hoping it would not be disagreeable to the gentlemen, and began to insist that it was *a cross*. Pigott withdrew from the smoke and noise into another room, and left me to dispute the point with them for a couple of hours *sans intermission* by the dial. The next morning we rose refreshed; and on observing that Jack had a pocket volume in his hand, in which he read in the intervals of our discourse, I inquired what it was, and learned to my particular satisfaction that it was a volume of the *New Elotse*. Ladies, after this, will you contend that a love for the *Fancy* is incompatible with the cultivation of sentiment? — We jogged on as before, my friend setting me up in a genteel drab great-coat and green silk handkerchief (which I must say became me exceedingly), and after stretching our legs for a few miles, and seeing Jack Randall, Ned Turner, and Scroggins, pass on the top of one of the Bath coaches, we engaged with the driver of the second to take us to London for the usual fee. I got inside, and found three other passengers. One of them was an old gentleman with an aquiline nose, powdered hair, and a pigtail, and who looked as if he had played many a rubber at the Bath rooms. I said to myself, he is very like Mr. Windham.² I wish he would enter into conversation, that I might hear what fine observations would come from those finely-turned features. However, nothing passed, till, stopping to dine at Reading, some inquiry was made by the company about the fight, and I gave (as the reader may believe) an eloquent and animated description of it. When we got into the coach again, the old gentleman, after a graceful exordium, said, he had, when a boy, been to a fight between

¹ Avaunt! ye unhallowed. Virgil, *Mneid*, vi, 258.

² William Windham (1750-1810), a famous orator and statesman.

the famous Broughton and George Stevenson, who was called the *Fighting Coachman*, in the year 1770, with the late Mr. Windham. This beginning flattered the spirit of prophecy within me and rivetted my attention. He went on — "George Stevenson was coachman to a friend of my father's. He was an old man when I saw him some years afterwards. He took hold of his own arm and said, 'there was muscle here once, but now it is no more than this young gentleman's.' He added, 'Well, no matter; I have been here long. I am willing to go hence, and I hope I have done no more harm than another man.' Once," said my unknown companion, "I asked him if he had ever beat Broughton? He said Yes; that he had fought with him three times, and the last time he fairly beat him, though the world did not allow it. Til tell you how it was, master. When the seconds lifted us up in the last round, we were so exhausted that neither of us could stand, and we fell upon one another, and as Master Broughton fell uppermost, the mob gave it in his favor, and he was said to have won the battle. But," says he, 'the fact was, that as his second (John Cuthbert) lifted him up, he said to him, 'Til fight no more, I've had enough'; which," says Stevenson, 'you know gave me the victory. And to prove to you that this was the case, when John Cuthbert was on his death-bed, and they asked him if there was anything on his mind which he wished to confess, he answered, "Yes, that there was one thing he wished to set right, for that certainly Master Stevenson won that last fight with Master Broughton; for he whispered him as he lifted him up in the last round of all, that he had had enough." This," said the Bath gentleman, "was a bit of human nature"; and I have written this account of the fight on purpose that it might not be lost to the world. He also stated as a proof of the candor of mind in this class of men, that Stevenson acknowledged that Broughton could have beat him in his best day; but that he (Broughton) was getting old in their last encounter. When we stopped in Piccadilly, I wanted to ask the gentleman some questions about the late Mr. Windham, but had not courage. I got

out, resigned my coat and green silk handkerchief to Pigott (loth to part with these ornaments of life), and walked home in high spirits.

P.S. Toms called upon me the next day, to ask me if I did not think the fight was a complete thing? I said I thought it was. I hope he will relish my account of it.

A Farewell to Essay-Writing

18x8

Written at Wintcrslow. Published in *The London Weekly Review* for March 29, 1828. The essay reflects Hazlitt's temperament, his interest in life, and his relations with his friends, Lamb and Leigh Hunt. The latter was editor of *The Examiner*, in which many of Hazlitt's essays were published.

This life is best, if quiet life is best.

Food, warmth, sleep, and a book; these are all I at present ask — the *ultima Thule*¹ of my wandering desires. Do you not then wish for

A friend in your retreat,
Whom you may whisper, solitude is sweet?

Expected, well enough: — gone, still better. Such attractions are strengthened by distance. Nor a mistress? "Beautiful mask! I know thee!" When I can judge of the heart from the face, of the thoughts from the lips, I may again trust myself. Instead of these give me the robin redbreast, pecking the crumbs at the door, or warbling on the leafless spray, the same glancing form that has followed me wherever I have been, and "done its spiriting gently"; or the rich notes of the thrush that startle the ear of winter, and seem to have drunk up the full draught of joy from the very sense of contrast. To these I adhere, and am faithful, for they are true to me; and, dear in themselves, are dearer for the sake of what is departed, leading me back (by the hand) to that dreaming world, in the innocence of which they sat and made sweet music, waking the promise of future years, and answered by the eager throbbings of my own breast. But now "the credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er," and I turn back from
¹ farthest north; i.e., the ultimate goal.

the world that has deceived me, to Nature that lent it a false beauty, and that keeps up the illusion of the past. As I quaff my libations of tea in a morning, I love to watch the clouds sailing from the west, and fancy that "the spring comes slowly up this way." In this hope, while "fields are dank and ways are mire," I follow the same direction to a neighboring wood, where, having gained the dry, level greensward, I can see my way for a mile before me, closed in on each side by copse-wood, and ending in a point of light more or less brilliant, as the day is bright or cloudy. What a walk is this to me! I have no need of book or companion — the days, the hours, the thoughts of my youth are at my side, and blend with the air that fans my cheek. Here I can saunter for hours, bending my eye forward, stopping and turning to look back, thinking to strike off into some less trodden path, yet hesitating to quit the one I am in, afraid to snap the brittle threads of memory. I remark the shining trunks and slender branches of the birch trees, waving in the idle breeze; or a pheasant springs up on whirring wing; or I recall the spot where I once found a wood-pigeon at the foot of a tree, weltering in its gore, and think how many seasons have flown since "it left its little life in air." Dates, names, faces come back — to what purpose? Or why think of them now? Or rather why not think of them oftencr? We walk through life, as through a narrow path, with a thin curtain drawn around it, behind are ranged rich portraits, airy harps are strung — yet we will not stretch forth our hands arid lift aside the veil, to catch glimpses of the one, or sweep the chords of the other. As in a theatre, when the old-fashioned green curtain drew up, groups of figures, fantastic dresses, laughing faces, rich banquets, stately columns, gleaming vistas appeared beyond; so we have only at any time to "peep through the blanket of the past," to possess ourselves at once of all that has regaled our senses, that is stored up in our memory, that has struck our fancy, that has pierced our hearts: — yet to all this we are indifferent, insensible, and seem intent only on the present vexation, and future disappointment. If there is a Titian

hanging up in the room with me, I scarcely regard it: how then should I be expected to strain the mental eye so far, or to throw down, by the magic spells of the will, the stone walls that enclose it in the Louvre? There is one head there of which I have often thought, when looking at it, that nothing should ever disturb me again, and I would become the character it represents — such perfect calmness and self-possession reigns in it! Why do I not hang an image of this in some dusky corner of my brain, and turn an eye upon it ever and anon, as I have need of some such talisman to calm my troubled thoughts? The attempt is fruitless, if not natural; or, like that of the French, to hang garlands on the grave, and to conjure back the dead by miniature pictures of them while living! It is only some actual coincidence or local association that tends, without violence, to "open all the cells where memory slept." I can easily, by stooping over the long-sprent grass and clay cold clod, recall the tufts of primroses, or purple hyacinths, that formerly grew on the same spot, and cover the bushes with leaves and singing-birds, as they were eighteen summers ago; or prolonging my walk and hearing the sighing gale rustle through a tall, straight wood at the end of it, can fancy that I distinguish the cry of hounds, and the fatal group issuing from it, as in the tale of *Theodore and Honora*.¹ A moaning gust of wind aids the belief, I look once more to see whether the trees before me answer to the idea of the horror-stricken grove, and an air-built city towers over their grey tops.

Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
The chief and most renown'd Ravenna stands.

I return home resolved to read the entire poem through, and, after dinner, drawing my chair to the fire, and holding a small print close to my eyes, launch into the full tide of Dryden's couplets (a stream of sound), comparing his didactic and descriptive pomp with the simple pathos and picturesque truth of Boccaccio's story, and tasting with a pleasure, which none but an habitual reader can feel, some quaint examples of pronunciation in this accomplished versifier.

¹ Dryden's version of a story from Boccaccio.

Which when Honoria viewed,
The fresh impulse her former fright renew'd.
(Theodore and Honoria.)

And made th' insult, which in his grief appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears.
(Sigismonda and Guiscardo.)

These trifling instances of the wavering and unsettled state of the language give double effect to the firm and stately march of the verse, and make me dwell with a sort of tender interest on the difficulties and doubts of an earlier period of literature. They pronounced words then in a manner which we should laugh at now; and they wrote verse in a manner which we can do anything but laugh at. The pride of a new acquisition seems to give fresh confidence to it; to impel the rolling syllables through the molds provided for them, and to overflow the envious bounds of rhyme into time-honored triplets. I am much pleased with Leigh Hunt's mention of Moore's involuntary admiration of Dryden's free, unshackled verse, and of his repeating *con amore** and with an Irish spirit and accent, the fine lines —

Let honor and preferment go for gold.
But glorious beauty isn't to be sold.

What sometimes surprises me in looking back to the past is, with the exception already stated, to find myself so little changed in the time. The same images and trains of thought stick by me: I have the same tastes, likings, sentiments, and wishes that I had then. One great ground of confidence and support has, indeed, been struck from under my feet; but I have made it up to myself by proportionable pertinacity of opinion. The success of the great cause,² to which I had vowed myself, was to me more than all the world: I had a strength in its strength, a resource which I knew not of, till it failed me for the second time.

Fall'n was Glenartny's stately tree!
Oh! ne'er to see Lord Ronald more!

It was not till I saw the axe laid to the root that I found the full extent of what I had

¹ with delight.

² The cause of liberty, typified by the French Revolution.

to lose and suffer. But my conviction of the right was only established by the triumph of the wrong; and my earliest hopes will be my last regrets. One source of this unbendingness (which some may call obstinacy) is that, though living much alone, I have never worshipped the Echo. I see plainly enough that black is not white, that the grass is green, that kings are not their subjects; and, in such self-evident cases, do not think it necessary to collate my opinions with the received prejudices. In subtler questions, and matters that admit of doubt, as I do not impose my opinion on others without a reason, so I will not give up mine to them without a better reason, and a person calling me names, or giving himself airs of authority, does not convince me of his having taken more pains to find out the truth than I have, but the contrary. Mr. Gifford¹ once said, that "while I was sitting over my gin and tobacco-pipes, I fancied myself a Leibnitz." He did not so much as know that I had ever read a metaphysical book: — was I, therefore, out of complaisance or deference to him, to forget whether I had or not? I am rather disappointed, both on my own account and his, that Mr. Hunt has missed the opportunity of explaining the character of a friend as clearly as he might have done. He is puzzled to reconcile the shyness of my pretensions with the inveteracy and sturdiness of my principles. I should have thought they were nearly the same thing. Both from disposition and habit, I can assume nothing in word, look, or manner. I cannot steal a march upon public opinion in any way. My standing upright, speaking loud, entering a room gracefully, proves nothing; therefore I neglect these ordinary means of recommending myself to the good graces and admiration of strangers (and, as it appears, even of philosophers and friends). Why? Because I have other resources, or, at least, am absorbed in other studies and pursuits. Suppose this absorption to be extreme, and even morbid — that I have brooded over an idea till it has become a kind of substance in my brain, that I have reasons for a thing which I have found out

* William Gifford, (1757-1826), editor of *The Quarterly Review* (Tory) and a bitter enemy of Hazlitt.

with much labor and pains, and to which I can scarcely do justice without the utmost violence of exertion (and that only to a few persons) — is this a reason for my playing off my out-of-the-way notions in all companies, wearing a prim and self-complacent air, as if I were "the admired of all observers?" or is it not rather an argument (together with a want of animal spirits), why I should retire into myself, and perhaps acquire a nervous and uneasy look, from a consciousness of the disproportion between the interest and conviction I feel on certain subjects, and my ability to communicate what weighs upon my own mind to others? If my ideas, which I do not avouch, but suppose, lie below the surface, why am I to be always attempting to dasfcle superficial people with them, or smiling, delighted, at my own want of success?

What I have here stated is only the excess of the common and well-known English and scholastic character. I am neither a buffoon, a fop, nor a Frenchman, which Mr. Hunt would have me to be. He finds it odd that I am a close reasoner and a loose dresser. I have been (among other follies) a hard liver as well as a hard thinker; and the consequences of that will not allow me to dress as I please. People in real life are not like players on a stage, who put on a certain look or costume, merely for effect. I am aware, indeed, that the gay and airy pen of the author does not seriously probe the errors or misfortunes of his friends — he only glances at their seeming peculiarities, so as to make them odd and ridiculous; for which forbearance few of them will thank him. Why does he assert that I was vain of my hair when it was black, and am equally vain of it now it is grey, when this is true in neither case? This transposition of motives makes me almost doubt whether Lord Byron was thinking so much of the rings on his fingers as his biographer was.¹ These sort of criticisms should be left to women. I am made to wear a little hat, stuck on the top of my head the wrong way. Nay, I commonly wear a large slouching hat over my eyebrows; and if ever I had another, I must have twisted it about in any

shape to get rid of the annoyance. This probably tickled Mr. Hunt's fancy and retains possession of it, to the exclusion of the obvious truism that I naturally wear "a melancholy hat."

I am charged with using strange gestures and contortions of features in argument, in order to "look energetic." One would rather suppose that the heat of the argument produces the extravagance of the gestures, as I am said to be calm at other times. It is like saying that a man in a passion clenches his teeth, not because he is, but in order to seem, angry. Why should everything be construed into air and affectation? With Hamlet, I may say, "I know not seems "

Again, my old friend and pleasant "Companion" remarks it, as an anomaly in my character, that I crawl about the fives-court like a cripple till I get the racket in my hand, when I start up as if I was possessed with a devil. I have then a motive for exertion; I lie by for difficulties and extreme cases. *Aut Caesar aut nullus.*¹ I have no notion of doing nothing with an air of importance, nor should I ever take a liking to the game of battledore and shuttlecock. I have only seen by accident a page of the unpublished manuscript relating to the present subject, which I dare say is, on the whole, friendly and just, and which has been suppressed as being too favorable, considering certain prejudices against me.

In matters of taste and feeling, one proof that my conclusions have not been quite shallow or hasty, is the circumstance of their having been lasting. I have the same favorite books, pictures, passages that I ever had: I may, therefore, presume that they will last me my life — nay, I may indulge a hope that my thoughts will survive me. This continuity of impression is the only thing on which I pride myself. Even L——,³ whose relish of certain things is as keen and earnest as possible, takes a surfeit of admiration, and I should be afraid to ask about his select authors or particular friends, after a lapse of ten years. As to myself, any one knows where to have me. What I have once made up my mind to, I abide by to the end of the

¹ Leigh Hunt wrote *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries* (1828).

² Lamb.

chapter. One cause of my independence of opinion is, I believe, the liberty I give to others, or the very diffidence and distrust of making converts. I should be an excellent man on a jury. I might say little, but should starve "the other eleven obstinate fellows" out. I remember Mr. Godwin writing to Mr. Wordsworth, that "his tragedy of *Antonio* could not fail of success." It was damned past all redemption. I said to Mr. Wordsworth that I thought this a natural consequence; for how could any one have a dramatic turn of mind who judged entirely of others from himself? Mr. Godwin might be convinced of the excellence of his work, but how could he know that others would be convinced of it, unless by supposing that they were as wise as himself, and as infallible critics of dramatic poetry — so many Aristotles sitting in judgment on Euripides! This shows why pride is connected with shyness and reserve; for the really proud have not so high an opinion of the generality as to suppose that they can understand them, or that there is any common measure between them. So Dryden exclaims of his opponents with bitter disdain —

Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive.

I have not sought to make partisans, still less did I dream of making enemies; and have therefore kept my opinions myself, whether they were currently adopted or not. To get others to come into our ways of thinking, we must go over to theirs; and it is necessary to follow, in order to lead. At the time I lived here formerly, I had no suspicion that I should ever become a voluminous writer, yet I had just the same confidence in my feelings before I had ventured to air them in public as I have now. Neither the outcry *for* or *against* moves me a jot: I do not say that the one is not more agreeable than the other.

Not far from the spot where I write, I first read Chaucer's *Flower and Leaf*,¹ and was charmed with that young beauty, shrouded in her bower, and listening with ever-fresh delight to the repeated song of the nightingale close by her — the impression of the

scene, the vernal landscape, the cool of the morning, the gushing notes of the songstress,

And ayen methought she sung close by mine ear,

5 is as vivid as if it had been of yesterday; and nothing can persuade me that that is not a fine poem. I do not find this impression conveyed in Dryden's version, and therefore nothing can persuade me that that is as fine. I used to walk out at this time with Mr. and Miss L—— of an evening, to look at the Claude Lorraine skies over our heads melting from azure into purple and gold, and to gather mushrooms, that sprung up at our feet, to throw into our hashed mutton at supper. I was at that time an enthusiastic admirer of Claude, and could dwell forever on one or two of the finest prints from him hung round my little room; the fleecy flocks, the bending trees, the winding streams, the groves, the nodding temples, the air-wave hills, and distant sunny vales; and tried to translate them into their lovely living hues. People then told me that Wilson was much superior to Claude: I did not believe them. Their pictures have since been seen together at the British Institution, and all the world have come into my opinion. I have not, on that account, given it up. I will not compare our hashed mutton with Amelia's;² but it put us in mind of it, and led to a discussion, sharply seasoned and well sustained, till midnight, the result of which appeared some years after in the *Edinburgh Review*. Have I a better opinion of those criticisms on that account, or should I therefore maintain them with greater vehemence and tenaciousness? Oh no; both rather with less, now that they are before the public, and it is for them to make their election.

It is in looking back to such scenes that I draw my best consolation for the future. Later impressions come and go, and serve to fill up the intervals; but these are my standing resource, my true classics. If I have had few real pleasures or advantages, my ideas, from their sinewy texture, have been to me in the nature of realities; and if I should not be able to add to the stock, I can live by

¹ In Hazlitt's time this poem was mistakenly attributed to Chaucer.

² Charles and Mary Lamb.

³ Fielding's *Amelia*, book x, chap. v.

husbanding the interest. As to my speculations, there is little to admire in them but my admiration of others; and whether they have an echo in time to come or not, I have learned to set a grateful value on the past, 5 and am content to wind up the account of what is personal only to myself and the immediate circle of objects in which I have moved, with an act of easy oblivion, And curtain close such scene from every future view.

Thomas T'e Quincey • 1785-1859

Like Lamb's, Thomas De Quincey's name stands high in literature without the support of a single work of large dimensions. He was a miscellanist, the author of some hundred and fifty magazine articles upon a vast variety of subjects, historical, philosophical, economic, literary, and imaginative, on most of which he set the stamp of a mysterious and baffling personality. He was born at Manchester, August 15, 1785. His father was a merchant who died when Thomas was a boy, and left a considerable fortune. The young De Quincey was sent to the Manchester Grammar School, from which he ran away and spent a summer wandering in North Wales, enjoying an income of a guinea a week. This he sacrificed when he went to London, to spend a winter of terrible hardship, which resulted in what was then known as dyspepsia, and also in the habit of taking laudanum to assuage the pain. At the age of eighteen, by arrangement with his guardians, he was sent to Worcester College, Oxford. He had an enthusiastic admiration for the Lake Poets; and, becoming acquainted with Coleridge, he presented him with £300 when his inheritance fell due. He escorted Coleridge's family to Keswick, and visited Wordsworth at Grasmere. In 1809 ^{he took} up his residence there, married a farmer's daughter, and, having spent his fortune, began to write for a livelihood. His first publication was the opening essay of the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* ' in *The London Magazine* (1821). Later he wrote for *Blackwood's Magazine*, in Edinburgh, whither he moved with his family in 1830. There he lived and wrote in the midst of financial complications which led to extraordinary difficulties with his employers, tradesmen, and landlords, and with the law. At one time he moved about among four separate lodgings. An edition of so much as could be recovered of his works appeared in fourteen volumes in 1859, the year of his death in Edinburgh.

De Quincey was a journalist, and his work reflects the faults and virtues of the type. Although shy and retiring, he confesses to an intense curiosity about people and things. As a journalist, he took advantage of the interest of the public in personalities. Beginning with the revelation of his own experience, he passed on to reminiscences of his friends, sketches of the Lake Poets, and *Early Memoirs of Grasmere*. Further, he exploited the passion of the public for the occult and mysterious in such papers as *Rostcrustans and Free Masons*-, and for the sensational and macabre in the account of his own addiction to opium, and in *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*, in which crime is treated with the gruesome detail of a reporter and with the playfulness of a professional humorist. As a literary critic, he took account of the contemporary interest in German philosophy, economics, and history, enlivening his topics with digressions, diversions, and examples of his endless love for mental play.

DC Quincey is responsible for a famous distinction between the literature of knowledge

and the literature of power. His own writings tended to obscure this division, for, though he wrote many informative and didactic articles, he was constantly drawn to pass beyond the facts into subtleties of theory and imaginative speculation. At times the historical subject is quite subordinate to the aesthetic appeal, as in *The Revolt of the Tartars* or *Joan of Arc*. His reputation, however, rests chiefly on works of sheer power of imagination, often excited by opium to supernatural brilliancy. These works include the conclusion of *The Pleasures of Optum*, in which he imitates the stately rhetoric of seventeenth-century prose, *The Pains of Optum*, *Susptna de Profundis*, and *The English Mail Coach* with its concluding *Dream-Fugue*. For these he developed a style which he described as "a mode of impassioned prose," a prose having in diction and rhythm the imaginative, and some of the technical, qualities of poetry. The influence of music in the development of themes is also noticeable. In his practice of what De Quincey claimed as his own invention he became a notable influence on English style, contributing to the recovery of resources for which the early seventeenth century was noteworthy, and finding imitators in Bulwer, Dickens, and Ruskin.

The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey have been edited by David Masson, in fourteen volumes (1896-1897). A volume of selections by M. H. Turk is included in the Athenaeum Press series. The authoritative biography is by Horace A. Eaton (1936). A Short Life by David Masson is in The English Men of Letters series (1901). There are essays by George Saintsbury in *Essays in English Literature* and by Sir Leslie Stephen in *Hours in a Library*.

FROM *Suspiria De Profundis*

1845

This title "Sighs from the Depths" covered three articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*, forming a continuation of the *Confessions*. The third, given here, an account of dreams experienced under the influence of opium, is the most famous of all the examples of De Quincey's prose poetry.

Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow

Oftentimes at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the newborn infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness — typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man everywhere, and of that benignity in powers invisible, which even in Pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. That might bear different interpretations.

But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying, perhaps, in his heart — "Behold what is greater than yourselves!" This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her face (except to me in dreams), but always acted by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb), *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the education of the nursery. She, that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She therefore watches over human education. Now, the word *educō*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified

in the crystallization of languages) from the word *educō*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *educēs* or develops — *educates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant — not the poor machinery that moves by spelling-books and grammars, but that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, works forever upon children — resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like restless spokes, are glimmering forever as they revolve.

If, then, these are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader, think — that children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally* — the sense of Euclid where it means *universally* (or in the whole extent of the *genus*) and a foolish sense of this world where it means *usually*. Now I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of, who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *Foundation* should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often communes with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. "These ladies," said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parca* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called

from the other side of the grave offences that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now*; but in Oxford I said — "one of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters — by what name shall we call them?

If I say simply — "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow — separate cases of sorrow — whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations, that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them, therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow*. I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household, and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? Oh, no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities of language. They may utter voices through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound — eternal silence reigns in *their* kingdoms. They spoke not as they talked with Levana. They whispered not. They sang not. Though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung; for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their pleasure, not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven — by changes on earth — by pulses in secret rivers — heraldries painted on darkness — and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. They wheeled in mazes; / spelled the steps. They telegraphed from afar; / read the signals. They conspired to-

gether; and on the mirrors of darkness my eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols — *mine* are the words.

What is it the sisters are? What is it that they do? Let me describe their form, and their presence, if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline; or presence it were that forever advanced to the front, or forever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, when a voice was heard of lamentation — Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened forever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds; oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sate all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, He recalled her to Himself. But her blind father mourns forever over *her*; still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing

before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of "Madonna."

The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops forever, forever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic; raging in the highest against heaven; and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in Mediterranean galleys, of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England, of the baffled penitent reverting his eye forever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him*

a stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered; — every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; — every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge; — every captive in every dungeon; — all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace — all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest—Hush! whisper, whilst we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live, but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers — for noon of day or noon of night — for ebbing or for flowing tide — may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power, but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast

or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps.

5 She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum* — Our Lady of Darkness.

10 These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses — these were the *Eumenides*' or Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation) — of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by
15 her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs, and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:

20 "Lo! here is he, whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he
25 become idolatrous, and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshipped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this
30 young idolater, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to *thy* heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou" — turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*' she said — "wicked sister, that
35 temptest and hatest, do thou take him from *her*. See that thy sceptre lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope — wither the relentings of
40 love — scorch the fountains of tears: curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace — so shall he see the things that ought *not* to be seen — sights that are abominable, and secrets that
45 are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had — to plague his heart
50 until we had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."

FROM The English Mail Coach

1849

In October, 1849, *Blackwood's Magazine* contained 5
an anonymous article entitled "The Glory of Motion," giving an account of coaching experiences, particularly of the bearing of the news of the victory of Waterloo to all parts of the kingdom. In December appeared two more sections of what was 10
then called *The English Mail Coach*. Later, for the collected edition of his works, DC Quincey supplied the following introduction:

The English Mail-Coach. — This little paper, according to my original intention, formed part of 15
the *Suspiria de Profundis*; from which, for a momentary purpose, I did not scruple to detach it, and to publish it apart, as sufficiently intelligible even when dislocated from its place in a larger whole. To my surprise, however, one or two 20
mimics, not carelessly in conversation, but deliberately in print, professed their inability to apprehend (he meaning of the whole, or to follow the links of the connexion between its several parts. I am myself as little able to understand where the difficulty lies, or to detect any lurking obscurity, as these critics found themselves to unravel my logic. Possibly I may not be an indifferent and 25
neutral judge in such a case. I will therefore sketch a brief abstract of the little paper according to my original design, and then leave the reader to judge how far this design is kept in sight through the actual execution.

Thirty-seven years ago, or rather more, accident made me, in the dead of night, and of a night memorably solemn, the solitary witness of an 30
appalling scene, which threatened instant death in a shape the most terrific to two young people whom I had no means of assisting, except in so far as I was able to give them a most hurried warning of their danger; but even *that* not until they stood 40
within the very shadow of the catastrophe, being divided from the most frightful of deaths by scarcely more, if more at all, than seventy seconds.

Such was the scene, such in its outline, from which the whole of this paper radiates as a natural expansion. This scene is circumstantially narrated in Section the Second, entitled *The Vision of Sudden Death*.

But a movement of horror, and of spontaneous 50
recoil from this dreadful scene, naturally carried the whole of that scene, raised and idealized, into my dreams, and very soon into a rolling succession of dreams. The actual scene, as looked down upon from the box of the mail, was transformed into a 55
dream, as tumultuous and changing as a musical fugue. This troubled dream is circumstantially reported in Section the Third, entitled *Dream-Fugue on the Theme of Sudden Death*. What I had beheld from my seat upon the mail — the scenical 60
strife of action and passion, of anguish and fear, as I had there witnessed them moving in ghostly

silence — this duel between life and death narrowing itself to a point of such exquisite evanescence as the collision neared: all these elements of the scene blended, under the law of association, with the previous and permanent features of distinction investing the mail itself, which features at that time lay — 1st, in velocity unprecedented, 2dly, in the power and beauty of the horses, 3dly, in the official connexion with the government of a great nation, and, 4thly, in the function, almost a consecrated function, of publishing and diffusing through the land the great political events, and especially the great battles, during a conflict of unparalleled grandeur. These honorary distinctions are all described circumstantially in the First or introductory Section (*The Glory of Motion*). The three first were distinctions maintained at all times; but the fourth and grandest belonged exclusively to the war with Napoleon; and this it was which most naturally introduced Waterloo into the dream. Waterloo, I understand, was the particular feature of the *Dream-Fugue* which my censors were least able to account for. Yet surely Waterloo, which, in common with every other great battle, it had been our special privilege to publish over all the land, most naturally entered the dream under the licence of our privilege. If not — if there be anything amiss — let the Dream be responsible. The Dream is a law to itself, and as well quarrel with a rainbow for showing, or for 35
not showing, a secondary arch. So far as I know, every element in the shifting movements of the Dream derived itself either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the mail. For example, the cathedral aisle derived itself from the mimic combination of features which grouped themselves together at the point of approaching collision — viz. an arrow-like section of the road, six hundred 40
yards long, under the solemn lights described, with lofty trees meeting overhead in arches. The guard's horn, again — a humble instrument in itself — was yet glorified as the organ of publication for so many great national events. And the incident of the Dying Trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-relief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn, and to blow the warning blast. But the Dream 45
knows best; and the Dream, I say again, is the responsible party.

SECTION II

The Vision of Sudden Death

What is to be taken as the predominant opinion of man, reflective and philosophic, upon SUDDEN DEATH? It is remarkable that, in different conditions of society, sudden

death has been variously regarded as the consummation of an earthly career most fervently to be desired, or, again, as that consummation which is with most horror to be deprecated. Caesar the Dictator, at his last dinner-party (*cana*), on the very evening before his assassination, when the minutes of his earthly career were numbered, being asked what death, in *his* judgment, might be pronounced the most eligible, replied "that which should be most sudden." On the other hand, the divine Litany of our English Church, when breathing forth supplications, as if in some representative character, for the whole human race prostrate before God, places such a death in the very van of horrors: "From lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence, and famine, from battle and murder, and from SUDDEN DEATH — *Good Lord, deliver us.*" Sudden death is here made to crown the climax in a grand ascent of calamities, it is ranked among the last of curses; and yet by the noblest of Romans it was ranked as the first of blessings. In that difference most readers will see little more than the essential difference between Christianity and Paganism. But this, on consideration, I doubt. The Christian Church may be right in its estimate of sudden death; and it is a natural feeling, though after all it may also be an infirm one, to wish for a quiet dismissal from life, as that which *seems* most reconcilable with meditation, with penitential retrospects, and with the humiliations of farewell prayer. There does not, however, occur to me any direct scriptural warrant for this earnest petition of the English Litany, unless under a special construction of the word "sudden." It seems a petition **indulged rather and conceded to human in-**

is not so much a doctrine built upon the eternities of the Christian system as a plausible opinion built upon special varieties of physical temperament. Let that, however, be as it may, two remarks suggest themselves as prudent restraints upon a doctrine which else *may* wander, and *has* wandered, into an uncharitable superstition. The first is this: that many people are likely to exaggerate the horror of a sudden death from the dis-

position to lay a false stress upon words or acts simply because by an accident they have become *final* words or acts. If a man dies, for instance, by some sudden death when he happens to be intoxicated, such a death is falsely regarded with peculiar horror; as though the intoxication were suddenly exalted into a blasphemy. But *that* is unphilosophic. The man was, or he was not, *habitually* a drunkard. If not, if his intoxication were a solitary accident, there can be no reason for allowing special emphasis to this act simply because through misfortune it became his final act. Nor, on the other hand, if it were no accident, but one of his *habitual* transgressions, will it be the more habitual or the more a transgression because some sudden calamity, surprising him, has caused this habitual transgression to be also a final one. Could the man have had any reason even dimly to foresee his own sudden death, there would have been a new feature in his **act of intemperance — a feature of presumption and impudence, and indeed that, having**

of God, should have suited his demeanor to an expectation so awful. But this is no part of the case supposed. And the only new element in the man's act is not any element of special immorality, but simply of special misfortune.

The other remark has reference to the meaning of the word *sudden*. Very possibly Caesar and the Christian Church do not differ in the way supposed — that is, do not differ by any difference of doctrine as between Pagan and Christian views of the moral temper appropriate to death; but perhaps they are contemplating different cases. Both contemplate a violent death, a *Bta0cu>aros* — death that is */3tcuos*, or, in other words, death that is brought about, not by internal and spontaneous change, but by active force having its origin from without. In this meaning the two authorities agree. Thus far they are in harmony. But the difference is that the Roman by the word "sudden" means *unlingering*, whereas the Christian Litany by "sudden death" means a death *without warning*, consequently without any available summons to religious preparation.

The poor mutineer who kneels down to gather into his heart the bullets from twelve firelocks of his pitying comrades dies by a most sudden death in Caesar's sense; one shock, one mighty spasm, one (possibly not one) groan, and all is over. But, in the sense of the Litany, the mutineer's death is far from sudden: his offence originally, his imprisonment, his trial, the interval between his sentence and its execution, having all furnished him with separate warnings of his fate — having all summoned him to meet it with solemn preparation.

Here at once, in this sharp verbal distinction, we comprehend the faithful earnestness with which a holy Christian Church pleads on behalf of her poor departing children that God would vouchsafe to them the last great privilege and distinction possible on a death-bed, viz., the opportunity of untroubled preparation for facing this mighty trial. Sudden death, as a mere variety in the modes of dying where death in some shape is inevitable, proposes a question of choice which, equally in the Roman and the Christian sense, will be variously answered according to each man's variety of temperament. Meantime, one aspect of sudden death there is, one modification, upon which no doubt can arise, that of all martyrdoms it is the most agitating — viz., where it surprises a man under circumstances which offer (or which seem to offer) some hurrying, flying, inappreciably minute chance of evading it. Sudden as the danger which it affronts must be any effort by which such an evasion can be accomplished. Even *that*, even the sickening necessity for hurrying to extremity where all hurry seems destined to be vain — even that anguish is liable to a hideous exasperation in one particular case: viz., where the appeal is made not exclusively to the instinct of self-preservation, but to the conscience, on behalf of some other life besides your own, accidentally thrown upon *your* protection. To fail, to collapse in a service merely your own, might seem comparatively venial; though, in fact, it is far from venial. But to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly thrown into your hands the final interests of another — a fellow-creature

shuddering between the gates of life and death: this, to a man of apprehensive conscience, would mingle the misery of an atrocious criminality with the misery of a bloody calamity. You are called upon, by the case supposed, possibly to die, but to die at the very moment when, by any even partial failure or effeminate collapse of your energies, you will be self-denounced as a murderer. You had but the twinkling of an eye for your effort, and that effort might have been unavailing; but to have risen to the level of such an effort would have rescued you, though not from dying, yet from dying as a traitor to your final and farewell duty.

The situation here contemplated exposes a dreadful ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature. It is not that men generally are summoned to face such awful trials. But potentially, and in shadowy outline, such a trial is moving subterraneously in perhaps all men's natures. Upon the secret mirror of our dreams such a trial is darkly projected, perhaps, to every one of us. That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, through languishing prostration in hope and the energies of hope, that constant sequel of lying down before the lion, publishes the secret frailty of human nature — reveals its deep-seated falsehood to itself — records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream; perhaps, as by some sorrowful doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation in Eden. Every one of us, in this dream, has a bait offered to the infirm places of his own individual will, once again a snare is presented for tempting him into captivity to a luxury of ruin, once again, as in aboriginal Paradise, the man falls by his own choice; again, by infinite iteration, the ancient earth groans to Heaven, through her secret caves, over the weakness of her child. "Nature, from her seat, sighing through all her works," again "gives signs of woe that all is lost"; and again the counter-sigh is repeated to the sorrowing heavens for the endless rebellion against God. It is not without probability that in the world of dreams every one of us

ratifies for himself the original transgression. In dreams, perhaps under some secret conflict of the midnight sleeper, lighted up to the consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several child of our mysterious race completes for himself the treason of the aboriginal fall.

The incident, so memorable in itself by its features of horror, and so scenical by its grouping for the eye, which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death* occurred to myself in the dead of night, as a solitary spectator, when seated on the box of the Manchester and Glasgow mail, in the second or third summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances, because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post-offices were so arranged, either through necessity or through defect of system, as to make it requisite for the main north-western mail (*i. e.*, the *down* mail) on reaching Manchester to halt for a number of hours; how many, I do not remember, six or seven, I think; but the result was that, in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northwards about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air, meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat at the post-office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen, and the streets being at that hour empty, so as to offer no opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way, and did not reach the post-office until it was considerably past midnight; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning), I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail, blazing through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was not yet lost. Past the time it was, but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to start. I ascended to my seat on the box, where my cloak was still lying as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a nautical discoverer, who leaves a bit of bunting on the

shore of his discovery, by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds, with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket-handkerchief once and forever upon that virgin soil: thenceforward claiming the *jus domini*¹ to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the centre of the earth below it; so that all people found after this warning either aloft in upper chambers of the atmosphere, or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers — kicked, that is to say, or decapitated, as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant, the owner of the said pocket-handkerchief. In the present case, it is probable that my cloak might not have been respected, and the *jus gentium*² might have been cruelly violated in my person — for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality; but so happened that on this night there was no other outside passenger; and thus the crime, which else was but too probable, missed fire for want of a criminal.

Having mounted the box, I took a small quantity of laudanum, having already travelled two hundred and fifty miles — viz., from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the box, the coachman. And in that also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Virgil as

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.³

He answered to the conditions in every one of the items: — i, a monster he was; 2., dread-

¹ law of ownership.

² law of nations.

³ *Mneid*, in, 658. "A horrible monster, misshapen, immense, and bereft of eyesight." — Virgil's description of Polyphemus, one of the Cyclops, whose eye was put out by Ulysses.

ful; 3, shapeless; 4, huge; 5, who had lost an eye. But why should *that* delight me? Had he been one of the Calenders¹ in the *Arabian Nights*, and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity, what right had / to exult in his misfortune? I did not exult; I delighted in no man's punishment, though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos. i, z, 3, 4, 5) identified in an instant an old friend of mine whom I had known in the south for some years as the most masterly of mail-coachmen. He was the man in all Europe that could (if *any* could) have driven six-in-hand full gallop over *Al Strat*² — that dreadful bridge of Mahomet, with no side battlements, and of *extra* room not enough for a razor's edge — leading right across the bottomless gulf. Under this eminent man, whom in Greek I cognominated Cyclops *Dtpbrclates* (Cyclops the Charioteer), I, and others known to me, studied the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic. As a pupil, though I paid extra fees, it is to be lamented that I did not stand high in his esteem. It showed his dogged honesty (though, observe, not his discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation, however, he admitted that I had the whip-hand of him. On the present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected, from such explanations as he volunteered, that he had an interest at stake in some suit-at-law now pending at Lancaster; so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his law-Suit.

Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrastinating mail, and this procrastinating post-office! Can't they take a

lesson upon that subject from *me*? Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the post-office. Will the post-office lay its hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for me? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war, by wind, by weather; in the packet service, which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour, it seems, the post-office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheaten correspondence of Glasgow, and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser intermediate towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard! Manchester, good-bye! we've lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post-office: which, however, though I do not mean to part with a serviceable ground of complaint, and one which really is such for the horses, to me secretly is an advantage, since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour amongst the next eight or nine, and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile extra per hour. Off we are at last, and at eleven miles an hour; and for the moment I detect no changes in the energy or in the skill of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal, which virtually (though not in law) is the capital of Westmoreland, there were at this time seven stages of eleven miles each. The first five of these, counting from Manchester, terminate in Lancaster; which is therefore fifty-five miles north of Manchester, and the same distance exactly from Liverpool. The first three stages terminate in Preston (called, by way of distinction from other towns of that name, *Proud Preston*); at which place it is that the separate roads from Liverpool and from Manchester to the North become confluent.¹

ⁱ Suppose a capital Y (the Pythagorean letter): Lancaster is at the foot of this letter; Liverpool at the top of the *right* branch; Manchester at the top of the *left*; Proud Preston at the centre, where the two branches unite. It is thirty-three miles along either of the two branches; it is twenty-two miles along the stem — viz., from Preston in the middle to Lancaster at the root. There's a lesson in geography for the reader! (De Quincey.)

¹ A Calender is one of an order of Dervishes, who live by alms, founded in the fourteenth century.

² According to Mahomet, the bridge over Hades, over which souls must pass to Paradise.

Within these first three stages lay the foundation, the progress, and termination of our night's adventure. During the first stage, I found out that Cyclops was mortal: he was liable to the shocking affection of sleep — as thing which previously I had never suspected. If a man indulges in the vicious habit of sleeping, all the skill in auguration of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions, avails him nothing. "Oh, Cyclops!" I exclaimed, "thou art mortal. My friend, thou snoorest." Through the first eleven miles, however, this infirmity — which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon — betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself which, instead of mending matters, laid open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster: in consequence of which for three nights and three days he had not lain down on a bed. During the day he was waiting for his own summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested, or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment, was drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night, or that part of it which at sea would form the middle watch, he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness, but in a way which made it much more alarming; since now, after several days' resistance to this infirmity, at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout the second stage he grew more and more drowsy. In the second mile of the third stage he surrendered himself finally and without a struggle to his perilous temptation. All his past resistance had but deepened the weight of this final oppression. Seven atmospheres of sleep rested upon him; and, to consummate the case, our worthy guard, after singing "Love amongst the Roses" for perhaps thirty times, without invitation and without applause, had in revenge moodily resigned himself to slumber — not so deep, doubtless, as the coachman's, but deep enough for mischief. And thus at last, about ten miles from Preston, it came about that I found myself left in charge of his Majesty's London and Glasgow mail,

then running at the least twelve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal than else it must have been thought was the condition of the roads at night during the assizes. At that time, all the law business of populous Liverpool, and also of populous Manchester, with its vast cincture of populous rural districts, was called up by ancient usage to the tribunal of Lilliputian Lancaster.¹ To break up this old traditional usage required, 1, a conflict with powerful established interests, 2, a large system of new arrangements, and 3, a new parliamentary statute. But as yet this change was merely in contemplation. As things were at present, twice in the year' so vast a body of business rolled northwards from the southern quarter of the county that for a fortnight at least it occupied the severe exertions of two judges in its despatch. The consequence of this was that every horse available for such a service, along the whole line of road, was exhausted in carrying down the multitudes of people who were parties to the different suits. By sunset, therefore, it usually happened that, through utter exhaustion amongst men and horses, the road sank into profound silence. Except the exhaustion in the vast adjacent county of York from a contested election, no such silence succeeding to no such fiery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

On this occasion the usual silence and solitude prevailed along the road. Not a hoof nor a wheel was to be heard. And, to strengthen this false luxurious confidence in the noiseless roads, it happened also that the night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part, though slightly alive to the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August; in the middle of which lay my own birthday — a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often sigh-

¹ Lancaster, the county town of Lancashire, in which Liverpool and Manchester, newer and much larger cities, are situated.

² There were at that time only two assizes even in the most populous counties — viz., the Lent Assizes and the Summer Assizes. (De Quincey.)

born¹ thoughts. The county was my own native county — upon which, in its southern section, more than upon any equal area known to man past or present, had descended the original curse of labor in its heaviest form, not mastering the bodies only of men, as of slaves, or criminals in mines, but working through the fiery will. Upon no equal space of earth was, or ever had been, the same energy of human power put forth daily. At this particular season also of the assizes, that dreadful hurricane of flight and pursuit, as it might have seemed to a stranger, which swept to and from Lancaster all day long, hunting the county up and down, and regularly subsiding back into silence about sunset, could not fail (when united with this permanent distinction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labor) to point the thoughts pathetically upon that counter-
 vision of rest, of saintly repose from strife and sorrow,, towards which, as their secret haven, the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in solitude continually travelling. Obliquely upon our left we were nearing the sea; which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of halcyon repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn were by this time blending; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless, and dieamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses — which, running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance — there was no sound abroad. In the clouds and on the earth prevailed the same majestic peace; and, in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the rum of our sublimer thoughts, which are the thoughts of our infancy, we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmosphere. Whatever we may swear with our false feigning lips, in our faithful hearts we still believe,

¹ I owe the suggestion of this word to an obscure remembrance of a beautiful phrase in *Giraldu Cambrensis* — viz., *suspiciosa cogitationes*. (De Quincey.) *Giraldu Cambrensis*: Gerald de Barry (1146-1220), a Welsh historian.

and must forever believe, in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still, in the confidence of children that tread without fear every chamber in their father's house, and to whom no door is closed, we, in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like this, ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upwards to the sandals of God.

Suddenly, from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment; I listened in awe; but then it died away. Once roused, however, I could not but observe with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing of motion, and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have, as regards *thought*, that in the first step towards the possibility of a misfortune I see its total evolution; in the radix of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion; in the first syllable of the dreadful sentence I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves *Us* our bulk and impetus charmed against peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that were matter of laughter to look back upon, the first face of which was horror, the parting face a jest — for any anxiety to rest upon *our* interests. The mail was not built, I felt assured, nor bespoke, that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But any carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this ominous accident of our situation — we were on the wrong side of the road. But then, it may be said, the other party, if other there was, might also be on the wrong side; and two wrongs might make

a right. *That* was not likely. The same motive which had drawn *us* to the right-hand side of the road — viz., the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved centre — would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would, therefore, to a certainty, be travelling on the same side; and from this side, as not being ours in law, the crossing over to the other would, of course, be looked for from *us*.¹ Our lamps, still lighted, would give the impression of vigilance on our part. And every creature that met *us* would rely upon *us* for quartering.² All this, and if the separate links of the anticipation had been a thousand times more, I saw, not discursively, or by effort, or by succession, but by one flash of horrid simultaneous intuition.

Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead, ah! what a sullen mystery of fear, what a sigh of woe, was that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard! A whisper it was — a whisper from, perhaps, four miles off — secretly announcing a ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevitable; that, being known, was not therefore healed. What could be done — who was it that could do it — to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering coachman? You, reader, think that it would have been *in your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible. Easy was it? See, then, that bronze equestrian statue. The cruel rider has kept the bit in his horse's mouth for two centuries. Unbridle him for a minute, if you please, and wash his mouth with water.

¹ It is true that, according to the law of the case as established by legal precedents, all carriages were required to give way before royal equipages, and therefore before the mail as one of them. But *this* only increased the danger, as being a regulation very imperfectly made known, very unequally enforced, and therefore often embarrassing the movements on both sides. (De Quincey.)

² This is the technical word, and, I presume, derived from the French *cartayer*, to evade a rut or any obstacle. (De Quincey.)

Easy was it? Unhorse me, then, that imperial rider; knock me those marble feet from those marble stirrups of Charlemagne.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be? Was it industry in a taxed cart? Was it youthful gaiety in a gig? Was it sorrow that loitered, or joy that raced? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion. Whoever were the travellers, something must be done to warn them. Upon the other party rests the active responsibility, but upon *us* — and, woe is me! that *us* was reduced to my frail opium-shattered self — rests the responsibility of warning. Yet, how should this be accomplished? Might I not sound the guard's horn? Already, on the first thought, I was making my way over the roof of the guard's seat. But this, from the accident which I have mentioned, of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof, was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside travelling. And, fortunately, before I had lost much time in the attempt, our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that final stage where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished. The court was sitting; the case was heard; the judge had finished; and only the verdict was yet in arrears.

Before us lay an avenue straight as an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length; and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light; but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! what are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady — though really I see nobody, at an hour and on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you — is it therefore requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The

little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour; and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, there is but a minute and a half. Oh heavens! what is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting, what help can I offer? Strange it is, and to a mere auditor of the tale might seem laughable, that I should need a suggestion from the *Iliad* to prompt the sole resource that remained. Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus, aided by Pallas? No: but then I needed not the shout that should alarm all Asia militant; such a shout would suffice as might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one gig-horse. I shouted—and the young man heard me not. A second time I shouted—and now he heard me, for now he raised his head.

Here, then, all had been done that, by me, could be done; more on my part was not possible. Mine had been the first step; the second was for the young man, the third was for God. If, said I, this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young girl at his side—or, loving her not, if he feels the obligation, pressing upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his protection—he will at least make some effort to save her. If that fails, he will not perish the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it, and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in vain to save. But, if he makes no effort—shrinking without a struggle from his duty—he himself will not the less certainly perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less: and why not? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in the world? No; let him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted upon him; and, in that case, all our **grief will be reserved for the fate of the help-**

failure in *him*, must by the fiercest of translations—must without time for a prayer—

must within seventy seconds—stand before the judgment-seat of God.

But craven he was not: sudden had been the call upon him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended, the ruin that was coming down: already its gloomy shadow darkened above him; and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah! what a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a-day: ah! what a sublime thing does courage seem when some fearful summons on the great deeps of life carries a man, as if running before a hurricane, up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which lie two courses, and a voice says to him audibly, "One way lies hope; take the other, and mourn forever!" How grand a triumph if, even then, amidst the rav-
ing of all around him, and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation—is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek his counsel from *Htm!*

For seven seconds, it might be, of his seventy, the stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us, as if to search and value every element in the conflict before him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably, like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more, perhaps, he sat with eyes upraised, like one that prayed in sorrow, under some extremity of doubt, for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose; stood upright; and, by a powerful strain upon the reins, raising his horse's fore-feet from the ground, he slewed him round on the pivot of his hind-legs, so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved; except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done, nothing was done; for the carriage still occupied the very centre of our path, though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late: fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted; and one almighty bound may avail to clear the ground. Hurry, then, hurry! for the flying moments—*they* hurry. Oh, hurry, hurry, my brave young man! for

the cruel hoofs of our horses — *they* also hurry! Fast are the flying moments, faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for *him*, if human energy can suffice; faithful was he that drove to his terrific duty; faithful was the horse to *his* command. One blow, one impulse given with voice and hand, by the stranger, one rush from the horse, one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence, landed the docile creature's fore-feet upon the crown or arching centre of the road. The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow: *that* was evident even to my own agitated sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety if upon the wreck that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage — was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin? What power could answer the question? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, which of these had speed enough to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly. His back was now turned to us; not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril, but, by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed that all was finished as regarded any effort of *his*. Already in resignation he had rested from his struggle; and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, "Father, which art in heaven, do Thou finish above what I on earth have attempted." Faster than ever millrace we ran past them in our inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurricanes that must have sounded in their young ears at the moment of our transit! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke aloud. Either with the swmglear, or with the haunch of our near leader, we had struck the off wheel of the little gig, which stood rather obliquely, and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near-wheel. The blow, from the fury of our passage, resounded terrifically. I rose in horror, to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down, and

looked back upon the scene; which in a moment told its own tale, and wrote all its records on my heart forever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore-feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He of the whole party might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little cany carriage — partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it — as if it sympathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round, for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady——

But the lady——! Oh, heavens! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case, suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night — from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight — from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love — suddenly as from the woods and fields — suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation — suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered; the strife was finished; the vision was closed. In the twinkling of an eye, our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle, at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction, the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams forever.

SECTION in
Dream-Fugue

FOUNDED ON THE PRECEDING THEME OF
SUDDEN DEATH

Whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen; his volent touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.
Paradise Lost, book xi.

Tumultuosissimamente'

Passion of sudden death! that once in is
youth I read and interpreted by the shadows
of thy averted signs!² — rapture of panic
taking the shape (which amongst tombs in
churches I have seen) of woman bursting her
sepulchral bonds — of woman's Ionic form
bending forward from the ruins of her grave
with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with
clasped adoring hands — waiting, watching,
trembling, praying for the trumpeter's call to
rise from dust forever! Ah, vision too fearful
of shuddering humanity on the brink of al-
mighty abysses! — vision that didst start
back, that didst reel away, like a shrivelling
scroll from before the wrath of fire racing on
the wings of the wind! Epilepsy so brief of
horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not die?
Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore
is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral
blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams?
Fragment of music too passionate, heard
once, and heard no more, what aileth thee,
that thy deep rolling chords come up at inter-
vals through all the worlds of sleep, and
after forty years have lost no element of
horror?

I

Lo, it is summer — almighty summer!
The everlasting gates of life and summer are

¹ Very tumultuously; — a direction similar to those used in musical compositions indicating how the piece should be played.

² I read the course and changes of the lady's agony in the succession of her involuntary gestures; but it must be remembered that I read all this from the rear, never once catching the lady's full face, and even her profile imperfectly. (De Quincey.)

thrown open wide; and on the ocean, tran-
quil and verdant as a savannah, the unknown
lady from the dreadful vision and I myself
are floating — she upon a fairy pinnacle, and
5 I upon an English three-decker. Both of us
are wooing gales of festal happiness within the
domain of our common country, within that
ancient watery park, within the pathless
chase of ocean, where England takes her
10 pleasure as a huntress through winter and
summer, from the rising to the setting sun.
Ah, what a wilderness of floral beauty was
hidden, or was suddenly revealed, upon the
tropic islands through which the pinnacle
moved! And upon her deck what a bevy of
human flowers: young women how lovely,
young men how noble, that were dancing to-
gether, and slowly drifting towards us amidst
music and incense, amidst blossoms from
20 forests and gorgeous corymbi¹ from vintages,
amidst natural carolling, and the echoes of
sweet girlish laughter. Slowly the pinnacle
nears us, gaily she hails us, and silently she
disappears beneath the shadow of our mighty
25 bows. But then, as at some signal from
heaven, the music, and the carols, and the
sweet echoing of girlish laughter — all are
hushed. What evil has smitten the pinnacle,
meeting or overtaking her? Did rum to
our friends couch within our own dreadful
shadow? Was our shadow the shadow of
death? I looked over the bow for an answer,
and, behold! the pinnacle was dismantled; the
revel and the revellers were found no more; the
35 glory of the vintage was dust, and the forests
with their beauty were left without a witness
upon the seas. "But where," and I turned
to our crew — "where are the lovely women
that danced beneath the awning of flowers
40 and clustering corymbi? Whither have fled
the noble young men that danced with *them*?"
Answer there was none. But suddenly the
man at the mast-head, whose countenance
darkened with alarm, cried out, "Sail on the
45 weather beam! Down she comes upon us: iq
seventy seconds she also will founder."

I looked to the weather side, and the sum-
mer had departed. The sea was rocking, and
¹ clusters of fruit or flowers.

shaken with gathering wrath. Upon its surface sat mighty mists, which grouped themselves into arches and long cathedral aisles. Down one of these, with the fiery pace of a quarrel¹ from a cross-bow, ran a frigate right athwart our course. "Are they mad?" some voice exclaimed from our deck. "Do they woo their ruin?" But in a moment, as she was close upon us, some impulse of a heady current or local vortex gave a wheeling bias to her course, and off she forged without a shock. As she ran past us, high aloft amongst the shrouds stood the lady of the pinnacle. The deeps opened ahead in malice to receive her, towering surges of foam ran after her, the billows were fierce to catch her. But far away she was borne into desert spaces of the sea: whilst still by sight I followed her, as she ran before the howling gale, chased by angry sea-birds and by maddening billows, still I saw her, at the moment when she ran past us, standing amongst the shrouds, with her white draperies streaming before the wind. There she stood, with hair dishevelled, one hand clutched amongst the tackling — rising, sinking, fluttering, trembling, praying, there for leagues I saw her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to heaven, amidst the fiery crests of the pursuing waves and the raving of the storm, until at last, upon a sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery, all was hidden forever in driving showers; and afterwards, but when I knew not, nor how.

3

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance, wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awakened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar shore. The morning twilight even then was breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But, when I leaped ashore, and followed on her steps to warn her of a peril in front, alas!

¹ bolt, of a cross-bow.

from me she fled as from another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster and faster she ran, round a promontory of rocks she wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head. Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens, and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by the early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness — saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds — saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying despair. The head, the diadem, the arm — these all had sunk; at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by the treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains. "Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthwards to listen — "hush! — this either is the very anarchy of strife, or else" — and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head — "or else, oh heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

4

Immediately, in trance, I was carried over land and sea to some distant kingdom, and placed upon a triumphal car, amongst companions crowned with laurel. The darkness of gathering midnight, brooding over all the land, hid from us the mighty crowds that were weaving restlessly about ourselves as a

centre: we heard them, but saw them not. Tidings had arrived, within an hour, of a grandeur that measured itself against centuries; too full of pathos they were, too full of joy, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless anthems, and *Te Deums* reverberated from the choirs and orchestras of earth. These tidings we that sat upon the laurelled car had it for our privilege to publish amongst all nations. And already, by signs audible through the darkness, by snortings and tramlngs, our angry horses, that knew no fear or fleshly weariness, upbraided us with delay. Wherefore was it that we delayed? We waited for a secret word, that should bear witness to the hope of nations as now accomplished forever. At midnight the secret word arrived; which word was — *Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!* The dreadful word shone by its own light; before us it went; high above our leaders' heads it rode, and spread a golden light over the paths which we traversed. Every city, at the presence of the secret word, threw open its gates. The rivers were conscious as we crossed. All the forests, as we ran along their margins, shivered in homage to the secret word. And the darkness comprehended it.

Two hours after midnight we approached a mighty Minster. Its gates, which rose to the clouds, were closed. But, when the dreadful word that rode before us reached them with its golden light; silently they moved back upon their hinges; and at a flying gallop our equipage entered the grand aisle of the cathedral. Headlong was our pace; and at every altar, in the little chapels and oratories to the right hand and left of our course, the lamps, dying or sickening, kindled anew in sympathy with the secret word that was flying past. Forty leagues we might have run in the cathedral, and as yet no strength of morning light had reached us, when before us we saw the aerial galleries of organ and choir. Every pinnacle of fretwork, every station of advantage amongst the traceries, was crested by white-robed choristers that sang deliverance; that wept no more tears, as once their fathers had wept; but at intervals that sang together to the generations, saying,

Chant the deliverer's praise in every tongue.

and receiving answers from afar,

Such as once in heaven and earth were sung.

And of their chanting was no end, of our head-
5 long pace was neither pause nor slackening.

Thus we ran like torrents — thus as we swept with bridal rapture over the Campo Santo¹ of the cathedral graves — suddenly we became aware of a vast necropolis rising
10 upon the far-off horizon — a city of sepulchres, built within the saintly cathedral for the warrior dead that rested from their feuds on earth. Of purple granite was the necropolis; yet, in the first minute, it lay like a
15 purple stain upon the horizon, so mighty was the distance. In the second minute it trembled through many changes, growing into terraces and towers of wondrous altitude, so mighty was the pace. In the third minute
20 already, with our dreadful gallop, we were entering its suburbs. Vast sarcophagi rose on every side, having towers and turrets that, upon the limits of the central aisle, strode forward with haughty intrusion, that ran back
25 with mighty shadows into answering recesses. Every sarcophagus showed many bas-reliefs — bas-reliefs of battles and of battle-fields; battles from forgotten ages, battles from yesterday; battle-fields that, long since, Nature
30 had healed and reconciled to herself with the sweet oblivion of flowers, battle-fields that were yet angry and crimson with carnage. Where the terraces ran, there did we run; where the towers curved, there did we curve.
3<j With the flight of swallows our horses swept round every angle. Like rivers in flood wheeling round headlands, like hurricanes that ride into the secrets of forests, faster than ever light unwove the mazes of darkness, our

¹ It is probable that most of my readers will be acquainted with the history of the Campo Santo (or cemetery) at Pisa, composed of earth brought from Jerusalem from a bed of sanctity as the highest prize which the noble piety of crusaders could ask or imagine. To readers who are unacquainted with England, or who (being English) are yet unacquainted with the cathedral cities of England, it may be right to mention that the graves within-side the cathedrals often form a flat pavement over which carriages and horses might uin, and perhaps a boyish remembrance of one particular cathedral, across which I had seen passengers walk and burdens carried, as about two centuries back they were through the middle of St. Paul's in London, may have assisted my dream. (De Quincey.)

flying equipage carried earthly passions, kindled warrior instincts, amongst the dust that lay around us — dust oftentimes of our noble fathers that had slept in God from Crecy to Trafalgar. And now had we reached the last sarcophagus, now were we abreast of the last bas-relief, already had we recovered the arrow-like flight of the illimitable central aisle, when coming up this aisle to meet us we beheld afar off a female child, that rode in a carriage as frail as flowers. The mists which went before her hid the fawns that drew her, but could not hide the shells and tropic flowers with which she played — but could not hide the lovely smiles by which she uttered her trust in the mighty cathedral, and in the cherubim that looked down upon her from the mighty shafts of its pillars. Face to face she was meeting us; face to face she rode, as if danger there were none. "Oh, baby!" I exclaimed, "shalt thou be the ransom for Waterloo? Must we, that carry tidings of great joy to every people, be messengers of ruin to thee!" In horror I rose at the thought, but then also, in horror at the thought, rose one that was sculptured on a bas-relief — a Dying Trumpeter. Solemnly from the field of battle he rose to his feet, and, unslinging his stony trumpet, carried it, in his dying anguish, to his stony lips — sounding once, and yet once again; proclamation that, in *thy* ears, oh baby! spoke from the battlements of death. Immediately deep shadows fell between us, and aboriginal silence. The choir had ceased to sing. The hoofs of our horses, the dreadful rattle of our harness, the groaning of our wheels, alarmed the graves no more. By horror the bas-relief had been unlocked unto life. By horror we, that were so full of life, we men and our horses, with their fiery fore-legs rising in mid air to their everlasting gallop, were frozen to a bas-relief. Then a third time the trumpet sounded; the seals were taken off all pulses; life, and the frenzy of life, tore into their channels again; again the choir burst forth in sunny grandeur, as from the muffling of storms and darkness; again the thunderings of our horses carried temptation into the graves. One cry burst from our lips, as the clouds, drawing off from the aisle, showed it

empty before us. — "Whither has the infant fled? — is the young child caught up to God?" Lo! afar off, in a vast recess, rose three mighty windows to the clouds; and on a level with their summits, at height insuperable to man, rose an altar of purest alabaster. On its eastern face was trembling a crimson glory. A glory was it from the reddening dawn that now streamed *through* the windows? Was it from the crimson robes of the martyrs painted on the windows? Was it from the bloody bas-reliefs of earth? There, suddenly, within that crimson radiance, rose the apparition of a woman's head, and then of a woman's figure. The child it was — grown up to woman's height. Clinging to the horns of the altar, voiceless she stood — sinking, rising, raving, despairing; and behind the volume of incense that, night and day, streamed upwards from the altar, dimly was seen the fiery font, and the shadow of that dreadful being who should have baptized her with the baptism of death. But by her side was kneeling her better angel, that hid his face with wings; that wept and pleaded for *her*; that prayed when *she* could *not*; that fought with Heaven by tears for *her* deliverance; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that from Heaven he had won at last.

5

Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals — gleaming amongst clouds and surges of incense — threw up, as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering music. Choir and anti-choir were filling fast with unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, and thy anguish that was finishing, didst enter the tumult; trumpet and echo — farewell love, and farewell anguish — rang through the dreadful *sanctus*. Oh, darkness of the grave! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the angel's eye — were these indeed thy children? Poms of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the

festivals of Death? Lo! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral, I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved with one step. Us, that, with laurelled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they wrapped us round with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together; to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that fled; rendering thanks to God in the highest — that, having hid His face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace; rendering thanks for thee, young girl! whom having overshadowed with His inef-

fable passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside His arm, and even in thee, sister unknown! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden forever, found an occasion to glorify His goodness. A thousand times, amongst the phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee with the armies of the grave behind thee — seen thee sinking, rising, raving, despairing; a thousand times in the worlds of sleep have I seen thee followed by God's angel through storms, through desert seas, through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams; only that at the last, with one sling of His victorious arm, He might snatch thee back from rum, and might emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrections of His love!

Lesser Poets of the Romantic Period

Samuel Rogers • 1763-1855

Rogers, a wealthy man, friend of all writers in London, whom he entertained at his famous breakfasts, achieved a reputation as a poet with his popular *Pleasures of Memory* in 1792. His *Recollections*, published after his death in 1859, contain, like Henry Crabb Robinson's notable *Diary* (1869), many interesting personal comments on the foremost literary men of the day.

The following poem (whether sincere or not on the part of a man of great wealth who preferred his large London house) represents a popular phase of romanticism; and yet it is the kind of poem that the Roman poet Horace might have written, and its theme is one that Pope constantly uses, as in his *Ode on Solitude*.

A Wish

Mine be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook that turns a mill
With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;

Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet gown and apron blue.

The village church among the trees,
Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze
And point with taper spire to Heaven.

James Hogg. 1770-1835

A shepherd in his youth, Hogg, after writing some verses, became acquainted with Scott, to whom he was able to give from oral tradition some ballads for his *Border Minstrelsy*. He went to Edinburgh to write, where, at different times, he made the acquaintance of Byron, Wordsworth, Southey, and Professor Wilson of *Blackwood's Magazine*, who fixed upon him the title "Ettrick Shepherd." Hogg wrote much, and with William Motherwell, another ballad-collector, published an edition of

Burns. Hogg is remembered mainly as a personality, but a few of his lyrics are still recalled.

The Skylark

Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place — 5
Oh, to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing, 10
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day, 15
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms 20
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place —
Oh, to abide in the desert with thee!
1810.

A Boy's Song

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest, 5
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest; 10
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free, 15
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little maidens from their play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell. 20

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay:
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.
1810.

Robert Southey . 1774 1843

A friend of Coleridge's and a sincere revolutionist in his youth, eager by deed and by word to make the world better, Southey later became conservative and settled down to a regular life, turning out a prodigious amount of writing — long narrative poems, histories, translations, lyrics. In 1813 he became Poet Laureate, when Scott refused the honor. In 1817 Byron attacked him for being a renegade in a vitriolic but humorous poem, *The Vision of Judgment*.

Southey enjoyed wide popularity in his time. Today he is remembered for his letters, his *Life of Nelson*, and especially for several short narrative poems, printed below.

The Battle of Blenheim

In 1704, at Hochstetdt in Bavaria, the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, who was fighting for Austria, defeated the French and Bavarians.

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green 5
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found; 10
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

- Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
 Who stood expectant by;
 And then the old man shook his head, 15
 And, with a natural sigh,
 " 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
 "Who fell in the great victory."
- "I find them in the garden,
 For there's many here about; 20
 And often when I go to plough,
 The ploughshare turns them out!
 For many a thousand men," said he,
 "Were slain in that great victory."
- "Now tell us what 'twas all about," 25
 Young Peterkin, he cries;
 And little Wilhelmine looks up
 With wonder-waiting eyes,
 "Now tell us all about the war,
 And what they fought each other for." 30
- "It was the English," Kaspar cried,
 "Who put the French to rout,
 But what they fought each other for,
 I could not well make out;
 But everybody said," quoth he, 35
 "That 'twas a famous victory."
- "My father lived at Blenheim then,
 Yon little stream hard by;
 They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
 And he was forced to fly, 40
 So with his wife and child he fled,
 Nor had he where to rest his head."
- "With fire and sword the country round
 Was wasted far and wide,
 And many a childmng mother then, 45
 And new-born baby died;
 But things like that, you know, must be
 At every famous victory."
- "They say it was a shocking sight
 After the field was won; 50
 For many thousand bodies here
 Lay rotting in the sun;
 But things like that, you know, must be
 After a famous victory."
- "Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
 And our good Prince Eugene." 56
- "Why 'twas a very wicked thing!"
 Said little Wilhelmine.
 "Nay, nay, my little girl," quoth he,
 "It was a famous victory. 60
- "And everybody praised the Duke
 Who this great fight did win."
 "But what good came of it at last?"
 Quoth little Peterkin.
 "Why that I cannot tell," said he, 65
 "But 'twas a famous victory."
 1798-

The Inchcape Rock

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
 The ship was still as she could be,
 Her sails from heaven received no motion;
 Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock 5
 The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock;
 So little they rose, so little they fell,
 They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The Abbot of Aberbrothok
 Had placed that Bell on the Inchcape Rock; 10
 On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
 And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell,
 The mariners heard the warning Bell;
 And then they knew the perilous Rock, 15
 And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The sun in heaven was shining gay;
 All things were joyful on that day;
 The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled round,
 And there was joyance in their sound. 20

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen,
 A dark spot on the ocean green;
 Sir Ralph the Rover walked his deck,
 And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring; 25
 It made him whistle, it made him sing;
 His heart was mirthful to excess,
 But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float.
 Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat 30
 And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
 And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
 And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
 Sir Ralph bent over from the boat, 35
 And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sank the Bell with a gurgling sound;
 The bubbles rose and burst around.
 Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to
 the Rock
 Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok." 40

Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away;
 He scoured the sea for many a day;
 And now grown rich with plundered store,
 He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspread the sky, 45
 They cannot see the sun on high:
 The wind hath blown a gale all day;
 At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand;
 So dark it is they see no land. 50
 Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be brighter soon,
 For there is the dawn of the rising moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the broken roar?
 For methinks we should be near the shore."
 "Now where we are I cannot tell, 55
 But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound; the swell is strong;
 Though the wind hath fallen, they drift along
 Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock:
 "O Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!" 60

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair,
 He curst himself in his despair:
 The waves rush in on every side;
 The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But, even in his dying fear, 65
 One dreadful sound could the Rover hear, —
 A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell
 The Devil below was ringing his knell.

The Legend of Bishop Hatto

The summer and autumn had been so wet,
 That in winter the corn was growing yet:
 'Twas a piteous sight to see, all around,
 The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor 5
 Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door;
 For he had a plentiful last-year's store,
 And all the neighborhood could tell
 His granaries were furnished well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day 10
 To quiet the poor without delay:
 He bade them to his great barn repair,
 And they should have food for winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
 The poor folk flocked from far and near; 15
 The great barn was full as it could hold
 Of women and children, and young and old.

Then, when he saw it could hold no more,
 Bishop Hatto, he made fast the door,
 And while for mercy on Christ they call, 20
 He set fire to the barn and burned them all.

"'Tis faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!" quoth he;
 "And the country is greatly obliged to me
 For ridding it in these times forlorn .
 Of Rats that only consume the corn." 25

So then to his palace returned he,
 And he sat down to supper merrily,
 And he slept that night like an innocent man;
 But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he entered the hall, 30
 Where his picture hung against the wall,
 A sweat-like death all over him came,
 For the Rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he looked, there came a man from his farm;
 He had a countenance white with alarm: 35
 "My Lord, I opened your granaries this morn,
 And the Rats had eaten all your corn."

Another came running presently,
 And he was pale as pale could be:
 "Fly, my Lord Bishop, fly!" quoth he, 40

"Ten thousand Rats are coming this way;
The Lord forgive you yesterday!"

"I'll go to my tower on the Rhine," replied he;
"Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high, and the shores are steep, 45
And the stream is strong, and the water is
deep."

Bishop Hatto fearfully hastened away,
And he crossed the Rhine without delay,
And reached his tower, and barred with care
All windows, doors, and loopholes there. 50

He laid him down, and closed his eyes;
But soon a scream made him arise:
He started and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow, from whence the screaming
came.

He listened and looked, it was only the cat: 55
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that;
For she sat screaming, mad with fear
At the army of Rats that was drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shore so steep, 60
And up the tower their way is bent,
To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or
score;
By thousands they come, and by myriads and
more;
Such numbers had never been heard of before,
Such a judgment had never been witnessed of
yore. 66

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did tell,
As, louder and louder drawing near,
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear. 70

And in at the windows and in at the door,
And through the walls, helter-skelter they
pour,
And down from the ceiling and up through
the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and
before,
And all at once to the Bishop they go. 75

They have whetted their teeth against the
stones;

And now they pick the Bishop's bones:
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him!

Thomas Campbell. 1777-1844

Shortly after his graduation from Glasgow University, Campbell began his career as a poet by publishing in 1799 a long poem, now seldom read, *The Pleasures of Hope*. From then on to the end of his life he continued to write verse, winning a certain popularity with *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809), a story of an Indian attack upon settlers in Pennsylvania.

Campbell, however, lives in English literature because of a few short poems, especially his war-songs. Of *Hohenlinden*, genial Professor Saintsbury of Edinburgh said: "Nothing anywhere... surpasses the last and culminating stanza in poignant simplicity."

Ye Mariners of England

A Naval Ode

Ye mariners of England,
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze! 5
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe,
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow,
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow. 10

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell, 15
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow. 20

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;

Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak, 25
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow. 30

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn,
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors! 35
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow. 40
Pub. 1801.

Hohenlinden

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay th' untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight, 5
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd
Each horseman drew his battle-blade, 10
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven;
Then rush'd the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of Heaven, 15
Far flash'd the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly 20

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,

Where furious Frank, and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulph'rous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave 25
Who rush to glory or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet, 30
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Lord Ullin's Daughter

This lyric is one of the best of the imitations of
the popular ballad.

A chieftain, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound,
To row us o'er the ferry."

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?" 6
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together, 10
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride,
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride 15
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief; I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright;
But for your winsome lady. 20

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace, 25
The water wraith¹ was shrieking,
¹ spirit supposed to preside over the waters.

And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer, 30
Adown the glen rode armed men —
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies, 35
But not an angry father."

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her, —
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gathered o'er her. 40

And still they row'd amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing;
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore —
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For sore dismay'd, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover: 46
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across the stormy water; 50
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter! oh, my daughter!"

'Twas vain; — the loud waves lash'd the
shore,
Return or aid preventing;
The waters wild went o'er his child, 55
And he was left lamenting.
1805.

Thomas Moore • 1779-1851

Of humble origin, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, for a time a government official in Bermuda, Moore won completely (he heart of Ireland — and of England — with the publication in 1807 of his first *Irish Melodies*, a series which he continued until 1835. In 1817 his growing reputation spread to the Continent with the publication of *Lalla Rookh*, a collection of four Oriental tales in verse told while Lalla, the daughter of Aurengzebe,

is journeying to Bucharia to marry the young king.

Among his many other writings may be mentioned his lives of Sheridan (1825) and of Byron (1830). Of the latter Moore was a very close friend. Byron left to him the manuscript of his *Memoirs*, which Moore, after much consideration and with the consent of Byron's publisher, burned.

Moore's popularity in his day was extraordinary. He was a singer who struck the chords of all simple emotions — which, after all, are the themes of most of the world's lyrics — producing words and music (Moore composed his own airs) that were felt by countless readers. Like Byron, he had facility of expression, and like him, also, was not ashamed to show his feelings.

The most recent study of Moore is by Howard Mumford Jones (1937).

The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls

The harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days, 5
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts that once beat high for praise
Now feel that pulse no more!

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells, 10
The chord alone that breaks at night
Its tale of rum tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks, 15
To show that still she lives.

Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms

Believe me, if all those endearing young
charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my
arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment 5
thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,

And around the dear ruin each wish of my
heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thy own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear, 10
That the fervor and faith of a soul can be
known,
To which time-will but make thee more
dear;
No, the heart that has truly loved never for-
gets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he
sets, is
The same look which she turned when he
rose.

The Minstrel Boy

The Minstrel Boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him. —
"Land of song!" said the warrior-bard, 5
"Though all the world betray thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee!"

The Minstrel fell! — but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under; 10
The harp he lov'd ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said, "No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free, 15
They shall never sound in slavery."

The Light of Other Days

Oft in the stillly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears 5
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken! 10

Thus in the stillly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all 15
The friends so link'd together
I've seen around me fall
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone 20
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!
Thus in the stillly night 25
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

The Last Rose of Summer

'Tis the last rose of summer
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred, 5
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes,
Or give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!
To pine on the stem; 10
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go, sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden 15
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away. 20
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
O! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?

Allan Cunningham 1784-1841

Beginning life as a stone-mason, Cunningham, a Scotsman, and a friend of Hogg, became interested in old ballads, some of which he collected and some of which he deliberately made up. After a brief experience as a newspaper reporter, he became secretary to the sculptor, Sir Francis Chantrey, a position he held from 1814 to 1841. During this period he published, among other things, a volume called *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern*, in which appeared the now famous sea-song given below.

A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys, 5
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

"O for a soft and gentle wind!"
I heard a fair one cry; 10
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free, —
The world of waters is our home, 15
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon horned moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud; 20
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free, —
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.
1825.

James Henry Leigh Hunt 1784-1859

Leigh Hunt was a professional writer, and during most of his life an able magazine editor. He became the friend and adviser of Moore,

Byron, Lamb, Keats, and Shelley. In Hunt's house in Hampstead, a suburb of London, Reals and Shelley first became acquainted with each other, and in his magazine, the influential and independent weekly, *The Examiner*, they published their early poems. When Hunt was in prison (1813-15), for writing an article against the Prince Regent, all his friends in London visited him.

As an editor of *The Examiner*, and, with Byron, the founder of *The Liberal* (1822), Hunt wielded a strong influence in the development of a new and important vehicle of literature, the magazine. He wrote much: a long poem, popular in its day, *The Story of Rimini* (1816); some lyrics that have become a part of English literature; and a vast amount of prose. Significant among his prose writings are a stimulating treatise on poetry, and many "familiar essays," a type of writing in which his friend Lamb was the master.

Hunt was a defender of the "Cockney School," London writers like Keats, Hazlitt, and himself, whom Lockhart and *The Quarterly Review* attacked vehemently. A cockney himself, with Christ's Hospital his only formal schooling, Hunt had the taste and keen discernment to recognize at the beginning the genius of Keats and of Shelley.

Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of
peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold: 5
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What wntest thou?" — "The vision raised
its head.
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the
Lord " 10
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not
so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray dice
then,
"Write me as one that loves his fellow men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next
night 15
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God
had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Rondeau

Jenny kissed me when we met,
 Jumping from the chair she sat in;
 Time, you thief, who love to get
 Sweets into your list, put that in:
 Say I'm weary, say I'm sad, 5
 Say that health and wealth have missed me,
 Say I'm growing old, but add,
 Jenny kissed me.

Cupid Drowned

T'other day as I was twining
 Roses, for a crown to dine in,
 What, of all things, 'mid the heap,
 Should I light on, fast asleep,
 But the little desperate elf, 5
 The tiny traitor, Love, himself!
 By the wings I picked him up
 Like a bee, and in a cup
 Of my wine I plunged and sank him,
 Then what d'ye think I did? — I drank him.
 Faith, I thought him dead. Not he! n
 There he lives with tenfold glee,
 And now this moment with his wings
 I feel him tickling my heart-strings.

Thomas Love Peacock

1785 1866

A man of means, Peacock wrote novels as an avocation. These novels, romantic in setting, satiric in import, have recently come into vogue again. Into them he incorporated many of his lyrics, of which the following, from his last novel, *Gryll Grange* (1860), is typical.

By many Peacock is remembered as the friend of Shelley and executor of his estate. Peacock's daughter was the first wife of George Meredith, of whose tragic love the sonnet-sequence *Modern Love* is a monument.

Love and Age

I played with you mid cowslips blowing,
 When I was six and you were four;
 When garlands weaving, flower-balls throw-
 ing,
 Were pleasures soon to please no more.

Through groves and meads, o'er grass and
 heather, 5
 With little playmates, to and fro,
 We wandered hand in hand together;
 But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
 And still our early love was strong; 10
 Still with no care our days were laden,
 They glided joyously along;
 And I did love you very dearly,
 How dearly words want power to show;
 I thought your heart was touched as nearly;
 But that was fifty years ago. 16

Then other lovers came around you,
 Your beauty grew from year to year.
 And many a splendid circle found you
 The centre of its glittering sphere. 20
 I saw you then, first vows forsaking;
 On rank and wealth your hand bestow;
 Oh, then I thought my heart was breaking, —
 But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another; 25
 No cause she gave me to repine;
 And when I heard you were a mother,
 I did not wish the children mine.
 My own young flock, in fair progression
 Made up a pleasant Christmas row: 30
 My joy in them was past expression, —
 But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
 You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze,
 My earthly lot was far more homely; 35
 But I too had my festal days.
 No merrier eyes have ever glistened
 Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
 Than when my youngest child was christened, —
 But that was twenty years ago. 40

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
 And I am now a grandsire gray;
 One pet of four years old I've carried
 Among the wild-flowered meads to play. 45
 In our old fields of childish pleasure,
 Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
 She fills her basket's ample measure, —
 But that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
 Has passed away in colder light, 50
 I still have thought of you with kindness,
 And shall do, till our last good-night.
 The ever-rolling silent hours
 Will bring a time we shall not know,
 When our young days of gathering flowers 55
 Will be an hundred years ago.

Charles Wolfe • 1791-1813

Wolfe, a curate who had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin — the college that produced Congreve, Swift, Farquhar, Goldsmith, Moore, Wilde — won fame in his short life because of the following popular poem.

Sir John Moore, while conducting the retreat at Coruna in Spain, defeated the French who had suddenly attacked; but in the course of the engagement was mortally wounded. He was buried in the citadel at midnight, January 16, 1809. Robert Southey reported the incident in a prose account, from which Wolfe took the facts for his poem.

The Burial of Sir John Moore at Coruna

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
 As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
 Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
 O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night, 5
 The sods with our bayonets turning;
 By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
 And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
 Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him,
 But he lay like a warrior taking his rest 10
 With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
 And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
 But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was
 dead, 15
 And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hallowed his narrow bed,
 And smoothed down his lonely pillow,

That the foe and the stranger would tread
 o'er his head,
 And we far away on the billow! 20

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
 And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him, —
 But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
 In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our weary task was done 25
 When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
 And we heard the distant and random gun
 That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
 From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
 We carved not a line, and we raised not a
 stone — 31
 But we left him alone with his glory.
 1817.

William M'otherwell 1797-1835

A Scottish newspaper editor, interested in the old ballads (and through them in Norse literature of which he made a study), Motherwell contributed to the growing collection of ballads with his *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern* (1827). In a volume of poems published in 1832 appeared the poem printed below. With Hogg, he edited Burns's poems in 1835.

Jeanie Morrison

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
 Through mony a weary way;
 But never, never can forget
 The luve o' life's young day!
 The fire that's blawn on Beltane¹ e'en, 5
 May weel be black gin³ Yule;
 But blacker fa' awaits the heart
 Where first fond luve grows cule.

Oh dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 The thochts o' bygone years 10
 Still fling their shadows ower my path,
 And blind my een wi' tears:

¹ Scottish May Day. ² towards.

They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,
As memory idly summons up 15
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.¹

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part;
Sweet time — sad time! twa bairns at scule.
Twa bairns, and but ae heart! 20
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,²
To leir³ ilk ither lear;
And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet 25
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof⁴ lock'd in loof,
What our wee heads could think.
When baith bent down ower ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee, 30
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the school-weans laughm' said, 35
We decked⁵ thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays
(The scule then skail't⁶ at noon)
When we ran aff to specl⁷ the braes —
The broomy braes o' June? 40

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As ane by ane the thochts rush back
O' scule-time and o' thee.
Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luv! 45
Oh lightsome days and lang,
When hinnied⁸ hopes around our hearts,
Like simmer blossoms sprang!

O mind ye, luv, how aft we left
The deavin',⁹ dinsome toun, 50
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon;
The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,

And in the gloamin' o' the wood,
The throssil whusslit sweet. 55

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
The burn sang to the trees,
And we with Nature's heart in tune,
Concerted harmonies; 60
And on the knowe¹ abune the burn,
For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat!²

Aye, aye, dear Jeanie Morrison, 65
Tears trickled down your cheek,
Like dew-beads from a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
When hearts were fresh and young, 70
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
Unsyllabled — unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin¹ I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts 75
As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows grit⁴
Wi' drcamings o' langsyne? 80

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart,
Still travels on its way; 86
And channels deeper as it rins,
The luv o' life's young day.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Since we were sindered young, 90
I've never seen your face, nor heard
The music o' your tongue;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
And happy could I die,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed 95
O' bygane days and me!

¹ long since. ² bench. ³ teach.
⁴ hand. ⁵ walked with arms hooked.
⁶ was let loose. ⁷ climb. ⁸ honied.
⁹ deafening.

¹ knoll.
² wept.
³ jif.
⁴ big.

Thomas Hood • 1799-1845

Thomas Hood belongs among the minor poets of the century chiefly by virtue of humor and pity. He was born in London, May 23, 1799, the son of a bookseller. He learned the engraver's trade and thus was able to illustrate his own works at a time when the relation between the printed page and its pictorial representation was most important. In 1821 he became sub-editor of *The London Magazine* in which were appearing the essays of Charles Lamb, with whom Hood had a temperamental affinity. He established *The Comic Annual* in 1830, and later edited *Hood's Magazine*, another humorous periodical. His humor is the more remarkable in view of his constant suffering from poverty and illness. He died, May 3, 1845.

• Hood is a jester, but he is also a worthy representative of nineteenth-century humamitarianism, a sincere and compassionate singer of the oppressed.

I Remember, I Remember

I remember, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon, 5
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white, 10
The vi'lets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday, — 15
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember,
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing; 20
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember, 25
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:

It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy 30
To know I'm farther off from heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

The Bridge of Sighs

"Drowned¹ Drowned!" — Hamlet
One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly, 5
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements; 10
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully; 15
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly. 20

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her 25
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily. 30

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home? 35

Who was her father? Who was her mother? Had she a sister? Had she a brother? Or was there a dearer one Still, and a nearer one Yet, than all other?		Fashioned so slenderly, Young, and so fair!	
Alas! for the rarity Of Christian charity Under the sun! O, it was pitiful! Near a whole city full, Home she had none.	40	Ere her limbs frigidly Stiffen so rigidly, Decently, kindly, Smooth and compose them; And her eyes, close them, Staring so blindly!	85
Sisterly, brotherly, Fatherly, motherly Feelings had changed: Love, by harsh evidence, Thrown from its eminence; Even God's providence Seeming estranged.	45	Dreadfully staring Thro' muddy impurity, As when with the daring Last look of despairing Fixed on futurity.	90
Where the lamps quiver So far in the river, With many a light From window to casement, From garret to basement, She stood with amazement, Houseless by night.	50	Perishing gloomily, Spurred by contumely, Cold inhumanity, Burning insanity, Into her rest. — Cross her hands humbly, As if praying dumbly, Over her breast!	95
The bleak wind of March Made her tremble and shiver; But not the dark arch, Or the black flowing river: Mad from life's history, Glad to death's mystery, Swift to be hurled — Anywhere, anywhere Out of the world!	55	Owning her weakness, Her evil behavior, And leaving with meekness, Her sins to her Savior!	100
		1843.	

The Song of the Shirt

Published in the Christmas number of *Punch*, 1843.

In she plunged boldly, No matter how coldly The rough river ran, — Over the brink of it, Picture it — think of it, Dissolute Man! Lave in it, drink of it, Then, if you can!	65	With fingers weary and worn, With eyelids heavy and red, A woman sat, in unwomanly rags, Plying her needle and thread — Stitch! stitch! stitch! In poverty, hunger, and dirt, And still with a voice of dolorous pitch She sang the "Song of the Shirt."	5
Take her up tenderly, Lift her with care;	70	"Work! work! work! While the cock is crowing aloof! And work — work — work, Till the stars shine through the roof! It's Oh! to be a slave Along with the barbarous Turk,	10
	75		
	so		

- Where woman has never a soul to save, 15
If this is Christian work!
- "Work — work — work,
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work — work — work,
Till the eyes are heavy and dim! 20
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!
- "Oh, men, with sisters dear! 25
Oh, men, with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch — stitch — stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt, 30
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.
- "But why do I talk of Death?
That phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear its terrible shape, 35
It seems so like my own —
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap! 40
- "Work — work — work!
My labor never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread — and rags.
That shattered roof — this naked floor — 45
A table — a broken chair —
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!
- " Work — work — work!
From weary chime to chime, 50
Work — work — work,
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed,
As well as the weary hand. 56
- "Work — work — work,
In the dull December light,
- And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright, —
While underneath the eaves 61
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.
- "Oh! but to breathe the breath 65
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet;
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel, 70
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal.
- "Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope, 75
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!" 80
- With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch!.stitch! 85
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch, —
Would that its tone could reach the Rich! —
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"
1843-

The Death Bed

- We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.
- So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.
- Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied — 10

We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed — she had 15
Another morn than ours.

Morning Meditations

Let Taylor preach upon a morning breeze,
How well to rise while nights and larks are
flying —
For my part getting up seems not so easy
By half as *lying*.

What if the lark does carol in the sky, 5
Soaring beyond the sight to find him out —
Wherefore am I to rise at such a fly?
I'm not a trout.

Talk not to me of bees and such like hums,
The smell of sweet herbs at the morning
prime — 10
Only he long enough, and bed becomes
A bed of *time*.

To me Dan Phcebus and his car are nought,
His steeds that paw impatiently about, —
Let them enjoy, say I, as horses ought, 15
The first turn-out!

Right beautiful the dewy meads appear
Besprinkled by the rosy-fingered girl;
What then, — if I prefer my pillow-beer
To early pearl? 20

My stomach is not ruled by other men's,
And grumbling for a reason, quaintly begs
Wherefore should master rise before the hens
Have laid their eggs?

Why from a comfortable pillow start 25
To see faint flushes in the east awaken?
A fig, I say, for any streaky part,
Excepting bacon.

An early riser Mr. Gray has drawn,
Who used to haste the dewy grass among, 30
"To meet the sun upon the upland lawn" —
Well — he died young.

With charwomen such early hours agree,
And sweeps that earn betimes their bit and
sup,

But I'm no climbing boy, and needs not be 35
All up — all up!

So here I'll lie, my morning calls deferring,
Till something nearer to the stroke of noon;—
A man that's fond precociously of *stirring*,
Must be a spoon. 40

Thomas Lovell Beddoes 1803-1849

Beddoes as a writer was a romanticist who found congenial the writings of the later Elizabethan dramatists, especially Webster. In 1822 he produced a successful play in blank verse, *The Bride's Tragedy*, which he had written three years before. About the time that he took his B.A. at Oxford in 1825^{ne} began a remarkable book, *Death's Jest Book* (published the year after his death).

Most of his life after graduation he spent on the Continent, where he studied medicine. As physician and as writer, he was greatly interested in death, especially what might be called its decorative or pictorial side. He took his own life in 1849.

Beddoes had an undoubted poetic gift, employing images both old and new with remarkable originality and intensity. His blank verse has a distinctive flexibility. His lyrics are polished and original. In all that he did, Beddoes was a speculative liberal.

Dream-Pedlary

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell,
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown 5
Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy? 10

A cottage lone and still,
With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
Until I die.

Such pearls from Life's fresh crown	15	Out of hell's murky haze,	
Fain would I shake me down.		Heaven's blue pall?	
Were dreams to have at will,		Raise my loved long-lost boy,	
This would best heal my ill,		To lead me to his joy. —	
This would I buy.		There are no ghosts to raise;	35
		Out of death lead no ways;	
But there were dreams to sell	20	Vain is the call.	
I'll didst thou buy,		Know'st thou not ghosts to sue,	
Life is a dream, they tell,		No love thou hast.	
Waking, to die.		Else he, as I will do,	40
Dreaming a dream to prize,		And breathe thy last.	
Is wishing ghosts to rise;	25	So out of Life's fresh crown	
And if I had the spell		Fall like a rose-leaf down.	
To call the buried well,		Thus are the ghosts to woo;	
Which one would I?		Thus are all dreams made true,	45
		Ever to last!	
If there are ghosts to raise,			
What shall I call,	30		

THE

Later Nineteenth Century

THE YEAR 1832. is a date that makes a natural division point between the early and the later nineteenth century. The choice is justified in history by the passing of the Reform Bill, which decisively marked the progress of Great Britain toward democracy and industrialism through the extension of the franchise to the upper middle class and to the large manufacturing towns. In the annals of literature the date coincides very nearly with the passing of several great figures of the romantic period, Hazlitt (1830), Scott (1831), Coleridge (1834), Lamb (1834). Byron, Shelley, and Keats had died in the decade before. Wordsworth had passed into his long poetic decline. Of the men who were to give character to the Victorian period, Macaulay, Carlyle, Tennyson, and John Stuart Mill were beginning their activity, and Dickens, Thackeray, Browning, and Ruskin were to appear within the next few years.

The later nineteenth century saw the changes of the earlier period carried forward, and new designs in the social fabric of the English people begin to take shape. With the extension of machinery, production in every department showed an enormous increase, and population doubled and trebled. This mass of human beings demanded education and entertainment, and accordingly the function of literature became greatly enlarged. They demanded, also, a share in the government. The Reform Bill of 1831 had extended the franchise to the upper industrial class. After its passage the workers organized a campaign for a more popular government, with universal suffrage, and a Parliament elected every three years. These demands were embodied in the People's Charter, whence came the name "Chartism." Although, as an attempt at mass-action, Chartism failed, its aims have been gradually achieved. Another popular movement was that for the repeal of the duties on foodstuffs, imposed by the so-called "Corn Laws," which were levied in the interest of the landowning agricultural class and kept the industrial population on the verge of starvation. They were repealed in 1846. Soon afterwards free trade was extended to nearly all commodities, and English manufacture and trade increased more rapidly than ever. This industrial activity demanded new markets, which were secured by extending the British Empire in Asia and Africa — by penetration, colonization, and conquest.

There continued to be great misery among the workers in mine and factory, and the labor of small children was necessary to support the family. Factory legislation gradually cured the worst evils, and the workers themselves organized trade unions which gave them an opportunity to check, by collective bargaining, the exploitation of capitalism.

The social and political movements of the first half of the nineteenth century were not, in general, treated directly by the writers of the period. The rapid shifts and changes of the second half are clearly reflected in its literature. The great advance in prosperity of the middle class, and the multiplication of material comforts made possible by machinery, 'contributed to a sense of well-being, of pride in wealth, of belief in progress through mechanical inventions and social organization. The most eloquent representative of this complacency was Lord Macaulay. Later in the century we find a corresponding pride in the increasing extent and power of the Empire, of which Rudyard Kipling was the exponent. On the other hand, the sense that this prosperity and power were paid for by the misery of the working class, that revolution was imminent in the mass demonstrations when the Chartists took their monster petitions to Parliament, was the burden of the urgent prophecies of Thomas Carlyle. The suffering of the poor was a theme in Dickens's work and in the poetry of Mrs. Browning. The injury to the natural beauty of the country caused by the growth of cities, by factories and railroads, and the decline in taste for beauty of workmanship under mass production, were subjects of bitter protest by John Ruskin and William Morris. The vulgarity, as well as the selfishness, of a society devoted to material ends, and contented with mechanical triumphs, was denounced by these writers and by Matthew Arnold, all of whom asserted the claims of the spiritual life upon the individual, and of art and beauty upon society, claims which could be realized only through the establishment of social justice.

Two marked tendencies, which had their beginnings at the time of the French Revolution and have continued influential down to our day, are discernible in this period. On the one hand were persons who believed in the application of intelligence to human affairs, who held that social problems were to be solved by democracy, that is, by giving the people control over the government and educating them to use their power for their own welfare. This trust in intelligence was characteristic of the Liberals; its classic expression is to be found in John Stuart Mill's tract *ON Liberty*. On the other hand, there were those who felt that the unconscious, non-intellectual elements in human nature, often called instincts, were more in harmony with the underlying forces which moved the world. Carlyle was their leader. Their doctrine of the spiritual nature of man and the universe made them sceptical or scornful of the triumphs of machinery, education, and democracy, to which the Liberal pointed as signs of progress. "What shall it profit a man," they asked, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The faith that the age had in the use of intelligence was greatly strengthened and profoundly influenced by the scientific discoveries which led to the promulgation of the theory of evolution in Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in 1859. This idea of man's evolution became the intellectual background for thought on social and ethical themes, even of writers like Walter Pater and R. L. Stevenson, whose interests were largely aesthetic. On the other hand, this linking of man in his natural history to the lower animals had a disturbing

influence on belief in revealed religion. One of the chief themes in nineteenth-century poetry and fiction is this decline in religious faith, and its tragic consequences to the individual and to society.

The Church was aroused from its lethargy to meet its new foe, natural science. About the time of the passage of the Reform Bill, a movement had begun at Oxford for the revival of spiritual power in the Church of England, led by John Henry Newman. The Oxford Movement, as it is called, emphasized the historical inheritance of Anglicanism from the Church of the Middle Ages. Many of its adherents, including Newman himself, were led to join the Roman Catholic Church. Newman's followers in the Anglo-Catholic Movement became the dominant party within the Church of England. Both churches gained in spiritual and social force; and to this revival is to be traced a group of religious poets, chief among whom is Francis Thompson, unequaled since the seventeenth century.

The great prose writers of the late nineteenth century displayed in their lives the growing seriousness of the age. They began their work with the literary and philosophical inheritance of romanticism, but gradually subordinated their individual interests to the social necessities of the time. Carlyle, a critic of literature, became a historian and critic of society. Ruskin turned from art-criticism to political economy. Matthew Arnold's early romantic verse gave place to the grave poetry of religious doubt, and to the prose of social criticism. This is especially true of the poets. Tennyson's early master was Keats, and his early verse was chiefly sensuous and decorative. His later history is an effort to deal with problems of the day, sometimes in allegory and symbol as in *The Princess* and the *Idylls of the King*, sometimes in the realism of *Dora* and *Aylmer's Field*. Browning's early master was Shelley. He likewise turned from the romantic studies of the individual, in *Pauline*, *Paracelsus*, and *Sordello*, to problems of men and women in social bonds, as in *The Ring and the Book*. Mrs. Browning's transition from *The Seraphim* to *Aurora Leigh*, and William Morris's from *The Earthly Paradise* to his propaganda for socialism, are even more striking. The effort of Victorian poetry to escape from its romantic inheritance, to deal with realities, and share in the social burden of the time, is a long descent from Parnassus.

In the general course of Victorian poetry there was one movement that did not follow the stream, but acted as an eddy or a cross-current. That is the pre-Raphaelite Movement. This owed its impulse largely to the Oxford Movement, with its revival of the medieval spirit of religious sincerity. The pre-Raphaelites, led by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, found a corresponding sincerity in art in the painters and poets who came before the Renaissance in Italy. The pre-Raphaelites were interested in aesthetic matters; they looked for their themes to medieval and early Christian stories; they were not concerned with social problems. Yet they contributed, in Christina Rossetti, to the revival of religious poetry of the later century; and their admiration of medieval ideals carried Ruskin and Morris into their attempts to revive medieval craftsmanship, and thence to restore the social conditions out of which that craftsmanship grew. In the main, however, the pre-Raphaelite Movement was a romantic escape from the serious preoccupation with society which absorbed much of the energy of the time. It furnished a sort of aesthetic background for a poet such as Swinburne, whose inspiration was mainly literary, for the neo-pagan philo-

sophy of Walter Pater, and for the various eccentricities of the mood of protest against Victorian seriousness which marked the last decade of the century.

The literary form that showed during this period the greatest expansion in subject matter and in technique is the novel. It was for many reasons the most popular form of prose in the nineteenth century. It was a free form, not subject to definite rules, it lent itself readily to the journalistic interests of the day; for both reasons it was agreeable to the new public of uncritical readers. The Victorian novel, like Victorian poetry, had to disembarass itself from the romantic inheritance. The success of Scott in the Waverley novels at first threatened to dominate fiction for an indefinite time. Other modes of popularity in time succeeded the historical interest, but down to the close of the century nearly every novelist chose to write his intended masterpiece in the historical form. The fiction-reading public built up by Scott was accustomed to romance, and his successors, Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, and others, sought it in various fields.

After Scott, three great novelists dominated the field. First in popularity was Charles Dickens (1811-70). Dickens began by using a humble popular form, the narrative of adventures of characters who find themselves in various incongruous, more or less humorous, situations. He thus came to write *Pickwick Papers*. For more serious fiction he drew characters, mainly children, who are victims of some private vice or institutional cruelty. His novels were an important influence in the redress of the social wrongs which the industrial system had aggravated. For romantic appeal he replaced the terror of the supernatural by that of lawlessness, of crime and mobs. In so doing, Dickens could claim to be a realist, but his effort was always to present the romantic elements of real life. He effected a great democratic revolution in the publication of fiction by issuing his novels in monthly installments at a shilling each, instead of in three volumes at a guinea and a half. This periodical form of publication tempted W. M. Thackeray (1811-63), who had a reputation as a writer of essays and sketches, to throw his material into a novel, whence came *Vanity* "(1848)", a panorama of English society in the first half of the century. Thackeray was a more thoroughgoing realist than Dickens, in his next novel *Pendennis* (1850) he worked in the spirit of Fielding. His masterpiece *Henry Esmond* (1851) is one of the best pictures of the eighteenth century imaginable. The third in the trio of great nineteenth-century novelists is Mary Ann Evans (1819-80), who is known by her pen-name of George Eliot. She began to write fiction about the time when the decline of faith in supernatural religion seemed to threaten the very basis of morality. George Eliot wrote to show that the principle of right conduct was implicit in the human soul, in a spirit of self-renunciation and unselfish service to others. These ideals, which reflect the spirit of Carlyle, are set forth in *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Romola* (1863), *Middelmarch* (1871).

The discoveries in science exerted a strong influence upon the technique of the novel, especially in the delineation of setting or environment and in the analysis of character. This influence was especially strong upon two novelists whose reputations fill the closing years of the century, George Meredith (1818-1909) and Thomas Hardy (1841-1918). They offer an interesting illustration of the opposition, noted above, between the school of thought which emphasizes conscious intelligence, and that which regards the unconscious forces as more important in human life. Meredith held that evolution, having produced

man as a physical being, would continue to raise him to higher power as an intellectual being. His poetry expresses this faith: "Never is earth misread by brain." Hardy's view of life rested upon the same revelation of the world by science as Meredith's, to which, however, it is totally opposed. Hardy pictures man as controlled by blind forces, of which intelligence merely serves to make him tragically aware. The happiest are the unconscious, simple souls, who resign themselves to fate. Hardy's most distinctive characters are his simple-minded peasants.

There was much to justify the mood of pessimism which settled down upon the late nineteenth century, of which Hardy's novels are typical. Industry destroyed the natural beauty of the parts of the world in which most of the great population that had been called into existence was obliged to live. It killed the primary source of satisfaction for most men, their joy in their work. As life in the present world became more bitter, faith grew weaker in a world to come. The great hopes entertained of science and intellectual progress, of the happiness of man through the extension of his control over nature and through the intelligent organization of society, seemed doomed to disappointment. Many of the poets of the period reflect this discouragement, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Morris, Swinburne, James Thomson, as well as Carlyle, Ruskin, and George Eliot.

These great Victorians were all deeply serious in their outlook on life. In the last decade of the century, this seriousness gave way to a mood of indifference to the social problems of mankind, a disposition to escape from them by way of aesthetic interests, to find satisfaction in art for its own sake, a mood which has something in common with the pre-Raphaelite Movement. It gave rise to much invention in forms of verse as well as in the other arts. Its philosophy was Walter Pater's Epicureanism. At the same time, Browning with his instinctive optimism was gaining in popularity, as was Meredith with his more intellectual faith. Against the Epicureanism of Pater, there was the Stoicism of Stevenson and Henley. There was a revival of religious poetry. Altogether, the decade of the nineties was one of those periods in which no general tendency can be discerned among the many cross and shifting currents, a period to which the term "decadence" is often applied.

It was a prevailing fashion of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, to look back on the Victorian Age with scorn somewhat similar to that with which the romantics viewed the Augustan writers. The term Victorian became an epithet for all that was narrow in religion, precise in morals, and complacent in social matters. The very success with which the Victorians, like the Augustans, realized their ends, limited as these were, tended to make them satisfied with their civilization and progress, and justified the satire of twentieth-century novelists like Galsworthy and Bennett. It must be remembered, on the other hand, that the Victorian Age differed from the Augustan in the unsparing criticism which its great masters levelled at their countrymen for the qualities which deserved it. Carlyle, Dickens, Thackeray, Kingsley, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, Meredith, Hardy, Swinburne, all were critics of society. Indeed the energy and eloquence which they showed in condemning evils and asserting the need of reform became a count in the indictment against them drawn by their successors. Victorian earnestness was one of the qualities held up to mockery. Yet seen in longer perspective, the age of Victoria justifies itself as, on the whole, one of peaceful progress,

increase of intellectual enlightenment, and physical amelioration. One of the leading exponents of the best aspects of the period was Lord Morley, who in the midst of the collapse and ruin of the Great War could write:

⁴⁴ Whatever we may say of Europe between Waterloo and Sedan, in our country at least, it was an epoch of hearts uplifted with hope, brains active with sober and manly reason for the common good. Some ages are marked as sentimental, others stand conspicuous as rational. The Victorian Age was happier than most in the flow of both these currents into a common stream of vigorous and effective talent. New truths were welcomed into free minds, and free minds make brave men. Old prejudices were disarmed. Fresh principles were set afloat, and supported by the right reasons. The standards of ambition rose higher and purer. Men learned to care more for one another. The sense of proportion among the claims of leading questions to the world's attention became more wisely tempered. The rational prevented the sentimental from falling into the pure emotional. Bacon was prince in intellect and large wisdom of the world, yet it was Bacon who penned that deep appeal from thought to feeling: The nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath. This of the great Elizabethan was the one prevailing note in our Victorian Age."

The student will find the following works useful: *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, vols. xiii and xiv (1927); H. D. Traill, *Social England*, vol. vi (1897); O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, vols. III and IV (1910), G. Samtisbury, *History of Nineteenth Century Literature* (1896); A. H. Thorndike, *Literature in a Changing Age*, Hugh Walker, *Literature in the Victorian Era*; G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*; J. W. Cunliffe, *English Literature during the Last Half Century*; Emery E. Neff, *Carlyle and Mill* (1916); Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties* (1913); Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorian* (1918); R. M. Lovett and H. S. Hughes, *A History of the Novel in England* (1931).

Thomas Carlyle • 1795-1881

The major figure in English literature of the middle nineteenth century is Thomas Carlyle. Although never a popular writer in the literal meaning of the word, he was a dynamic force on the best minds, inspiring both enthusiastic affirmation and equally vigorous dissent. He wrote in a prose style remarkable for its personal quality, its mannerisms, among which exclamation and direct address to the reader are prominent — a style which commanded attention and response.

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, Annandale, December 4, 1795. He was sent to the University of Edinburgh to prepare for the ministry. The curse of poverty, bad food, led to stomach trouble from which he suffered all his days, and which undoubtedly affected his temper, view of life, and relations with people. He taught school at Annan and Kircaldy, became a private tutor for a time, and then turned to literature. In 1816 he married Jane Welsh, and shortly afterwards went to the remote farm of Craigenputtock, where for six years he struggled with farming and writing. Here Emerson visited him,

and the friendship began which was to be an important influence in the lives of both, bringing Carlyle into contact with the Transcendentalists in Massachusetts, and securing to him returns from the American publication of his books. In 1834 he moved to London, and took up his residence at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea. Here he remained during the long remainder of his life, gathering about him a circle of younger men whose guide and philosopher he became — Tennyson, Ruskin, Kingsley, Browning, Dickens, Thackeray, John Sterling, Clough; and seeing visitors from America — Emerson, Norton, Alcott, and Margaret Fuller. In 1866 he was elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh. While he was in Scotland to receive this honor Mrs. Carlyle died. For fifteen years he lingered on, chiefly occupied with his *Reminiscences* in which he pays a noble tribute to that brilliant and devoted woman.

Carlyle's early writing had to do with literature. He had the good fortune to learn German from a fellow student at Edinburgh, at a time when few Englishmen knew that language, and when romanticism in literature, and idealism in philosophy, were giving German writers and thinkers a chief place in the culture of Europe. His reading of German authors — Goethe, Schiller, Richter, Kant, Fichte, Novalis — not only gave him subjects for the articles which he wrote for self-support, but had a profound influence upon his own thought and style. His first important work was a translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Apprenticeship*, published in 1824, a novel which dealt with a young man's effort to learn how to live, to adjust himself to his environment in a world of men and women. This theme persisted in much of Carlyle's later writing. Through his translation he was brought into relation with Goethe, whose friendly letters and advice brought much encouragement to the young Scotsman during a long period of waiting for recognition in his own country.

Carlyle accepted with reluctance the fate that made him a literary man, and only because he saw in literature a means of uttering a message which he felt was of the highest significance to his contemporaries. He was essentially a teacher and prophet. Like other Victorian writers, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, he was driven by the religious and social crises of the age to turn from criticism of literature to criticism of life. He wrote for *The Edinburgh Review* two essays, *Signs of the Times*, and *Characteristics*, which contain the central texts of his preaching, viz., that the reality of the world is spiritual, "a divine idea" behind the phenomena of sensuous experience, and that this essential truth is to be reached not by reason but by intuition. In this he carried forward the protest of Coleridge against a mechanistic, in favor of a spiritual conception of the universe. The conscious he described as the realm of manufacture, the unconscious as the realm of creation. He thus became the leader of a crusade against the application of reason to human affairs, which was the political creed of the Liberals, and in favor of a more mystical doctrine, according to which certain individuals, gifted with insight into the divine idea of which the world of nature and of human history are expressions, become the natural leaders of the people. Thus, while calling himself a radical, Carlyle was opposed to what the Liberals understood by political progress through the extension of democracy.

While at Craigenputtock, Carlyle wrote his first book, *Sartor Resartus*, which was published serially in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1834. This spiritual autobiography sets forth his theory of the individual's relation to a universe permeated by the divine idea, a relation to be developed through renunciation and work. Later he published *Past and Present* (1843),¹⁰ which this doctrine is translated into social terms. Carlyle had begun work on *The French Revolution* before leaving Scotland. He handed the manuscript of the first vol-

ume to John Stuart Mill to read. Unfortunately this unique copy was burned by accident, and as Carlyle had saved only enough money to carry him through the writing of the work, this loss was a heavy blow. With the courage of despair he set about rewriting, and completed the three volumes in 1837.

Carlyle regarded history as a gospel, a revelation of the divine idea, from which mankind could draw warnings and lessons. The nineteenth century was haunted by fears of revolution, so that his study of the spiritual forces behind the greatest of revolutions had a special timeliness. Moreover, in 1839, ^{he} published a long pamphlet on Chartism, the movement which seemed to carry a threat of revolution in England. Carlyle considered the human element most important in history, which in his view was "the essence of innumerable biographies," and the record of what great men had accomplished in the world. This theory he set forth in a series of lectures on *Heroes and Hero Worship* in 1840. His ideal of the hero as king was Oliver Cromwell, whose letters and speeches he published, with "elucidations" by himself, in 1845.

Carlyle was now at the height of his fame and power. The revolutions throughout Europe in 1848, however, threw him into violent reaction; and his *Latter Day Pamphlets* (1850) expressed his scorn of liberalism and reform, his hope of social salvation through the advent of the strong man. In contrast to the bitterness of these protests, *The Life of John Sterling* (1851) is a loving and tender tribute to a friend whose views were generally of the type which Carlyle regarded as most pernicious. For many years he was engaged on the life of a rather dubious hero, Frederick the Great, finished in 1865. The ^{next year} his Inaugural Address at Edinburgh, an eloquent and beautiful summing up of his message, did much to win back the respect and admiration which he had forfeited. After his death in 1881, the publication of his reminiscences and biography, with expressions of personal animus toward many people, and a quarrel between his biographer, Froude, and members of the Carlyle family, led to another period of depreciation, from which Carlyle's reputation is now emerging.

The complete works of Carlyle are published in many editions, notably the Century, 31 volumes with an introduction by H. D. Traill. A critical edition of *Sartor Resartus* is that by Archibald MacMechan in the Athenaeum Press series (1896). *Sartor Resartus* and *Heroes and Hero Worship* form a volume in Everyman's Library, which publishes also several other works. The standard biography is that by J. A. Froude in four volumes (1897). A new Life by David Alec Wilson has been completed in six volumes (1913-35). Short Lives are those by John Nichol in the English Men of Letters series (1892.), and Richard Garnett in the Great Writers series (1911). Essays by W. C. Brownell in *Victorian Prose Masters* and R. H. Hutton in *Modern Guides to English Thought in Matters of Faith* are noteworthy. *Carlyle and Mill*, by Emery Neff (1926), is a study of two philosophies which persist through the nineteenth century.

FROM *Sartor Resartus*

1834

In 1831 Carlyle, then at Craigenputtock, wrote, "Am engaged on a strange piece on clothes. Know not what will come of it." This was the germ of *Sartor Resartus*, which was published in *Fraw's Magazine* in 1834, and in book form in Boston two years later. The book consists of supposed auto-

Biographical fragments of Professor Diogenes Teufelsdröckh (Devils dung) of Weissmüchtwo (Know not where), which Carlyle supposes himself obliged to arrange and publish with explanatory comments. The title of the book, *The Tailor Reclothed*, has reference to a humorous philosophy of the imaginary Professor Teufelsdröckh, according to which the opinions of men are likened to the clothes which they put on or off, change and renew — doubtless a reminiscence of Swift's satire in

A Tale of a Tub. The experience and philosophy are those of Carlyle himself. The chapters here given narrate an episode, as Carlyle says, quite literally, which occurred to him in Leith Walk, Edinburgh. In deep spiritual discouragement, "without hope and God in the world," he suddenly realized the strength of his own unconquerable soul. This sense of personality was the basis of Carlyle's faith. It was strengthened by sacrifice and work. It became the source of a mystic faith in the spiritual nature of the universe which is developed in the further chapter, on Natural Supernaturalism.

Sartor Resartus is written in a style distinguished by strange words placed in unusual order for emphasis, an explosive rather than a sustained rhythmic style. Carlyle excuses it by referring to his original which he is supposed to be translating, but in fact it is the style which he made thereafter his own, a style suited to the burden of his utterance, which was of the nature of Hebrew prophecy.

BOOK II

CHAPTER VII

The Everlasting No

Under the strange nebulous envelopment, wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature is nevertheless progressive, and growing: for how can the "Son of Time," in any case, stand still? We behold him, through those dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition: his mad Pilgrimages, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all this but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he molts is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-off the old one upon rocks. What Stoicism soever our Wanderer, in his individual acts and motions, may affect, it is clear that there is a hot fever of anarchy and misery raging within; coruscations of which flash out: as, indeed, how could there be other? Have we not seen him disappointed, bemocked of Destiny, through long years? All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied; nay, as in the last worst instance, offered and then snatched away. Ever an "excellent Passivity"; but of useful, reasonable Activity, essential to the former as Food

to Hunger, nothing granted: till at length, in this wild Pilgrimage, he must forcibly seize for himself an Activity, though useless, unreasonable. Alas, his cup of bitterness, which had been filling drop by drop, ever since that first "ruddy morning" in the Hinterschlag¹ Gymnasium, was at the very lip; and then with that poison-drop, of the Towgood-and-Blumine business,² it runs over, and even hisses over in a deluge of foam.

He himself says once, with more justice than originality: "Man is, properly speaking, based upon Hope, he has no other possession but Hope; this world of his is emphatically the 'Place of Hope.' " What, then, was our Professor's possession? We see him, for the present, quite shut-out from Hope; looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado.

Alas, shut-out from Hope, in a deeper sense than we yet dream of! For, as he wanders wearisomely through this world, he has now lost all tidings of another and higher. Full of religion, or at least of religiosity, as our Friend has since exhibited himself, he hides not that, in those days, he was wholly irreligious: "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief," says he, "shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black." To such readers as have reflected, what can be called reflecting, on man's life, and happily discovered, in contradiction to much Profit-and-Loss Philosophy, speculative and practical, that Soul is *not* synonymous with Stomach; who understand, therefore, in our Friend's words, "that, for man's well-being, Faith is properly the one thing needful; how, with it, Martyrs, otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross; and without it, Worldlings puke-up their sick existence, by suicide, in the midst of luxury": to such it will be clear that, for a pure moral nature, the loss of his religious Belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! All wounds, the crush of long-continued Destitution, the stab of false Friendship and of

¹ Spankbottom.

² In an earlier chapter he had seen his beloved Blumine setting out on her wedding journey.

false Love, all wounds in thy so genial heart, would have healed again, had not its life-warmth been withdrawn. Well might he exclaim, in his wild way: "Is there no God, then, but at best an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his Universe, and *seeing* it go? Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthly Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the Gallows and from Doctor Graham's¹ Celestial-Bed? Happiness of an approving Conscience! Did not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that *he* was 'the chief of sinners'; and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Wordmonger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure, — I tell thee, Nay! To the unregenerate Prometheus Vincutus² of a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation of his wretchedness that he is conscious of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim not of suffering only, but of injustice. What then? Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others *profit* by? I know not: only this I know, If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of Conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *be* has provided for his Elect!"

Thus has the bewildered Wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the Sibyl cave of Destiny, and receive no Answer but an Echo. It is all a grim Desert, this once-fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-

filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of Inquiry carried him. "But what boots it (*was thut'sy* cries he: "it is but the common lot in this era. Not having come to spiritual majority prior to the *Siecle de Louis Quince*, and not being born purely a Loghead (*Dummkopf*), thou hadst no other outlook.

10 The whole world is, like thee, sold to Unbelief; their old Temples of the Godhead, which for long have not been rainproof, crumble down; and men ask now: where is the Godhead; our eyes never saw him?"

15 Pitiful enough were it, for all these wild utterances, to call our Diogenes wicked. Unprofitable servants as we all are, perhaps at no era of his life was he more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God,

20 than even now when doubting God's existence. "One circumstance I note," says he: "after all the nameless woe that Inquiry, which for me, what it is not always, was genuine Love of Truth, had wrought me, I nevertheless still loved Truth, and would

25 bate no jot of my allegiance to her. 'Truth!' I cried, 'though the Heavens crush me for following her: no Falsehood! though a whole celestial Lubberland were the price of Apostasy.' In conduct it was the same. Had

30 a divine Messenger from the clouds, or miraculous Handwriting on the wall, convincingly proclaimed to me *This thou shalt do*, with what passionate readiness, as I often

35 thought, would I have done it, had it been leaping into the infernal Fire. Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had

40 brought on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft; if my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there."

Meanwhile, under all these tribulations, and temporal and spiritual destitutions, what must the Wanderer, in his silent soul, have endured I "The painfulest feeling," writes

¹ A famous quack doctor, whose bed was supposed to cure sterility in women.

² Prometheus Bound, the title of a drama by Æschylus.

he, " is that of your own Feebleness (*Unkraft*); ever, as the English Milton says, to be weak is the true misery. And yet of your Strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, *Know thyself*;¹ till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at*.

"But for me, so strangely unprosperous had I been, the net-result of my Workings amounted as yet simply to — Nothing. How then could I believe in my Strength, when there was as yet no mirror to see it in? Ever did this agitating, yet, as I now perceive, quite frivolous question, remain to me insoluble: Hast thou a certain Faculty, a certain Worth, such even as the most have not; or art thou the completest Dullard of these modern times? Alas, the fearful Unbelief is unbelief in yourself; and how could I believe? Had not my first, last Faith in myself, when even to me the Heavens seemed laid open, and I dared to love, been ail-too cruelly belied? The speculative Mystery of Life grew ever more mysterious to me: neither in the practical Mystery had I made the slightest progress, but been everywhere buffeted, foiled, and contemptuously cast out. A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening Infinitude, I seemed to have nothing given me but eyes, whereby to discern my own wretchedness. Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of Enchantment, divided me from all living: was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine? O Heaven, No, there was none! I kept a lock upon my lips: why should I speak much with that shifting variety of so-called Friends, in whose withered, vain and too-hungry souls Friendship was but an incredible tradition? In such cases, your re-

¹ Maxim of Solon inscribed over the portico of the temple of Delphi.

source is to talk little, and that little mostly from the Newspapers. Now when I look back, it was a strange isolation I then lived in. The men and women around me, even speaking with me, were but Figures; I had, practically, forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automatic. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages, I walked solitary; and (except as it was my own heart, not another's, that I kept devouring) savage also, as the tiger in his jungle. Some comfort it would have been, could I, like a Faust, have fancied myself tempted and tormented of the Devil; for a Hell, as I imagine, without Life, though only diabolic Life, were more frightful: but in our age of Down-pulling and Disbelief, the very Devil has been pulled down, you cannot so much as believe in a Devil. To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golluth,¹ and Mill of Death! Why was the Living banished thither companionless, conscious? Why, if there is no Devil; nay, unless the Devil is your God?"

A prey incessantly to such corrosions, might not, moreover, as the worst aggravation to them, the iron constitution even of a Teufelsdröckh threaten to fail? We conjecture that he has known sickness; and, in spite of his locomotive habits, perhaps sickness of the chronic sort. Hear this, for example: "How beautiful to die of broken-heart, on Paper! Quite another thing in practice; every window of your Feeling, even of your Intellect, as it were, begrimed and mud-bespattered, so that no pure ray can enter; a whole Drugshop in your inwards; the fordone soul drowning slowly in quagmires of Disgust!"

Putting all which external and internal miseries together, may we not find in the following sentences, quite in our Professor's still vein, significance enough? "From Suicide a certain afterglow (*Nachschein*) of Christianity withheld me: perhaps also a certain indolence of character; for, was noL

¹ St. Matthew xxvii, 33.

that a remedy I had at any time within reach? Often, however, was there a question present to me: Should some one now, at the turning of that corner, blow thee suddenly out of Space, into the other World, or other No-world, by pistol-shot, — how were it? On which ground, too, I often, in seastorms and sieged cities and other death-scenes, exhibited an imperturbability, which passed, falsely enough, for courage."

"So had it lasted," concludes the Wanderer, "so had it lasted as in bitter protracted Death-agony, through long years. The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dew-drop was smoldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. Almost since earliest memory I had shed no tear, or once only when I, murmuring half-audibly, recited Faust's Death-song, that wild *Selig der den er im Stegesglanz findet* (Happy whom he finds in Battle's splendor), and thought that of this last Friend even I was not forsaken, that Destiny itself could not doom me not to die. Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil: nay, I often felt as if it might be solacing, could the Arch-Devil himself, though in Tartarean terrors, but rise to me, that I might tell him a little of my mind. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what; it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me, as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited, to be devoured.

"Full of such humor, and perhaps the mis-erablest man in the whole French Capital or Suburbs, was I, one sultry Dogday, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enffr*, among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere, and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace; whereby doubtless my spirits were little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a Thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What art thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies

before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it! And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance.

"Thus had the EVERLASTING No (*das twice Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my ME, and then was it that my whole ME stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's); to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometric¹ Fire-baptism, perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

CHAPTER VIII

Centre of Indifference

Though, after this "Baphometric Fire-baptism" of his, our Wanderer signifies that his Unrest was but increased; as, indeed, "Indignation and Defiance," especially against things in general, are not the most peaceable inmates; yet can the Psychologist surmise that it was no longer a quite hopeless Unrest; that henceforth it had at least a fixed centre to revolve round. For the fire-baptized soul, long so scathed and thunder-riven, here feels its own Freedom, which feeling is its Baphometric Baptism: the citadel of its whole kmg-

¹ From Baphomet, the imaginary idol or symbol which the Templars were accused of worshipping.

dom it has thus gained by assault, and will keep inexpugnable; outwards from which the remaining dominions, not indeed without hard battling, will doubtless by degrees be conquered and pacificated. Under another figure, we might say, if in that great moment, in the *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, the old inward Satanic School was not yet thrown out of doors, it received peremptory judicial notice to quit; — whereby, for the rest, its howl-chantings, Ernulphus-'cursings, and rebellious gnashings of teeth, might, in the meanwhile, become only the more tumultuous, and difficult to keep secret.

Accordingly, if we scrutinize these Pilgrimings well, there is perhaps discernible henceforth a certain incipient method in their madness. Not wholly as a Spectre does Teufelsdröckh now storm through the world; at worst as a spectre-fighting Man, nay who will one day be a Spectre-queller. If pilgrimmg restlessly to so many "Saints' Wells," and ever without quenching of his thirst, he nevertheless finds little secular wells, whereby from time to time some alleviation is ministered. In a word, he is now, if not ceasing, yet intermitting to "eat his own heart"; and clutches round him outwardly on the NOT-ME for wholesomer food. Does not the following glimpse exhibit him in a much more natural state?

"Towns also and Cities, especially the ancient, I failed not to look upon with interest. How beautiful to see thereby, as through a long vista, into the remote Time; to have as it were, an actual section of almost the earliest Past brought safe into the Present, and set before your eyes! There, in that old City, was a live ember of Culinary Fire put down, say only two-thousand years ago; and there, burning more or less triumphantly, with such fuel as the region yielded, it has burnt, and still burns, and thou thyself seest the very smoke thereof. Ah! and the far more mysterious live ember of Vital Fire was then also put down there, and still miraculously burns and spreads; and the smoke and ashes thereof (in these Judgment-Halls and Church-yards), and its bellows-engines (in these Churches), thou still seest;

¹ The curse is given in *Tristram Shandy*, in, xi.

and its flame, looking out from every kind countenance, and every hateful one, still warms thee or scorches thee.

"Of Man's Activity and Attainment the chief results are aeriform, mystic, and preserved in Tradition only: such are his Forms of Government, with the Authority they rest on; his Customs, or Fashions both of Cloth-habits and of Soul-habits; much more his collective stock of Handicrafts, the whole Faculty he has acquired of manipulating Nature: all these things, as indispensable and priceless as they are, cannot in any way be fixed under lock and key, but must flit, spirit-like, on impalpable vehicles, from Father to Son; if you demand sight of them, they are nowhere to be met with. Visible Plowmen and Hammermen there have been, ever from Cam and Tubalcain downwards: but where does your accumulated Agricultural, Metallurgic, and other Manufacturing SKILL lie warehoused? It transmits itself on the atmospheric air, on the sun's rays (by Hearing and by Vision); it is a thing aeriform, impalpable, of quite spiritual sort. In like manner, ask me not, Where are the LAWS; where is the GOVERNMENT? In vain wilt thou go to Schonbrunn, to Downing Street, to the Palais Bourbon:¹ thou findest nothing there but brick or stone houses, and some bundles of Papers tied with tape. Where, then, is that same cunningly-devised almighty GOVERNMENT of theirs to be laid hands on? Everywhere, yet nowhere: seen only in its works, this too is a thing aeriform, invisible; or if you will, mystic and miraculous. So spiritual (*geistig*) is our whole daily Life: all that we do springs out of Mystery, Spirit, invisible Force; only like a little Cloud-image, or Amida's Palace,² air-built, does the Actual body itself forth from the great mystic Deep.

"Visible and tangible products of the Past, again, I reckon-up to the extent of three. Cities, with their Cabinets and Arsenals; then tilled Fields, to either or to both of which divisions Roads with their Bridges,

¹ Seats of government in Vienna, London, and Paris respectively.

² The palace of an enchantress in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, book xvi.

may belong; and thirdly——Books. In which third truly, the last invented, lies a worth far surpassing that of the two others. Wondrous indeed is the virtue of a true Book. Not like a dead city of stones, yearly crumbling, yearly needing repair; more like a tilled field, but then a spiritual field: like a spiritual tree, let me rather say, it stands from year to year, and from age to age (we have Books that already number some hundred-and-fifty human ages); and yearly comes its new produce of leaves (Commentaries, Deductions, Philosophical, Political Systems; or were it only Sermons, Pamphlets, Journalistic Essays), every one of which is tahsmanic and thaumaturgic, for it can persuade men. O thou who art able to write a Book, which once in the two centuries or oftener there is a man gifted to do, envy not him whom they name City-builder, and inexpressibly pity him whom they name Conqueror or City-burner! Thou too art a Conqueror and Victor; but of the true sort, namely over the Devil: thou too hast built what will outlast all marble and metal, and be a wonder-bringing City of the Mind, a Temple and Seminary and Prophetic Mount, whereto all kindreds of the Earth will pilgrim. — Fool! why journeyest thou wearisomely, in thy antiquarian fervor, to gaze on the stone pyramids of Geeza, or the clay ones of Sacchara? These stand there, as I can tell thee, idle and inert, looking over the Desert, foolishly enough, for the last three-thousand years: but canst thou not open thy Hebrew BIBLE, then, or even Luther's Version thereof?"

No less satisfactory is his sudden appearance not in Battle, yet on some Battle-field; which, we soon gather, must be that of Wagram; so that here, for once, is a certain approximation to distinctiveness of date. Omitting much, let us impart what follows:

"Horrible enough! A whole Marchfeld¹ strewn with shell-splinters, cannon-shot, ruined tumbrils, and dead men and horses; stragglers still remaining not so much as buried. And those red mould heaps: ay, there lie the Shells of Men, out of which all

the Life and Virtue has been blown; and now are they swept together, and crammed-down out of sight, like blown Egg-shells! — Did Nature, when she bade the Donau bring down his mould-cargoes from the Carmthian and Carpathian Heights, and spread them out here into the softest, richest level, — intend thee, O Marchfeld, for a corn-bearing Nursery, whereon her children might be nursed; or for a Cockpit, wherein they might the more commodiously be throttled and tattered? Were thy three broad Highways, meeting here from the ends of Europe, made for Ammunition-wagons, then? Were thy Wagrams and Stillfneds but so many ready-built Casemates, wherein the house of Hapsburg might batter with artillery, and with artillery be battered? Konig Ottokar, amid yonder hillocks, dies under Rodolf's truncheon; here Kaiser Franz falls a-swoon under Napoleon's: within which five centuries, to omit the others, how has thy breast, fair Plain, been defaced and defiled¹ The green-sward is torn-up and trampled-down, man's fond care of it, his fruit-trees, hedge-rows, and pleasant dwellings, blown away with gunpowder: and the kind seedfield lies a desolate, hideous Place of Skulls. — Nevertheless, Nature is at work, neither shall these Powder-Devilkins with their utmost devilry gainsay her: but all that gore and carnage will be shrouded-in, absorbed into manure, and next year the Marchfeld will be green, nay greener. Thrifty unwearied Nature, ever out of our waste educing some little profit of thy own, — how dost thou, from the very carcass of the Killer, bring Life for the Living!

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five-hundred souls. From these, by certain 'Natural Enemies' of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men: Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them: she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another

¹ A decisive battle between the Emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg and Ottokar, King of Bohemia, fought in 1278.

hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two-thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending: till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition, and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen-out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot. — Alas, so is it in Deutschland, and hitherto in all other lands, still as of old, 'what devilry soever Kings do, the Greeks must pay the piper!' — In that fiction of the English Smollett, it is true, the final Cessation of War is perhaps prophetically shadowed forth; where the two Natural Enemies, in person, take each a Tobacco-pipe, filled with Brimstone, light the same, and smoke in one another's faces, till the weaker gives in: but from such predicted Peace-Era, what blood-filled trenches, and contentious centuries, may still divide us!"

Thus can the Professor, at least in lucid intervals, look away from his own sorrows, over the many-colored world, and pertinently enough note what is passing there. We may remark, indeed, that for the matter of spiritual culture, if for nothing else, perhaps few periods of his life were richer than this. Internally, there is the most momentous instructive Course of Practical Philosophy, with Experiments, going on; towards the

right comprehension of which his Peripatetic habits, favorable to Meditation, might help him rather than hinder. Externally, again, as he wanders to and fro, there arc, if for the longing heart little substance, yet for the seeing eye sights enough: in these so boundless Travels of his, granting that the Satanic School was even partially kept down, what an incredible knowledge of our Planet, and its Inhabitants and their Works, that is to say, of all knowable things, might not Teufelsdröckh acquire!

"I have read in most Public Libraries," says he, "including those of Constantinople and Samarcand: in most Colleges, except the Chinese Mandarin ones, I have studied, or seen that there was no studying. Unknown Languages have I oftenest gathered from their natural repertory, the Air, by my organ of Hearing; Statistics, Geographies, Topographies came, through the Eye, almost of their own accord. The ways of Man, how he seeks food, and warmth, and protection for himself, in most regions, are ocularly known to me. Like the great Hadrian, I meted-out much of the terraqueous Globe with a pair of Compasses that belonged to myself only.

"Of great Scenes why speak? Three summer days, I lingered reflecting, and even composing (*dtcktcte*) by the Pine-chasms of Vaucluse; and in that clear Lakelet moistened my bread. I have sat under the Palmtrees of Tadmor,² smoked a pipe among the ruins of Babylon. The great Wall of China I have seen; and can testify that it is of gray brick, coped and covered with granite, and shows only second-rate masonry. — Great Events, also, have not I witnessed? Kings sweated-down (*ausgemergeli*) into Berlin-and-Milan³ Customhouse-Officers, the World well won, and the World well lost; oftener than once a hundred-thousand individuals shot (by each other) in one day. All kindreds and peoples and nations dashed together, and shifted and shovelled into heaps, that they

¹ A village near Avignon where Petrarch once lived.

² Palmyra, once a city on an oasis in the desert edict of Syria.

³ The Berlin and Milan decrees were directed by Napoleon from those cities, imposing restrictions on British trade, to be carried out by the states of Europe.

might ferment there, and in time unite. The birth-pangs of Democracy, wherewith convulsed Europe was groaning in cries that reached Heaven, could not escape me.

"For great Men I have ever had the warmest predilection; and can perhaps boast that few such in this era have wholly escaped me. Great Men are the inspired (speaking and acting) Texts of that divine BOOK OF REVELATION, whereof a Chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named HISTORY; to which inspired Texts your numerous talented men, and your innumerable untalented men, are the better or worse exegetic Commentaries, and wagonload of too-stupid, heretical or orthodox, weekly Sermons. For my study, the inspired Texts themselves! Thus did not I, in very early days, having disguised me as tavern-waiter, stand behind the field-chairs, under the shady Tree at Treisnitz by the Jena Highway; waiting upon the great Schiller and greater Goethe; and hearing what I have not forgotten. For——"

—But at this point the Editor recalls his principle of caution, some time ago laid down, and must suppress much. Let not the sacredness of Laurelled, still more, of Crowned Heads, be tampered with. Should we, at a future day, find circumstances altered, and the time come for Publication, then may these glimpses into the privacy of the Illustrious be conceded; which for the present were little better than treacherous, perhaps traitorous Eavesdroppings. Of Lord Byron, therefore, of Pope Pius, Emperor Tarakwang,¹ and the "White Water-roses" (Chinese Carbonari) with their mysteries, no notice here! Of Napoleon himself we shall only, glancing from afar, remark that Teufelsdröckh's relation to him seems to have been of very varied character. At first we find our poor Professor on the point of being shot as a spy; then taken into private conversation, even pinched on the ear, yet presented with no money; at last indignantly dismissed, almost thrown out of doors, as an "Ideologist." "He himself," says the Professor, "was among the completest Ideologists, at least Ideopraxists: in the Idea (*in*

¹ The contemporary Emperor of China.

der Idee) he lived, moved and fought. The man was a Divine Missionary, though unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, that great doctrine, *La carriers ouverte aux talcns* (The Tools to him that can handle them), which is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can liberty lie. Madly enough he preached, it is true, as Enthusiasts and first Missionaries are wont, with imperfect utterance, amid much frothy rant; yet as articulately perhaps as the case admitted. Or call him, if you will, an American Backwoodsman, who had to fell unpenetrated forests, and battle with innumerable wolves, and did not entirely forbear strong liquor, rioting, and even theft; whom, notwithstanding, the peaceful Sower will follow, and, as he cuts the boundless harvest, bless."

More legitimate and decisively authentic is Teufelsdröckh's appearance and emergence (we know not well whence) in the solitude of the North Cape, on that June Midnight. He has a "light-blue Spanish cloak" hanging round him, as his "most commodious, principal, indeed sole upper-garment"; and stands there, on the World-promontory, looking over the infinite Brine, like a little blue Belfry (as we figure), now motionless indeed, yet ready, if stirred, to ring quaintest changes.

"Silence as of death," writes he; "for Midnight, even in the Arctic latitudes, has its character: nothing but the granite cliffs ruddy-tinged, the peaceable gurgle of that slow-heaving Polar Ocean, over which in the utmost North the great Sun hangs low and lazy, as if he too were slumbering. Yet is his cloud-couch wrought of crimson and cloth-of-gold, yet does his light stream over the mirror of waters, like a tremulous fire-pillar, shooting downwards to the abyss, and hide itself under my feet. In such moments, Solitude also is invaluable; for who would speak, or be looked on, when behind him lies all Europe and Africa, fast asleep, except the watchmen; and before him the silent Immensity, and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our Sun is but a porch-lamp?

"Nevertheless, in this solemn moment comes a man, or monster, scrambling from among the rock-hollows; and, shaggy, huge as

the Hyperborean Bear, hails me in Russian speech: most probably, therefore, a Russian Smuggler. With courteous brevity, I signify my indifference to contraband trade, my humane intentions, yet strong wish to be private. In vain: the monster, counting doubtless on his superior stature, and minded to make sport for himself, or perhaps profit, were it with murder, continues to advance; ever assailing me with his importunate train-oil breath; and now has advanced, till we stand both on the verge of the rock, the deep Sea rippling greedily down below. What argument will avail? On the thick Hyperborean, cherubic reasoning, seraphic eloquence were lost. Prepared for such extremity, I, deftly enough, whisk aside one step; draw out, from my interior reservoirs, a sufficient Birmingham Horse-pistol, and say, 'Be so obliging as retire, Friend (*Jer ziehe sich zuruck, FreuncT*), and with promptitude!' This logic even the Hyperborean understands: fast enough, with apologetic, petitionary growl, he sidles off; and, except for suicidal as well as homicidal purposes, need not return.

"Such I hold to be the genuine use of Gunpowder: that it makes all men alike tall. Nay, if thou be cooler, cleverer than I, if thou have more *M.tnd*, though all but no *Body* whatever, then canst thou kill me first, and art the taller. Hereby, at last, is the Goliath powerless, and the David resistless; savage Animalism is nothing, inventive Spiritualism is all.

"With respect to Duels, indeed, I have my own ideas. Few things, in this so surprising world, strike me with more surprise. Two little visual Spectra of men, hovering with insecure enough cohesion in the midst of the UNFATHOMABLE, and to dissolve therein, at any rate, very soon, — make pause at the distance of twelve paces asunder; whirl round; and, simultaneously by the cunningest mechanism, explode one another into Dissolution; and off-hand become Air, and Non-extant! Deuce on it (*verdammt*), the little spitfires! — Nay, I think with old Hugo von Tnnberg:¹ 'God must needs laugh outright, could such a thing be, to see his wondrous Manikins here below.'"

¹ A schoolmaster and moral writer, 1260-1309.

But amid these specialties, let us not forget the great generality, which is our chief quest here: How prospered the inner man of Teufelsdröckh under so much outward shifting? Does Legion still lurk in him, though repressed; or has he exorcised that Devil's Brood? We can answer that the symptoms continue promising. Experience is the grand spiritual Doctor, and with him Teufelsdröckh had been long a patient, swallowing many a bitter bolus. Unless our poor Friend belong to the numerous class of Incurables, which seems not likely, some cure will doubtless be effected. We should rather say that Legion, or the Satanic School,¹ was now pretty well extirpated and cast out, but next to nothing introduced in its room; whereby the heart remains, for the while, in a quiet but no comfortable state.

"At length, after so much roasting," thus writes our Autobiographer, "I was what you might name calcined. Pray only that it be not rather, as is the more frequent issue, reduced to a *caput-mortuum*!"² But in any case, by mere dint of practice, I had grown familiar with many things. Wretchedness was still wretched; but I could now partly see through it, and despise it. Which highest mortal, in this inane Existence, had I not found a Shadow-hunter, or Shadow-hunted; and, when I looked through his brave garnitures, miserable enough? Thy wishes have all been sniffed aside, thought I: but what, had they even been all granted! Did not the Boy Alexander weep because he had not two Planets to conquer; or a whole Solar System; or after that, whole Universe? *Ach Gott*, when I gazed into these Stars, have they not looked-down on me as if with pity, from their serene spaces; like Eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man! Thousands of human generations, all as noisy as our own, have been swallowed-up of Time, and there remains no wreck of them any more; and Arcturus and Orion and Sirius and the Pleiades are still shining in their courses, clear and young, as when the Shep-

¹ So Southey called the school of Byron.

² Literally, a dead-head — from the terminology of the old chemists, denoting the residuum when volatile elements had escaped.

herd first noted them in the plain of Shinar. Pshaw! what is this paltry little Dogcage of an Earth; what art thou that sittest whining there? Thou art still Nothing, Nobody: true; but who, then, is Something, Somebody? For thee the Family of Man has no use; it rejects thee; thou art wholly as a dis-severed limb: so be it; perhaps it is better so!"

Too-heavy-laden Teufelsdröckh f Yet surely his bands are loosening; one day he will hurl the burden far from him, and bound forth free and with a second youth.

"This," says our Professor, "was the CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE I had now reached, through which whoso travels from the Negative Pole to the Positive must necessarily pass."

CHAPTER ix

The Everlasting Yea

"Temptations in the Wilderness!" exclaims Teufelsdröckh: "Have we not all to be tried with such? Not so easily can the old Adam, lodged in us by birth, be dispossessed. Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus have we a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, *Work thou in Well-doing*, lies mysteriously written, in Promethean Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed; till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the clay-given mandate, *Eat thou and be filled*, sit the same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve, — must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper?"

"To me nothing seems more natural than that the Son of Man, when such God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within him, and the Clay must now be vanquished or vanquish, — should be carried of the spirit into grim Solitudes, and there fronting the Tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught, till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose: with or

without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness — to such Temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but Half-men, in whom that divine hand-writing has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in true sun-splendor; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights; or smolders, in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapors! — Our Wilderness is the wide World in an Atheistic Century, our Forty Days are long years of suffering and fasting; nevertheless, to these also comes an end." Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left. To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out my way into the higher sunlight slopes — of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only!"

He says elsewhere, under a less ambitious figure, as figures are, once for all, natural to him: "Has not thy Life been that of most sufficient men (*tuchtigen Manner*) thou hast known in this generation? An outflush of foolish young Enthusiasm, like the first fallow-crop, wherein are as many weeds as valuable herbs: this all parched away, under the Droughts of practical and spiritual Unbelief, as Disappointment, in thought and act, often-repeated gave rise to Doubt, and Doubt gradually settled into Denial! If I have had a second-crop, and now see the perennial greensward, and sit under umbrageous cedars, which defy all Drought (and Doubt); herein too, be the Heavens praised, I am not without examples, and even exemplars."

So that, for Teufelsdröckh also, there has been a "glorious revolution", these mad shadow-hunting and shadow-hunted Pilgrimages of his were but some purifying "Temptation in the Wilderness," before his apostolic work (such as it was) could begin; which Temptation is now happily over, and the Devil once more worsted! Was "that high moment in the *Rue de l'Enfer*," then, properly the turning-point of the battle;

when the Fiend said, *Worship mc' or bt torn in shreds*; and was answered valiantly with an *Apoge Satanat!*¹ — Singular Teufelsdröckh, would thou hadst told thy singular story in plain words! But it is fruitless to look there, in those Paper-bags, for such. Nothing but innuendoes, figurative crotchets: a typical Shadow, fitfully wavering, propheticos-satiric; no clear logical Picture. "How paint to the sensual eye," asks he once, "what passes in the Holy-of-Holies of Man's Soul; in what words, known to these profane times, speak even afar-off of the unspeakable?" We ask in turn: Why perplex these times, profane as they are, with needless obscurity, by omission and by commission? Not mystical only is our Professor, but whimsical; and involves himself, now more than ever, in eye-bewildering *chiaroscuro*. Successive glimpses, here faithfully imparted, our more gifted readers must endeavor to combine for their own behoof.

He says: "The hot Harmattan² wind had raged itself out, its howl went silent within me; and the long-deafened soul could now hear. I paused in my wild wanderings, and sat me down to wait, and consider; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. I seemed to surrender, to renounce utterly, and say: Fly, then, false shadows of Hope; I will chase you no more, I will believe you no more. And ye too, haggard spectres of Fear, I care not for you, ye too are all shadows and a lie. Let me rest here: for I am way-weary and life-weary; I will rest here, were it but to die: to die or to live is alike to me; alike insignificant." — And again: "Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE; cast, doubtless by benignant upper Influence, into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral Act, Annihilation of Self (*Selbst-tödtung*), had been happily accomplished; and my mind's eyes were now unsealed, and its hands ungyved."

Might we not also conjecture that the following passage refers to his Locality,

¹ "Get thee behind me, Satan!" St. Matthew iv, 10.

² A devastating dry land wind that often blows on the coast of North Africa.

during this same "healing sleep"; that his Pilgrim-staff lies cast aside here, on "the high table-land"; and indeed that the repose is already taking wholesome effect on him? If it were not that the tone, in some parts, has more of riancy, even of levity, than we could have expected! However, in Teufelsdröckh, there is always the strangest Dualism: light dancing, with guitar-music, will be going on in the fore-court, while by fits from within comes the faint whimpering of woe and wail. We transcribe the piece entire.

"Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains; over me, as roof, the azure Dome, and around me, for walls, four azure-flowing curtains, — namely, of the Four azure Winds, on whose bottom-fringes also I have seen gilding. And then to fancy the fair Castles that stood sheltered in these Mountain hollows; with their green flower-lawns, and white dames and damosels, lovely enough: or better still, the straw-roofed Cottages, wherein stood many a Mother baking bread, with her children round her: — all hidden and protectm'g folded-up in the valley-folds; yet there and alive, as sure as if I beheld them. Or to see, as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages, that lay round my mountain-seat, which, in still weather, were wont to speak to me (by their steeple-bells) with metal tongue; and, in almost all weather, proclaimed their vitality by repeated Smoke-clouds; whereon, as on a culinary horologe, I might read the hour of the day. For it was the smoke of cookery, as kind housewives at morning, midday, eventide, were boiling their husbands' kettles; and ever a blue pillar rose up into the air, successively or simultaneously, from each of the nine, saying, as plainly as smoke could say: Such and such a meal is getting ready here. Not uninteresting! For you have the whole Borough, with all its love-makings and scandal-mongeries, contentions and contentments, as in miniature, and could cover it all with your hat. — If, in my wide Way-farings, I had learned to look into the business of the World in its details, here perhaps was the place for combining it into general

propositions, and deducing inferences therefrom.

"Often also could I see the black Tempest marching in anger through the Distance: round some Schreckhorn,¹ as yet grim-blue, would the eddying vapor gather, and there tumultuously eddy, and flow down like a mad witch's hair; till, after a space, it vanished, and, in the clear sunbeam, your Schreckhorn stood smiling grim-white, for the vapor had held snow. How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature! — Or what is Nature? Ha! why do I not name thee GOD? Art not thou the 'Living Garment of God'? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, HE, then, that ever speaks through thee; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me?"

"Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendors, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Ship-wrecked in Nova Zembla,² ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, and my Father's!"

"With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy-laden; and thy Bed of Rest is but a Grave. O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes! — Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which, in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb

creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. The poor Earth, with her poor joys, was now my needy Mother, not my cruel Stepdame; Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavors, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. Thus was I standing in the porch of that *'Sanctuary of Sorrow'*,¹ by strange, steep ways had I too been guided thither; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the *'Divine Depth of Sorrow'* lie disclosed to me."

The Professor says, he here first got eye on the Knot that had been strangling him, and straightway could unfasten it, and was free. "A vain interminable controversy," writes he, "touching what is at present called Origin of Evil, or some such thing, arises in every soul, since the beginning of the world, and in every soul, that would pass from idle Suffering into actual Endeavoring, must first be put an end to. The most, in our time, have to go content with a simple, incomplete enough Suppression of this controversy; to a few some Solution of it is indispensable. In every new era, too, such Solution comes-out in different terms; and ever the Solution of the last era has become obsolete, and is found unserviceable. For it is man's nature to change his Dialect from century to century; he cannot help it though he would. The authentic *Church-Catechism* of our present century has not yet fallen into my hands: meanwhile, for my own private behoof, I attempt to elucidate the matter so. Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoeblack HAPPY? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoeblack also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: *God's infinite Universe altogether to himself,*

¹ From Goethe's *Wilhelm Master's Travels*, chap. xi.

¹ A mountain in the Bernese Alps. The name means Peak of Terror.

² A reference to the Barents Expedition seeking a northern passage. Their ship was frozen in off the coast of Nova Zembla in the late sixteenth century.

therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer, a Throat like that of Ophiuchus:¹ speak not of them; to the infinite Shoeblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarrelling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men. — Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the *Shadow of Ourselves*.

"But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts, requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such *overplus* as there may be do we account Happiness; any *deficit* again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us, — do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used! — I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou *fanciest* those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou *cjeservest* to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou *dcbervest* to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

"So true is it, what I then said, that the *Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by Zero will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then, thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time² write: 'It is only with Renunciation (*Jentsageri*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'

"I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting

and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting, on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honored, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that *thou* shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to *be* at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat*, and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron*, open thy *Goethe*."

"*Es leuchtet mir em*, I see a glimpse of it!" cries he elsewhere: "there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honored to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."

And again: "Small is it that thou canst trample the Earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno¹ trained thee: thou canst love the Earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee; for this a Greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Knowest thou that '*Worship of*

¹A constellation of the northern heavens.

²Goethe.

¹A Greek philosopher of the fifth century B.C. He was the founder of the Stoic philosophy.

Sorrow"? The Temple thereof, founded some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures: nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt, arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the Altar still there, and its sacred Lamp perennially burning."

Without pretending to comment on which strange utterances, the Editor will only remark, that there lies beside them much of a still more questionable character; unsuited to the general apprehension; nay wherein he himself does not see his way. Nebulous disquisitions on Religion, yet not without bursts of splendor, on the "perennial continuance of Inspiration", on Prophecy; that there are "true Priests, as well as Baal-Priests, in our own day": with more of the like sort. We select some fractions, by way of finish to this farrago.

"Cease, my much respected Herr von Voltaire," thus apostrophizes the Professor: "shut thy sweet voice, for the task appointed thee seems finished. Sufficiently hast thou demonstrated this proposition, considerable or otherwise: That the Mythus of the Christian Religion looks not in the eighteenth century as it did in the eighth. Alas, were thy six-and-thirty quartos, and the six-and-thirty thousand other quartos and folios, and flying sheets or reams, printed before and since on the same subject, all needed to convince us of so little! But what next? Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus, in a new vehicle and vesture, that our Souls, otherwise too like perishing, may live? What! thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks, then, and—thyself away.

"Meanwhile what are antiquated Mythuses to me? Or is the God present, felt in my own heart, a thing which Herr von Voltaire will dispute out of me; or dispute into me? To the '*Worship of Sorrow*' ascribe what origin and genesis thou pleasest, has not that Worship originated, and been generated; is it not *here*? Feel it in thy heart, and then say whether it is of God! This is Belief; all else is Opinion, — for which latter whoso will, let him worry and be worried."

"Neither," observes he elsewhere, "shall ye tear-out one another's eyes, struggling over 'Plenary Inspiration,' and such-like: try rather to get a little even Partial Inspiration, each of you for himself One BIBLE I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw the God's-Hand writing it: thereof all other Bibles are but Leaves, — say, in Picture-Writing to assist the weaker faculty."

Or, to give the wearied reader relief, and bring it to an end, let him take the following perhaps more intelligible passage:

"To me, in this our life," says the Professor, "which is an internecine warfare with the Time-spirit, other warfare seems questionable. Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is. If thou gauge it to the bottom, it is simply this- 'Fellow, see! thou art taking more than thy share of Happiness in the world, something from my share: which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not; nay I will fight thee rather.' — Alas, and the whole lot to be divided is such a beggarly matter, truly a 'feast of shells,' for the substance has been spilled out: not enough to quench one Appetite; and the collective human species clutching at them! — Can we not, in all such cases, rather say: 'Take it, thou too-ravenous individual; take that pitiful additional fraction of a share, which I reckoned mine, but which thou so wantest, take it with a blessing: would to Heaven I had enough for thee!' — If Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*¹ be, 'to a certain extent, Applied Christianity,' surely to a still greater extent, so is this. We have here not a Whole Duty of Man,² yet a Half Duty, namely the Passive half: could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!

"But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly Conviction is not possible till then; inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices: only by a felt indubitable cer-

¹ *The Theory of Knowledge* by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814).

² An anonymous book of moral instruction first published in 1659.

tainty of Experience does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system. Most true is it, as a wise man teaches us, that 'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action.' On which ground, too, let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this other precept well to heart, which to me was of invaluable service: '*Do the Duty which lies nearest thee,*' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer.

"May we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister*, that your 'America is here or nowhere'? The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pimest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere,' couldst thou only see!

"But it is with man's Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is — Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tossed Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate

Firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-encompassed World.

"I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even World-kin Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

BOOK in

CHAPTER VIII

Natural Supernaturalism

It is in his stupendous Section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing Phantasms, TIME and SPACE, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Pahngenesia* in all senses, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First once did. This stupendous

* * second birth.

Section we, after long painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but, on the contrary, to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part; as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours:

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle; whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical '*Open sesame!*' every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?"

"'But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?' ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Law, now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force."

"Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make Iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach Religion? To us, truly, of the Nineteenth Century, such declaration were inept enough; which nevertheless to our fathers, of the First Century, was full of meaning."

"'But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?' cries an illuminated class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,' does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most

unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?"

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience? — Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel; that they read His ground-plan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise! These scientific individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore."

"Laplace's¹ Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a rate and in a course, which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting, — is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest 'Mechanism of the Heavens,' and 'System of the World'; this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel's² Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls, had been — looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill, so that we can now prate of their Whereabout, their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?"

"System of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infimte* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles. The course of Nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle

¹ Pierre Simon de Laplace (1749-1827), a French astronomer, author of the *Micromque Céleste*.

² Sir William Herschel (1738-1822) with an improved telescope made the first systematic survey of the sidereal universe.

revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (unmiraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth, his Ocean the immeasurable All, his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through *ALons* of 'ons.

"We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is, — whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, the) strive bravely; and, from amid the thick crowded, inextricably intertwined hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combination, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve' itself, the fewest dream.

"Custom," continues the Professor, "doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by

it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

"Innumerable are the illusions and Icgcr-delain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurse-lings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred, or two-million times? There is no reason in Nature or in Art why I should: unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-Machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby cotton might be spun, and money and money's worth realized.

"Notable enough too, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of Names; which indeed are but one kind of such custom-woven, wonder-hiding Garments. Witchcraft, and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness and Diseases of the Nerves. Seldom reflecting that still the new question comes upon us: What is Madness, what are Nerves?

Ever, as before, does Madness remain a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation, which swims thereon, which we name the Real. Was Luther's Picture of the Devil less a Reality, whether it were formed within the bodily eye, or without it? In every the wisest Soul lies a whole world of internal Madness, an authentic Demon-Empire; out of which, indeed, his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together, and now rests

there, as on its dark foundations does a habitable flowery Earth-rmd.

"But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME. These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it, — lie all embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavor to strip them off, you can, at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

"Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Anywhere, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space; for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse of Weiss-nichtwo, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself; and, as his fellow-craftsman made Space-annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen; but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhere*, straightway to be *There!* Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhen*, straightway to be *Then!* This were indeed the grander: shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its Fire-Consummation; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca; there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late Time!

"Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future nonextant, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine, Memory and Hope, already answer:

already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up, but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of Man's Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal HERE, so is it an everlasting Now.

"And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY?—O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone, — but a pale spectral Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God! — Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

"That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and there-

with clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practices on us.

"Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand antimagician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissmicht-wo, summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Stembruch*¹ (now a huge Troglodyte Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilizing Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen-hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

¹ quarry.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved, did he never so much as look into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were travelling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the threescore years into three minutes: what else was he, what else are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple scientific fact; we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beatified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and jibber (in our discordant, screech-owlsh debatings and recriminations); and glide bodelful, and feeble, and fearful; or uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead, — till

the scent of the morning air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela, remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Retreats and Austerlitz Campaigns! Was it all other than the veriest Spectre-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away? — Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

"O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future Ghost within Him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them; this stormy Force; this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our ME; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision, a revealed Force, nothing more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet's sounding. Plummet's? Fantasy herself will not follow them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

"So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow: — and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's

Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are levelled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence? — O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little Life
Is rounded with a sleep!"

FROM Past and Present 1843

The publication by the Camden Society of a mediæval chronicle, giving an account of the reformation of the Monastery of Saint Edmundsbury in the reign of King John, furnished Carlyle with the text for a sermon on the necessity of a similar reform in the England of his day. In 1843 the condition of the country was alarming. The extension of manufacturing had called into existence a great population of industrial workers, men, women, and children, whose lives depended precariously on the demand for English-made goods. There was a high tariff on imported grain to protect the agricultural interests, and as England had long ceased to raise enough food for her population, starvation of the poor was chronic. Carlyle saw the three classes which divided England at odds with each other. The old landed aristocracy had ceased to govern, and were sunk in idleness and pleasure. The active middle class, to which the political power had passed, were ambitious of material success and selfishly devoted to their own interests, content to attribute the misery of the workers to economic law. The lower class were demanding a share in the government through the People's Charter, and threatening revolution. Carlyle believed that the well-being of the community, as of the single life, depended on the practice of the virtues of toil and sacrifice; and he felt the necessity of putting at the head of the State a strong governor, like the Abbot Samson who brought the idle and dissipated monks of Saint

Edmundsbury to order. This notion of the part played by the strong man, the hero, in history, and the need of hero-worship, in the present, is the essence of Carlyle's social doctrine.

BOOK III
CHAPTER XII
Reward

"Religion," I said; for, properly speaking, all true Work is Religion: and whatsoever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbor. Admirable was that of the old Monks, "*Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship."

Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have well-being Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work; — and burns like a painfully-smoldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable, obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy, attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brute-mindedness, — yes, there, with or without Church-tithes and Shovel-hat, with or without Talfourd-Mahon¹ Copyrights, or were it with mere dungeons and gibbets and crosses, attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not

while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! The Highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee; still audibly, if thou have ears to hear. He, even He, with hisunssspoken voice, awfuller than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the SILENCE of deep Eternities, of Worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee? The unborn Ages; the old Graves, with their long-moldering dust, the very tears that wetted it now all dry, — do not these speak to thee, what ear hath not heard? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all Space and all Time, proclaim it to thee in continual silent admonition. Thou too, if ever man should, shalt work while it is called Today. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

All true Work is sacred, in all true Work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow, and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms, — up to that "Agony of bloody sweat," which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not "worship," then I say, the more pity for worship, for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving; sacred Band of the Immortals, celestial Bodyguard of the Empire of Mankind. Even in the weak Human Memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving; peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time! To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind, Heaven is kind, — as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, "With it, my son, or upon it!" Thou too shall return *home* in honor; to thy far-distant Home, in honor; doubt it not, — if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest Death-kingdoms, art not an alien; thou

¹Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795-1854), English jurist and poet, and Philip Henry Stanhope, Lord Mahon (1805-75) were authors of the International Copyright Law.

everywhere art a denizen! Complain not; the very Spartans did not *complain*.

And who art thou that braggest of thy life of Idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions; appliances for folding of the hands to mere sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one. In the Heavens, in the Earth, in the Waters under the Earth, is none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this Creation, a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary Century or Half-Century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "Religion"? That Nature is a Phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie. — Alas, alas, who of us is there that can say, I have worked? The faithfulest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfulest of us know that best. The faithfulest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel,¹ "Much of my life has been trifled away!" But he that has, and except "on public occasions" professes to have, no function but that of going idle in a graceful or graceless manner; and of begetting sons to go idle, and to address Chief Spinners and Diggers, who at least *an* spinning and digging, "Ye scandalous persons who produce too much" — My Corn-Law friends, on what imaginary still richer Eldorados, and true iron-spikes with law of gravitation, are ye rushing!

As to the Wages of Work there might innumerable things be said; there will and must yet innumerable things be said and spoken, in Saint Stephen's² and out of Saint Stephen's; and gradually not a few things be ascertained and written, on Law-parchment, concerning this very matter: — "Fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work" is the most unrefusable demand! Money-wages "to the extent of keeping your worker alive that he may work more;" these, unless you mean to dismiss him straightway out of this world,

are indispensable alike to the noblest Worker and to the least noble!

One thing only I will say here, in special reference to the former class, the noble and noblest; but throwing light on all the other classes and their arrangements of this difficult matter: The "wages" of every noble Work do yet lie in Heaven or else 'Jowhere. Not in Bank-of-England bills, in Owen's¹ Labor-bank, or any the most improved establishment of banking and money-changing, needest thou, heroic soul, present thy account of earnings. Human banks and labor-banks know thee not; or know thee after generations and centuries have passed away, and thou art clean gone from "rewarding," — all manner of bank-drafts, shop-tills, and Downing-street Exchequers lying very invisible, so far from thee! Nay, at bottom, dost thou need any reward? Was it thy aim and life-purpose to be filled with good things for thy heroism; to have a life of pomp and ease, and be what men call "happy," in this world, or in any other world? I answer for thee deliberately, No. The whole spiritual secret of the new epoch lies in this, that thou canst answer for thyself, with thy whole clearness of head and heart, deliberately, No!

My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee; — thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner? What price, for example, would content thee? The just price of thy LIFE to thee, — why, God's entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold: that is the price which would content thee; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that! It is thy all; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal; — or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable! Thou wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart; let the price be Nothing: thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it! The heroic man, — and is not every man, God be thanked, a potential hero? — has to do so, in all times and

¹ Samuel Johnson.

² The British Parliament.

¹ Robert Owen (1771-1858), founder of English socialism.

circumstances. In the most heroic age, as in the most unheroic, he will have to say, as Burns said proudly and humbly of his little Scottish Songs, little dewdrops of Celestial Melody in an age when so much was unmelodious: "By Heaven, they shall either be invaluable or of no value; I do not need your guineas for them!" It is an element which should, and must, enter deeply into all settlements of wages here below. They never will be "satisfactory" otherwise; they cannot, O Mammon Gospel, they never can! Money for my little piece of work "to the extent that will allow me to keep working;" yes, this, — unless you mean that I shall go my ways before the work is all taken out of me: but as to "wages" — ! —

On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old Monks, *Laborare est Orare*. In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work is Worship. He that works, whatsoever be his work, — he bodies forth the form of Things Unseen; a small Poet every Worker is. The idea, were it but of his poor Delf Platter, how much more of his Epic Poem, is as yet "seen," half-seen, only by himself; to all others it is a thing unseen, impossible; to Nature herself it is a thing unseen, a thing which never hitherto was; — very "impossible," for it is as yet a No-thing! The Unseen Powers had need to watch over such a man; he works in and for the Unseen. Alas, if he look to the Seen Powers only, he may as well quit the business; his No-thing will never rightly issue as a Thing, but as a Deceptivity, a Sham-thing, — which it had better not do!

Thy No-thing of an Intended Poem, O Poet who hast looked merely to reviewers, copyrights, booksellers, popularities, behold it has not yet become a Thing; for the truth is not in it! Though printed, hotpressed, reviewed, celebrated, sold to the twentieth edition: what is all that? The Thing, in philosophical uncommercial language, is still a No-thing, mostly semblance and deception of the sight; — benign Oblivion incessantly gnawing at it, impatient till Chaos, to which it belongs, do reabsorb it! —

He who takes not counsel of the Unseen and Silent, from him will never come real

visibility and speech. Thou must descend to the Mothers,¹ to the Manes² and Hercules-like long suffer and labor there, wouldst thou emerge with victory into the sunlight. As in battle and the shock of war, — for is not this a battle? — thou too shalt fear no pain or death, shalt love no ease or life; the voice of festive Lubberlands, the noise of greedy Acheron shall alike lie silent under thy victorious feet. Thy work, like Dante's, shall "make thee lean for many years." The world and its wages, its criticisms, counsels, helps, impediments, shall be as a waste ocean-flood; the chaos through which thou art to swim and sail. Not the waste waves and their weedy gulf-streams, shalt thou take for guidance: thy star alone, — "*Se tu segur tua stella*"³ Thy star alone, now clear-beaming over Chaos, nay now by fits gone out, disastrously eclipsed: this only shalt thou strive to follow. O, it is a business, as I fancy, that of weltering your way through Chaos and the murk of Hell! Green-eyed dragons watching you, three-headed Cerberuses, — not without sympathy of their sort! "*Eccovi l' uom ch' e stato all' Inferno*"⁴ For in fine, as Poet Dryden says, you do walk hand in hand with sheer Madness, all the way, — who is by no means pleasant company! You look fixedly into Madness, and her undiscovered, boundless, bottomless Night-empire; that you may extort new Wisdom out of it, as an Eurydice from Tartarus. The higher the Wisdom, the closer was its neighborhood and kindred with mere Insanity; literally so; — and thou wilt, with a speechless feeling, observe how highest Wisdom, struggling up into this world, has oftentimes carried such tinctures and adhesions of Insanity still cleaving to it hither!

All Works, each in their degree, are a making of Madness sane; — truly enough a religious operation; which cannot be carried on without religion. You have not work otherwise; you have eye-service, greedy grasping of wages, swift and ever swifter manufacture of semblances to get hold of

¹ Mothers of Destiny, or Fates.

² Shades of Hades in Greek Mythology.

³ If thou followest thy star!

⁴ "Behold the man who has been in Hell!" said of Dante.

wages. Instead of better felt-hats to cover your head, you have bigger lath-and-plaster hats set travelling the streets on wheels. Instead of heavenly and earthly Guidance for the souls of men, you have "Black or White Surplice" Controversies, stuffed hair-and-leather Popes; — terrestrial Law-wards, Lords and Law-bringers, "organizing Labor" in these years, by passing Corn-Laws. With all which, alas, this distracted Earth is now full, nigh to bursting. Semblances most smooth to the touch and eye; most accursed, nevertheless, to body and soul. Semblances, be they of Shamwoven Cloth or of Dilettante Legislation, which are *not* real wool or substance, but Devil's-dust, accursed of God and man! No man has worked, or can work, except religiously; not even the poor day-laborer, the weaver of your coat, the sewer of your shoes. All men, if they work not as in a Great Taskmaster's eye will work wrong, work unhappily for themselves and you.

Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle. Men in the rapidest motion and self-motion; restless, with convulsive energy, as if driven by Galvanism, as if possessed by a Devil: tearing asunder mountains, — to no purpose, for Mammonism is always Midas-eared! This is sad, on the face of it. Yet courage: the beneficent Destinies, kind in their sternness, are apprising us that this cannot continue. Labor is not a devil, even while encased in Mammonism; Labor is ever an imprisoned god, writhing unconsciously or consciously to escape out of Mammonism! Plugson of Undershot, like Taillefer¹ of Normandy, wants victory; how much happier will even Plugson be to have a Chivalrous victory than a Chactaw one! The unreddeemed ugliness is that of a slothful People. Show me a People energetically busy; heaving, struggling, all shoulders at the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling, with man's energy and will; — I show you a

People of whom great good is already predictable; to whom all manner of good is yet certain, if their energy endure. By very working, they will learn; they have, Antasus-like, their foot on Mother Fact: how can they but learn?

The vulgarest Plugson of a Master-Worker, who can command Workers, and get work out of them, is already a considerable man. Blessed and thrice-blessed symptoms I discern of Master-Workers who are not vulgar men; who are Nobles, and begin to feel that they must act as such: all speed to these, they are England's hope at present! But in this Plugson himself, conscious of almost no nobleness whatever, how much is there! Not without man's faculty, insight, courage, hard energy, is this rugged figure. His words none of the wisest; but his actings cannot be altogether foolish. Think, how were it, stoodst thou suddenly in his shoes! He has to command a thousand men. And not imaginary commanding; no, it is real, incessantly practical. The evil passions of so many men (with the Devil in them, as in all of us) he has to vanquish, by manifold force of speech and of silence, to repress or evade. What a force of silence, to say nothing of the others, is in Plugson! For these his thousand men he has to provide raw-material, machinery, arrangement, houseroom; and ever at the week's end, wages by due sale. No Civil-List, or Goulburn-Baring¹ Budget has he to fall back upon, for paying of his regiment; he has to pick his supplies from the confused face of the whole Earth and Contemporaneous History, by his dexterity alone. There will be dry eyes if he fail to do it! — He exclaims, at present, "black in the face," near strangled with Dilettante Legislation: "Let me have elbow-room, throat-room, and I will not fail! No, I will spin yet, and conquer like a giant: what 'sinews of war' lie in me, untold resources towards the Conquest of this Planet, if instead of hanging me, you husband them, and help me!" — My indomitable friend, it is *true*, and thou shalt and must be helped.

¹ The Minstrel who rode in front of the Norman army at the Battle of Hastings, tossing his sword in the air and catching it as it fell. Chanting *The Song of Roland*, he was the first to fall in battle.

¹ Henry Goulburn (1784-1856) was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1841 to 1846, succeeding in that office Sir Francis Thornhill Baring (1796-1866).

This is not a man I would kill and strangle by Corn-Laws, even if I could! No, I would fling my Corn-Laws and Shotbelts to the Devil, and try to help this man. I would teach him, by nobler precept and law-precept, by noble example most of all, that Mammonism was not the essence of his or of my station in God's Universe; but the adscititious excrescence of it; the gross, terrene, godless embodiment of it; which would have to become, more or less, a godlike one. By noble *real* legislation, by true noble's-work, by unwearied, valiant, and were it wageless effort, in my Parliament and in my Parish, I would aid, constrain, encourage him to effect more or less this blessed change. I should know that it would have to be effected, that unless it were in some measure effected, he and I and all of us, I first and soonest of all, were doomed to perdition! — Effected it will be, unless it were a Demon that made this Universe; which I, for my own part, do at no moment, under no form, in the least believe.

May it please your Serene Highness, your Majesties, Lordships and Law-wards, the proper Epic of this world is not now "Arms and the Man," how much less, "Shirt-frills and the Man:" no, it is now "Tools and the Man:" that, henceforth to all time, is now our Epic; — and you, first of all others, think, were wise to take note of that!

CHAPTER XIII

Democracy

If the Serene Highnesses and Majesties do not take note of that, then, as I perceive, that will take note of itself! The time for levity, insincerity, and idle babble and play-acting, in all kinds, is gone by; it is a serious, grave time. Old long-vexed questions, not yet solved in logical words or parliamentary laws, are fast solving themselves in facts, somewhat unblessed to behold! This largest of questions, this question of Work and Wages, which ought, had we heeded Heaven's voice, to have begun two generations ago or more, cannot be delayed longer without hearing Earth's voice. "Labor" will verily need to be somewhat "organized," as they say, — God knows with what difficulty. Man will

actually need to have his debts and earnings a little better paid by man; which, let Parliaments speak of them or be silent of them, are eternally his due from man, and cannot, without penalty and at length not without death-penalty, be withheld. How much ought to cease among us straightway; how much ought to begin straightway, while the hours yet are!

Truly they are strange results to which this of leaving all to "Cash;" of quietly shutting-up the God's Temple, and gradually opening wide-open the Mammon's Temple, with "Laissez-faire, and Every man for himself," — have led us in these days! We have Upper, speaking Classes, who indeed do "speak" as never man spake before; the withered flimsiness, the godless baseness and barrenness of whose Speech might of itself indicate what kind of Doing and practical Governing went on unto it! For Speech is the gaseous element out of which most kinds of Practice and Performance, especially all kinds of moral Performance, condense themselves, and take shape; as the one is, so will the other be. Descending, accordingly, into the Dumb Class in its Stockport Cellars and Poor-Law Bastilles,¹ have we not to announce that they also are hitherto unexampled in the History of Adam's Posterity?

Life was never a May-game for men: in all times the lot of the dumb millions born to toil was defaced with manifold sufferings, injustices, heavy burdens, avoidable and unavoidable; not play at all, but hard work that made the sinews sore and the heart sore. As bond-slaves, *villani*, *bordant*, *sochemannt*² nay indeed as dukes, earls and kings, men were oftentimes made weary of their life, and had to say, in the sweat of their brow and of their soul, Behold, it is not sport, it is grim earnest, and our back can bear no more! Who knows not what massacres and harrings there have been; grinding, long-continuing, unbearable injustices, — till the heart had to rise in madness, and some "Eu *Sachsen*, *nimith ever sachs*es, You Saxons, out with your gully-knives, then!" You Saxons, some "arrestment," partial "arrest-

¹ Carlyle's usual term for work-houses.

² Classes of the lower orders under feudalism.

ment of the Knaves and Dastards" has become indispensable! — The page of Dryasdust is heavy with such details.

And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is even in the days now passing over us. It is not to die or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched; many men have died; all men must die, — the last exit of us all is in a Fire-Chariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt-in with a cold universal Laissez-faire: it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed iron belly of a Phalaris' Bull!¹ This is and remains forever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days?² The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

Never before did I hear of an Irish Widow³ reduced to "prove her sisterhood by dying of typhus-fever and infecting seventeen persons," — saying in such undeniable way, "You see I was your sister!" Sisterhood, brotherhood, was often forgotten; but not till the rise of these ultimate Mammon and Shotbelt Gospels did I ever see it so expressly denied. If no pious Lord or Lawward would remember it, always some pious Lady ("*Hlaf-dig*," Benefactress, "*Loafgiveress*," they say she is, — blessings on her beautiful heart!) was there, with mild mother-voice and hand, to remember it; some pious thoughtful Elder, what we now call "Prester," *Presbyter* or "Priest," was there to put all men in mind of it, in the name of the God who had made all.

Not even in Black Dahomey was it ever, I think, forgotten to the typhus-fever length.

¹ The tyrant of Agrigentum, in the sixth century B.C., who tortured his prisoners by throwing them into a red-hot brazen bull.

² The "three days of July," 1830, when Charles X was dethroned and forced to flee from Paris, and Louis Philippe became king.

³ Elsewhere Carlyle tells the story of an Irish widow who, denied charity, died of typhus, and infected seventeen of her neighbors.

Mungo Park,¹ resourceless, had sunk down to die under the Negro Village-Tree, a horrible White object in the eyes of all. But in the poor Black Woman, and her daughter who stood aghast at him, whose earthly wealth and funded capital consisted of one small calabash of rice, there lived a heart richer than *Laissez-faire*: they, with a royal munificence, boiled their rice for him; they sang all night to him, spinning assiduous on their cotton distaffs, as he lay to sleep: "Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to fetch him milk, no sister to grind him corn!" Thou poor black Noble One, — thou Lady too: did not a God make thee too; was there not in thee too something of a God! —

Gurth,² born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, has been greatly pitied by Dryasdust and others. Gurth, with the brass collar round his neck, tending Cedric's pigs in the glades of the wood, is not what I call an exemplar of human felicity: but Gurth, with the sky above him, with the free air and tinted boscage and umbrage round him, and in him at least the certainty of supper and social lodging when he came home; Gurth to me seems happy, in comparison with many a Lancashire and Buckinghamshire man of these days, not born thrall of anybody! Gurth's brass collar did not gall him: Cedric deserved to be his master. The pigs were Cedric's, but Gurth too would get his parings of them. Gurth had the inexpressible satisfaction of feeling himself related indissolubly, though in a rude brass-collar way, to his fellow-mortals in this Earth. He had superiors, inferiors, equals. — Gurth is now "emancipated" long since; has what we call "Liberty." Liberty, I am told, is a divine thing. Liberty when it becomes the "Liberty to die by starvation" is not so divine!

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out the right path, and to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same!

¹ Mungo Park (1771-1806) was an explorer of the Niger region in Africa.

² See *Ivanhoe*, chap. I.

That is his true blessedness, honor, "liberty" and maximum of wellbeing; if liberty be not that, I for one have small care about liberty. You do not allow a palpable mad-man to leap over precipices; you violate his liberty, you that are wise; and keep him, were it in strait-waistcoats, away from the precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly and foolish man is but a less palpable mad-man: his true liberty were that a wiser man, that any and every wiser man, could, by brass collars, or in whatever milder or sharper way, lay hold of him when he was going wrong, and order and compel him to go a little righter. O, if thou really art my *Senior*, *Seigneur*, my *Elder*, *Presbyter* or *Priest*, — if thou art in very deed my *Wiser*, may a beneficent instinct lead and impel thee to "conquer" me, to command me! If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! That I have been called, by all the Newspapers, a "free man" will avail me little, if my pilgrimage have ended in death and wreck. O that the Newspapers had called me slave, coward, fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to name me, and I had attained not death, but life! — Liberty requires new definitions.

A conscious abhorrence and intolerance of Folly, of Baseness, Stupidity, Poltroonery and all that brood of things, dwells deep in some men: still deeper in others an *unconscious* abhorrence and intolerance, clothed moreover by the beneficent Supreme Powers in what stout appetites, energies, egoisms so-called, are suitable to it; — these latter are your Conquerors, Romans, Normans, Russians, Indo-English; Founders of what we call Aristocracies. Which indeed have they not the most "divine right" to found; — being themselves very truly Aporot, BRAVEST, BEST; and conquering generally a confused rabble of WORST, or at lowest, clearly enough, of WORSE? I think their divine right, tried, with affirmatory verdict, in the greatest Law-Court known to me, was good! A class of men who are dreadfully exclaimed against by Dryasdust; of whom

nevertheless beneficent Nature has oftentimes had need; and may, alas, again have need.

When, across the hundredfold poor scepticisms, triviaisms and constitutional cobwebberies of Dryasdust, you catch any glimpse of a William the Conqueror, a Tancred of Hauteville¹ or suchlike, — do you not discern veritably some rude outline of a true God-made King; whom not the Champion of England cased in tin, but all Nature and the Universe were calling to the throne? It is absolutely necessary that he get thither. Nature does not mean her poor Saxon children to perish, of obesity, stupor or other malady, as yet: a stern Ruler and Line of Rulers therefore is called in, — a stern but most beneficent *perpetual House-Surgeon* is by Nature herself called in, and even the appropriate *fees* are provided for him! Dryasdust talks lamentably about Hereward² and the Fen Counties; fate of Earl Waltheof; Yorkshire and the North reduced to ashes: all which is undoubtedly lamentable.³ But even Dryasdust apprises me of one fact: "A child, in this William's reign, might have carried a purse of gold from end to end of England." My erudite friend, it is a fact which outweighs a thousand! Sweep away thy constitutional, sentimental and other cobwebberies; look eye to eye, if thou still have any eye, in the face of this big burly William Bastard: thou wilt see a fellow of most flashing discernment, of most strong lion-heart, — in whom, as it were, within a frame of oak and iron, the gods have planted the soul of "a man of genius"! Dost thou call that nothing? I call it an immense thing! — Rage enough was in this Willelmus Conquasstor, rage enough for his occasions; — and yet the essential element of him, as of all such men, is not *scorching fire*, but shining illuminative *light*. Fire and light are strangely interchangeable; nay, at bottom, I have found them different forms of the same most godlike "elementary substance" in our world: a thing worth stating in these days.

¹ A hero of the First Crusade, celebrated in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*.

² The son of Earl Leofric. He held out against William the Conqueror. He was the hero of Kingsley's novel, *Hereward the Wake*.

³ A reference to revolt which William suppressed.

The essential element of this Conquestor is, first of all, the most sun-eyed perception of what is really what on this God's Earth; — which, thou wilt find, does mean at bottom "Justice," and "Virtues" not a few: *Con-* 5
formity to what the Maker has seen good to make; that, I suppose, will mean Justice and a Virtue or two? —

Dost thou think Willelmus Conquestor would have tolerated ten years' jargon, one 10
hour's jargon, on the propriety of killing Cotton-manufacturers by partridge Corn-Laws? I fancy, this was not the man to knock out of his night's-rest with nothing but a noisy bedlamism in your mouth! "Assist 15
us still better to bush the partridges; strangle Plugson who spins the shirts?" — "*Par la Splendeur de Dieu!*" — Dost thou think Willelmus Conqua'stor, in this new time, with Steam-engine Captains of Industry on 20
one hand of him, and Joe-Manton² Captains of Idleness on the other, would have doubted which was really the BEST; which did deserve strangling, and which not?

I have a certain indestructible regard for 25
Willelmus Conquxstor. A resident House-Surgeon, provided by Nature for her beloved English People, and even furnished with the requisite fees, as I said; for he by no means felt himself doing Nature's work, this Willel- 30
mus, but his own work exclusively! And his own work withal it was; informed "*par la Splendeur de Dieu.*" — I say, it is necessary to get the work out of such a man, however harsh that be! When a world, not yet 35
doomed for death, is rushing down to ever-deeper Baseness and Confusion, it is a dire necessity of Nature's to bring in her ARISTOCRACIES, her BEST, even by forcible meth- 40
ods. When their descendants or representatives cease entirely to be the Best, Nature's poor world will very soon rush down again to Baseness, and it becomes a dire necessity of Nature's to cast them out. Hence French 45
Revolutions, Five-point Charters, Democracies, and a mournful list of *Etceteras*, in these 'our afflicted times.

To what extent Democracy has now

reached, how it advances irresistible with ominous, ever-increasing speed, he that will open his eyes on any province of human affairs may discern. Democracy is every- 5
where the inexorable demand of these ages, swiftly fulfilling itself. From the thunder of Napoleon battles, to the jabbering of Open-vestry in St. Mary Axe, all things announce Democracy. A distinguished man, whom 10
some of my readers will hear again with pleasure, thus writes to me what in these days he notes from the Wahngasse of Weiss- 15
nichtwo, where our London fashions seem to be in full vogue. Let us hear the Herr Teufelsdröckh again, were it but the smallest word!

"Democracy, which means despair of finding any Heroes to govern you, and contented putting-up with the want of them, — 20
alas, thou too, *mem Lteber*, seest well how close it is of kin to *Atheism*¹ and other sad *Isms*: he who discovers no God whatever, how shall he discover Heroes, the visible Temples of God? — Strange enough mean- 25
while it is, to observe with what thoughtlessness, here in our rigidly Conservative Country, men rush into Democracy with full cry. Beyond doubt, his Excellenz the Titular-Herr Ritter Kauderwalsch von Pferdefuss-Quack- 30
salber, he our distinguished Conservative Premier himself, and all but the thicker-headed of his Party, discern Democracy to be inevitable as death, and are even desperate of delaying it much!

"You cannot walk the streets without be- 35
holding Democracy announce itself: the very Tailor has become, if not properly Sansculottic, which to him would be ruinous, yet a Tailor unconsciously symbolizing, and prophesying with his scissors, the reign of Equal- 40
ity. What now is our fashionable coat? A thing of super-finest texture, of deeply meditated cut; with Malmeslace cuffs; quilted with gold, so that a man can carry, without difficulty, an estate of land on his back? 45
Keineswegs, By no manner of means! The Sumptuary Laws have fallen into such a state of desuetude as was never before seen. Our fashionable coat is an amphibium between barn-sack and drayman's doublet. 50
The cloth of it is studiously coarse; the color

¹ By the splendor of God, a favorite oath of William.

² Joseph Manton (1766-1835) was a gunsmith. 50
His name suggests the sporting aristocracy.

a speckled soot-black or rust-brown gray; the nearest approach to a Peasant's. And for shape, — thou shouldst see it! The last consummation of the year now passing over us is definable as Three Bags; a big bag for the body, two small bags for the arms, and by way of collar a hem! The first Antique Cheruscan¹ who, of felt-cloth or bear's-hide, with bone or metal needle, set about making himself a coat, before Tailors had yet awakened out of Nothing, — did not he make it even so? A loose wide poke for body, with two holes to let out the arms; this was his original coat: to which holes it was soon visible that two small loose pokes, or sleeves, easily appended, would be an improvement.

"Thus has the Tailor-art, so to speak, overset itself, like most other things; changed its centre-of-gravity; whirled suddenly over from zenith to nadir. Your Stulz,² with huge somerset, vaults from his high shopboard down to the depths of primal savagery, — carrying much along with him! For I will invite thee to reflect that the Tailor, as top-most ultimate froth of Human Society, is indeed swift-passing, evanescent, slippery to decipher; yet significant of much, nay of all. Topmost evanescent froth, he is churned-up from the very lees, and from all intermediate regions of the liquor. The general outcome he, visible to the eye, of what men aimed to do, and were obliged and enabled to do, in this one public department of symbolizing themselves to each other by covering of their skins. A smack of all Human Life lies in the Tailor: its wild struggles towards beauty, dignity, freedom, victory; and how, hemmed-in by Sedan and Huddersfield, by Nescience, Dulness, Prurience, and other sad necessities and laws of Nature, it has attained just to this: Gray savagery of Three Sacks with a hem!

"When the very Tailor verges towards Sansculottism, is it not ominous? The last Divinity of poor mankind dethroning himself; sinking *his* taper too, flame downmost, like the Genius of Sleep or of Death; admonitory that Tailor time shall be no more! — For, little as one could advise Sumptuary

Laws at the present epoch, yet nothing is clearer than that where ranks do actually exist, strict division of costumes will also be enforced; that if we ever have a new Hierarchy and Aristocracy, acknowledged veritably as such, for which I daily pray Heaven, the Tailor will reawaken; and be, by volunteering and appointment, consciously and unconsciously, a safeguard of that same." —

Certain farther observations, from the same invaluable pen, on our never-ending changes of mode, our "perpetual nomadic and even ape-like appetite for change and mere change" in all the equipments of our existence, and the "fatal revolutionary character" thereby manifested, we suppress for the present. It may be admitted that Democracy, in all meanings of the word, is in full career; irresistible by any Ritter Kauderwalsch or other Son of Adam as times go. "Liberty" is a thing men are determined to have.

But truly, as I had to remark in the meanwhile, "the liberty of not being oppressed by your fellow man" is an indispensable, yet one of the most insignificant fractional parts of Human Liberty. No man oppresses thee, can bid thee fetch or carry, come or go, without reason shown. True, from all men thou art emancipated: but from Thyself and from the Devil —? No man, wiser, unwiser, can make thee come or go: but thy own futilities, bewilderments, thy false appetites for Money, Windsor Georges¹ and suchlike? No man oppresses thee, O free and independent Franchiser: but does not this stupid Porterpot oppress thee? No Son of Adam can bid thee come or go; but this absurd Pot of Heavy-wet, this can and does! Thou art the thrall not of Cedric the Saxon, but of thy own brutal appetites and this scoured dish of liquor. And thou pratest of thy "liberty"? Thou entire blockhead!

Heavy-wet and gin: alas, these are not the only kinds of thralldom. Thou who walkest in a vain show, looking out with ornamental dilettante sniff and serene supremacy at all Life and all Death; and amblest jauntily; perking up thy poor talk into crotchets, thy poor conduct into fatuous somnambulisms;

¹ Decorations granted by King George.

¹ A German tribe in the time of Caesar.

² A famous London tailor.

— and *art* as an 'enchanted Ape' under God's sky, where thou mightest have been a man, had proper Schoolmasters and Conquerors, and Constables with cat-o'-nine tails, been vouchsafed thee; dost thou call that "liberty"? Or your unrepenting Mammon-worshipper again, driven, as if by Galvanisms, by Devils, and Fixed-ideas, who rises early and sits late, chasing the impossible; straining every faculty to "fill himself with the east wind;" — how merciful were it, could you, by mild persuasion, or by the severest tyranny so-called, check him in his mad path, and turn him into a wiser one! All painful tyranny, in that case again, were but mild "surgery"; the pain of it cheap, as health and life, instead of galvanism and fixed-idea, are cheap at any price.

Sure enough, of all paths a man could strike into, there is, at any given moment, a *best path* for every man, a thing which, here and now, it were of all things *wisest* for him to do; — which could he be but led or driven to do, he were then doing "like a man," as we phrase it; all men and gods agreeing with him, the whole Universe virtually exclaiming Well-done to him! His success, in such case, were complete; his felicity a maximum. This path, to find this path and walk in it, is the one thing needful for him. Whatsoever forwards him in that, let it come to him even in the shape of blows and spurrings, is liberty: whatsoever hinders him, were it wardmotes, open-vestries pollbooths, tremendous cheers, rivers of heavy-wet, is slavery.

The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, "Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?" — is one of the pleasantest! Nature nevertheless is kind at present; and puts it into the heads of many, almost of all. The liberty especially which has to purchase itself by social isolation, and each man standing separate from the other, having "no business with him" but a cash-account: this is such a liberty as the Earth seldom saw; — as the Earth will not long put up with, recommend it how you may. This liberty turns out, before it have long continued in

action, with all men flinging up their caps round it, to be, for the Working Millions a liberty to die by want of food, for the Idle Thousands and Units, alas, a still more fatal liberty to live in want of work, to have no earnest duty to do in this God's-World any more. What becomes a man in such predicament? Earth's Laws are silent; and Heaven's speak in a voice which is not heard. No work, and the ineradicable need of work, give rise to new very wondrous life-philosophies, new very wondrous life-practices! Dilettantism, Pococurantism,¹ Beau-Brummelism,² with perhaps an occasional, half-mad, protesting burst of Byromism, establish themselves: at the end of a certain period, — if you go back to "the Dead Sea," there is, say our Moslem friends, a very strange "Sabbath-day" transacting itself there! — Brethren, we know but imperfectly yet, after ages of Constitutional Government, what Liberty and Slavery are.

Democracy, the chase of Liberty in that direction, shall go its full course; unrestrained by him of Pferdcfuss-Quacksalber, or any of *his* household. The Toiling Millions of Mankind, in most vital need and passionate instinctive desire of Guidance, shall cast away False-Guidance; and hope, for an hour, that No-Guidance will suffice them: but it can be for an hour only. The smallest item of human Slavery is the oppression of man by his Mock-Superiors; the palpablest, but I say at bottom the smallest. Let him shake-off such oppression, trample it indignantly under his feet; I blame him not, I pity and commend him. But oppression by your Mock-Superiors well shaken off, the grand problem yet remains to solve: That of finding government by your Real-Superiors! Alas, how shall we ever learn the solution of that, benighted, bewildered, sniffing, sneering, godforgetting unfortunates as we are? It is a work for centuries; to be taught us by tribulations, confusions, insurrections, obstructions; who knows if not by conflagra-

¹ Pococurantism, from Pococurante, a character in Voltaire's *Candide*, who, with wealth and command of all the arts, is yet incapable of enjoying himself. The name means "caring little."

² George Bryan Brummell (1778-1840), a leader of London Society.

tion and despair! It is a lesson inclusive of all other lessons; the hardest of all lessons to learn.

One thing I do know: Those Apes, chattering on the branches by the Dead Sea, never got it learned; but chatter there to this day. To them no Moses need come a second time; a thousand Moseses would be but so many painted Phantasms, interesting Fellow-Apes of new strange aspect, — whom they would "invite to dinner," be glad to meet with in lion-soirees. To them the voice of Prophecy, of heavenly monition, is quite ended. They chatter there, all Heaven shut to them, to the end of the world. The unfortunates! Oh, what is dying of hunger, with honest tools in your hand, with a manful purpose in your heart, and much real labor lying round you done, in comparison? You honestly quit your tools; quit a most muddy confused coil of sore work, short rations, of sorrows, dispiritedness and contradictions, having now honestly done with it all, — and await, not entirely in a distracted manner, what the Supreme Powers, and the Silences and the Eternities may have to say to you.

A second thing I know: This lesson will have to be learned, — under penalties! England will either learn it, or England also will cease to exist among Nations. England will either learn to reverence its Heroes, and discriminate them from its Sham-Heroes and Valets and gashgighted Histrios; and to prize them as the audible God's-voice, amid all inane jargons and temporary market-cries, and say to them with heart-loyalty, "Be ye King and Priest, and Gospel and Guidance for us": or else England will continue to worship new and ever-new forms of Quackhood, — and so, with what resiliences and reboundings matters little, go down to the Father of Quacks! Can I dread such things of England? Wretched, thick-eyed, gross-hearted mortals, why will ye worship lies, and "Stuffed Clothes-suits created by the ninth-parts of men!" It is not your purses that suffer; your farm-rents, your commerces, your mill-revenues, loud as ye lament over these; no, it is not these alone, but a far deeper than these: it is your souls that

lie dead, crushed down under despicable Nightmares, Atheisms, Brain-fumes; and are not souls at all, but mere succedanea for salt to keep your bodies and their appetites from putrefying! Your cotton-spinning and thrice-miraculous mechanism, what is this too, by itself, but a larger kind of Animalism? Spiders can spin, Beavers can build and show contrivance; the Ant lays-up accumulation of capital, and has, for aught I know, a Bank of Antland. If there is no soul in man higher than all that, did it reach to sailing on the cloud-rack and spinning sea-sand, then I say, man is but an animal, a more cunning kind of brute: he has no soul, but only a succedaneum for salt. Whereupon, seeing himself to be truly of the beasts that perish, he ought to admit it, I think; — and also straightway universally to kill himself; and so, in a manlike manner at least *end*, and wave these brute-worlds *bis* dignified farewell!—

FROM The French Revolution

1837

BOOK VI

Thermidor

In the early nineteenth century history was regarded as the intellectual pursuit of most significance. It was "philosophy teaching by experience." The study of the past afforded lessons for the present and warnings for the future. Carlyle held, moreover, a transcendental theory of history: it was to him like nature itself a revelation of the divine idea which underlay all phenomena of the universe. Accordingly he chose for the subject of his masterpiece the history of the French Revolution. It had a special pertinence in the years when England was itself threatened by violent opposition to the reactionary policy of the government. The tension eased somewhat after the Tory House of Lords yielded to the demands of the Commons for the Reform Bill of 1832; but though this measure extended the suffrage and representation in Parliament to the middle class, the workers were aroused and enlisted in the Chartist movement to obtain political rights for themselves. Carlyle saw in the French Revolution a striking passage in the "prophetic manuscript" called history. The fate of the French throne and noblesse was a warning of what would happen to the British aristocracy if they continued

to ignore the first responsibility of government — the welfare of the mass of the people.

The chapters chosen deal with the last scene of the Revolution, the close of the Reign of Terror. The Revolution had proceeded step by step from constitutional reform under monarchy, to the establishment of a republic and execution of the king, and thence to a concentration of power in the hands of a group of extremists headed by Maximilien Robespierre.

These chapters show the power of Carlyle at its height. He recognized that the narrator can deal with events only as a linear series, whereas in life they occur simultaneously. He overcame this difficulty by brevity and concentration, leaving details to be filled in by the reader's imagination. Above all, he was concerned not so much with the events themselves as with the feeling which they inspire. In this respect he may be called an expressionist. This emotional tension expands the reader's power of grasping the situation, and realizing the march of destiny, through uncertainty and confusion, to the fall of the dictator.

CHAPTER VI

To Finish the Terror

It is very remarkable, indeed, that since the *fare-Supreme* Feast,¹ and the sublime continued harangues on it, which Billaud feared would become a bore to him, Robespierre has gone little to Committee: but held himself apart, as if in a kind of pet. Nay they have made a Report on that old Catherine Theot,² and her Regenerative Man spoken of by the Prophets; not in the best spirit. This Theot mystery they affect to regard as a Plot, but have evidently introduced a vein of satire, of irreverent banter, not against the Spinster alone, but obliquely against her Regenerative Man! Barrere's³ light pen was perhaps at the bottom of it; read through the solemn snuffling organs of old Vadier of the *Stirett Generale*, the Theot Report had its effect; wrinkling the general Republican visage into an iron grin. Ought these things to be?

We note further, that among the Prisoners in the Twelve Houses of Arrest, there is one

¹ The Feast of the Supreme Being was inaugurated by Robespierre, June 8, 1794.

² An old woman who asserted that Robespierre was the Messiah.

³ Bertrand Barrere (1755-1841), one of the most violent terrorists.

whom we have seen before — Senhora Fontenai, *born* Cabarus, the fair Proserpine whom Representative Tallien¹ Pluto-like did gather at Bourdeaux, not without effect on himself! Tallien is home, by recall, long since, from Bourdeaux; and in the most alarming position. Vain that he sounded, louder even than ever, the note of Jacobinism, to hide past shortcomings: the Jacobins purged him out; two times has Robespierre growled at him words of omen from the Convention Tribune. And now his fair Cabarus, hit by denunciation, lies Arrested, Suspect, in spite of all he could do! — Shut in horrid pinfold of death, the Senhora smuggles out to her red-gloomy Tallien the most pressing entreaties and conjurings: Save me; save thyself. Seest thou not that thy own head is doomed; thou with a too fiery audacity, a Dantonist withal; against whom lie grudges? Are ye not all doomed, as in the Polyphemus Cavern: the fawningest slave of you will be but eaten last! — Tallien feels with a shudder that it is true. Tallien has had words of omen, Bourdon has had words, Freron is hated and Barras:² each man "feels his head if it yet stick on his shoulders."

Meanwhile Robespierre, we still observe, goes little to Convention, not at all to Committee; speaks nothing except to his Jacobin House of Lords, amid his body-guard of *Tappeclurs*.³ These "forty-days," for we are now far in July, he has not showed face in Committee; could only work there by his three shallow scoundrels, and the terror there was of him. The Incorruptible himself sits apart; or is seen stalking in solitary places in the fields, with an intensely meditative air; some say, "with eyes red-spotted," fruit of extreme bile: the lamentablest seagreen Chimera that walks the Earth that July! O hapless Chimera, for thou too hadst a life, and heart of flesh, — what is this that the stern gods, seeming to smile all the way, have Jed and let thee to! Art not thou he, who, few years ago, was a young Advocate of

¹ Jean Lambert Tallien (1769-1820), member of the Convention and agent of the Terror at Bourdeaux.

² Paul Jean Barras (1755-1829), an aristocrat who joined the Third Estate. The chief military man of the Convention.
strong arm men.

promise, and gave up the Arras Judgeship rather than sentence one man to die? —

What his thoughts might be? His plans for finishing the Terror? One knows not. Dim vestiges there flit of Agrarian Law; a victorious Sansculottism become Landed Proprietor; old Soldiers sitting in National Mansions, in Hospital Palaces of Chambord and Chantilly; peace bought by victory; breaches healed by Feast of *Etre Supreme*, — and so, through seas of blood, to Equality, Frugality, work-some Blessedness, Fraternity, and Republic of the virtues. Blessed shore, of such a sea of Aristocrat blood: but how to land on it? Through one last wave: blood of corrupt Sansculottists; traitorous or semi-traitorous Conventional, rebellious Talhens, Billauds, to whom with my *litre Supreme* I have become a bore; with my Apocalyptic Old Woman a laughing-stock! — So stalks he, this poor Robespierre, like a seagreen ghost, through the blooming July. Vestiges of schemes flit dim. But *what* his schemes or his thoughts were will never be known to man.

New Catacombs, some say, are digging for a huge simultaneous butchery. Convention to be butchered, down to the right pitch, by General Hennot¹ and Company: Jacobin House of Lords made dominant; and Robespierre Dictator. There is actually, or else there is not actually, a List made out; which the Hairdresser has got eye on, as he frizzled the Incorruptible locks. Each man asks himself, Is it I?

Nay, as Tradition and rumor of Anecdote still convey it, there was a remarkable bachelor's dinner, one hot day, at Barrere's. For doubt not, O Reader, this Barrere and others of them gave dinners, had "country-house at Clichy," with elegant enough sumptuosities, and pleasures high-rouged. But at this dinner we speak of, the day being so hot, it is said, the guests all stripped their coats, and left them in the drawing-room: whereupon Carnot glided out; groped in Robespierre's pocket; found a list of Forty, his own name among them; and tarried not at the wine-cup

that day! — Ye must bestir yourselves, O Friends; ye dull Frogs of the Marsh, mute ever since Girondism sank under, even you now must croak or die! Councils are held, with word and beck; nocturnal, mysterious as death. Does not a feline Maximilien stalk there; voiceless as yet; his green eyes red-spotted; back bent, and hair up? Rash Talhen, with his rash temper and audacity of tongue; he shall *bell the cat*. Fix a day; and be it soon, lest never!

Lo, before the fixed day, on the day which they call Eighth of Thermidor, 26th July 1794, Robespierre himself reappears in Convention; mounts to the Tribune! The biliary face seems clouded with new gloom: judge whether your Talliens, Bourdons, listened with interest. It is a voice bodeful of death or of life. Long-winded unmelodious as the screech-owl's, sounds that prophetic voice: Degenerate condition of Republican spirit; corrupt Moderatism; *Surett, Salut* Committees themselves infected; backsliding on this hand and on that; I, Maximilien, alone left incorruptible, ready to die at a moment's warning. For all which what remedy is there? The Guillotine; new vigor to the all-healing Guillotine; death to traitors of every hue! So sings the prophetic voice; into its Convention sounding-board. The old song this: but today, O Heavens! has the sounding-board ceased to act? There is not resonance in this Convention; there is, so to speak, a gasp of silence, nay a certain grating of one knows not what? — Lecointre, our old Draper of Versailles, in these questionable circumstances, sees nothing he can do so safe as rise, "insidiously" or not insidiously, and move, according to established wont, that the Robespierre Speech be "printed and sent to the Departments." Hark: gratings, even of dissonance! Honorable Members hint dissonance; Committee-Members, inculpated in the Speech, utter dissonance, demand "delay in printing." Ever higher rises the note of dissonance; inquiry is even made by Editor Freron: "What has become of the Liberty of Opinions in this Convention?" The Order to print and transmit, which had got passed, is rescinded. Robespierre, greener than ever before, has to retire, foiled;

¹ One of Robespierre's supporters, in command of the municipal troops of Paris.

² Lazare Nicolas Marguerite Carnot (1755-1823), 50th Minister of War 1793-95, "the Organizer of Victory."

discerning that it is mutiny, that evil is nigh!

Mutiny is a thing of the fatallest nature in all enterprises whatsoever; a thing so meal-
culable, swift-frightful: not to be dealt with
in *fright*. But mutiny in a Robespierre Con-
vention, above all, — it is like fire seen
sputtering in the ship's powder-room! One
death-defiant plunge at it, this moment, and
you may still tread it out: hesitate till next
moment, — ship and ship's captain, crew and
cargo are shivered far; the ship's voyage has
suddenly ended between sea and sky. If
Robespierre can, tonight, produce his Henriot
and Company, and get his work done by
them, he and Sansculottism may still subsist
Some time; if not, probably not. Oliver
Cromwell, when that Agitator Sergeant stepped
forth from the ranks, with plea of grievances,
and began gesticulating and demonstrating,
as the mouthpiece of Thousands expectant
there, — discerned, with those truculent
eyes of his, how the matter lay; plucked a
pistol from his holsters, blew Agitator and
Agitation instantly out. Noll was a man fit
for such things.

Robespierre, for his part, glides over at
evening to his Jacobin House of Lords;¹ un-
folds there, instead of some adequate resolu-
tion, his woes, his uncommon virtues, in-
corruptibilities; then, secondly, his rejected
screech-owl Oration; — reads this latter over
again; and declares that he is ready to die at
a moment's warning. Thou shalt not die!
shouts Jacobinism from its thousand throats.
"Robespierre, I will drink the hemlock with
thee," cries Painter David, "*Je boirai la cigue
avec toi* "; — a thing not essential to *do*, but
which, in the fire of the moment, can be said.

Our Jacobin sounding-board, therefore,
does act! Applauses heaven-high cover the
rejected Oration; fire-eyed fury lights all
Jacobin features: Insurrection a sacred duty;
the Convention to be purged; Sovereign
People under Henriot and Municipality; we
will make a new June-Second' of it: To your
tents, O Israel! In this key pipes Jacobinism,

¹ The Jacobin Club.

² June 2, 1793, when the Girondins, or moderate re-
publicans, were arrested, preliminary to their execution.

in sheer tumult of revolt. Let Tallien and all
Opposition men make off. Collot d'Herbois,¹
though of the supreme *Salut*, and so lately
near shot, is elbowed, bullied; is glad to
escape alive. Entering Committee-room of
Salut, all disheveled, he finds sleek somber
Saint-Just² there, among the rest; who in
his sleek way asks, "What is passing at the
Jacobins?" — "What is passing?" repeats
Collot, in the unhistrionic Cambyse's³ vein:
"What is passing? Nothing but revolt and
horrors are passing. Ye want our lives; ye
shall not have them." Saint-Just stutters at
such Cambyse-oratory; takes his hat to
withdraw. That *Report* he had been speaking
of, *Report* on Republican Things in General
we may say, which is to be read in Convention
on the morrow, he cannot show it them, at
this moment: a friend has it; he, Saint-Just,
will get it, and send it, were he once home.
Once home, he sends not it, but an answer
that he will not send it; that they will hear
it from the Tribune tomorrow.

Let every man, therefore, according to a
well-known good advice, "pray to Heaven,
and keep his powder dry!" Paris, on the
morrow, will see a thing. Swift scouts fly
dim or invisible, all night, from *Surete* and
Salut; from conclave to conclave; from
Mother-Society to Townhall. Sleep, can it
fall on the eyes of Talliens, Frérons, Collots?
Puissant Henriot, Mayor Fleuriot, Judge
Coffinhal, Procureur Payan, Robespierre and
all the Jacobins are getting ready.

CHAPTER VII

Go Down to

Tallien's eyes beamed bright, on the
morrow, Ninth of Thermidor "about nine
o'clock," to see that the Convention had
actually met. Paris is in rumor: but at least
we are met, in Legal Convention here; we
have not been snatched seriatim; treated with
a *Pride's Purge*' at the door. "*Allans, brave*

¹ Jean Marie Collot-d'Herbois (1750-96), an actor.

² Antoine Saint-Just (1757-94), one of the triumvi-
rate with Robespierre.

³ "*Cambyse's vein*" is Shakespeare's reference in *I
Henry IV* to a play by Thomas Preston (1561).

⁴ The expulsion of Presbyterian members of Parlia-
ment by Colonel Pride, December 6, 1648.

men of the Plain," late Frogs of the Marsh! cried Tallien with a squeeze of the hand, as he passed in; Saint-Just's sonorous voice being now audible from the Tribune, and the game of games begun.

Saint-Just is verily reading that Report of his; green Vengeance, in the shape of Robespierre, watching nigh, Behold, however, Saint-Just has read but few sentences, when interruption rises, rapid *crescendos* when Tallien starts to his feet, and Billaud, and this man starts and that, — and Tallien, a second time, with his: "Citoyens, at the Jacobins last night, I trembled for the Republic. I said to myself, if the Convention dare not strike the Tyrant, then I myself dare; and with this I will do it, if need be," said he, whisking out a clear-gleaming Dagger, and brandishing it there, the Steel of Brutus, as we call it. Whereat we all bellow, and brandish, impetuous acclaim. "Tyranny! Dictatorship! Triumvirate!" And the *Salut* Committee-men accuse, and all men accuse, and uproar, and impetuously acclaim. And Saint-Just is standing motionless, pale of face; Couthon¹ ejaculating, "Triumvir?" with a look at his paralytic legs. And Robespierre is struggling to speak, but President Thunot is jingling the bell against him, but the Hall is sounding against him like an Æolus-Hall: and Robespierre is mounting the Tribune-steps and descending again; going and coming, like to choke with rage, terror, desperation: — and mutiny is the order of the day!

'O President Thuriot, thou that wert Elector Thuriot, and from the Bastille battlements sawest Saint-Antoine rising like the Ocean-tide, and hast seen much since, sawest thou ever the like of this? Jingle of bell, which thou jinglest against Robespierre, is hardly audible amid the Bedlam-storm; and men rage for life. "President of Assassins," shrieks Robespierre, "I demand speech of thee for the last time!" It cannot be had. "To you, O virtuous men of the Plain," cries he, finding audience one moment, "I appeal to you!" The virtuous men of the Plain sit silent as stones. And Thuriot's bell jingles, and the Hall sounds like bolus's Hall.

¹ Georges Gouthon (1756-94), the third triumvir.

Robespierre's frothing lips are grown "blue;" his tongue dry, cleaving to the roof of his mouth. "The blood of Danton chokes him," cry they. "Accusation! Decree of Accusation!" Thuriot swiftly puts that question. Accusation passes; the incorruptible Maximilien is decreed Accused.

"I demand to share my Brother's fate, as I have striven to share his virtues," cries Augustin, the Younger Robespierre: Augustin also is decreed. And Couthon, and Saint-Just, and Lebas, they are all decreed; and packed forth, — not without difficulty, the Ushers almost trembling to obey. Triumvirate and Company are packed forth, into *Salut* Committee-room, their tongue cleaving to the roof of their mouth. You have but to summon the Municipality; to cashier Commandant Hennot, and launch Arrest at him; to regulate formalities; hand Tinville¹ his victims. It is noon: the Æolus-Hall has delivered itself; blows now victorious, harmonious, as one irresistible wind.

And so the work is finished? One thinks so: and yet it is not so. Alas, there is yet but the first-act finished; three or four other acts still to come, and an uncertain catastrophe! A huge City holds in it so many confusions: seven hundred thousand human heads; not one of which knows what its neighbor is doing, nay not what itself is doing. — See, accordingly, about three in the afternoon, Commandant Henriot, how instead of sitting cashiered, arrested, he gallops along the Quais, followed by Municipal Gendarmes, "trampling down several persons!" For the Townhall sits deliberating, openly insurgent: Barriers to be shut; no Gaoler to admit any Prisoner this day; — and Henriot is galloping towards the Tuileries, to deliver Robespierre. On the Quai de la Ferrallerie, a young Citoyen, walking with his wife, says aloud: "Gendarmes, that man is not your Commandant, he is under arrest." The Gendarmes strike down the young Citoyen with the flat of their swords.

Representatives themselves (as Merlin the Thionviller), who accost him, this puissant Henriot flings into guardhouses. He bursts

¹ Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville (1747-1795) public accuser before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

towards the Tuileries Committee-room, "to speak with Robespierre": with difficulty, the Ushers and Tuileries Gendarmes, earnestly pleading and drawing saber, seize this Henriot; get the Hennot Gendarmes persuaded not to fight; get Robespierre and Company packed into hackney-coaches, sent off under escort, to the Luxembourg and other Prisons. This then is the end? May not an exhausted Convention adjourn now, for a little repose and sustenance, "at five o'clock?"

An exhausted Convention did it; and repented it. The end was not come; only the end of the *second act*. Hark, while exhausted Representatives sit at victuals, — tocsin bursting from all steeples, drums rolling, in the summerevening; Judge Coffinhal is galloping with new Gendarmes, to deliver Henriot from Tuileries Committee-room; and does deliver him! Puissant Henriot vaults on horseback; sets to haranguing the Tuileries Gendarmes, corrupts the Tuileries Gendarmes too; trots off with them to Townhall. Alas, and Robespierre is not in Prison: the Gaoler showed his Municipal order, durst not, on pain of his life, admit any Prisoner; the Robespierre Hackney-coaches, in this confused jangle and whirl of uncertain Gendarmes, have floated safe — into the Townhall! There sit Robespierre and Company, embraced by Municipals and Jacobins, in sacred right of Insurrection, redacting Proclamations, sounding tocsins; corresponding with Sections and Mother-Society. Is not here a pretty enough third act of a *natural* Greek Drama; catastrophe more uncertain than ever?

The hasty Convention rushes together again, in the ominous nightfall: President Collot, for the chair is his, enters with long strides, paleness on his face; claps-on his hat; says with solemn tone: "Citoyens, armed Villains have beset the Committee-rooms, and got possession of them. The hour is come, to die at our post!" "*Oui*," answer one and all: "We swear it!" It is no rodomontade, this time, but a sad fact and necessity; unless we *do* at our posts, we must verily die. Swift, therefore, Robespierre, Henriot, the Municipality, are declared Rebels; put *Hors la Loi*, Out of Law. Better still, we appoint Barras

Commandant of what Armed-force is to be had; send Missionary Representatives to all Sections and quarters, to preach, and raise force; will die at least with harness on our back.

What a distracted City; men riding and running, reporting and hearsaying; the Hour clearly in travail, — child not to be named till born! The poor Prisoners in the Luxembourg hear the rumor; tremble for a new September. They see men making signals to them, on skylights and roofs, apparently signals of hope, cannot in the least make out what it is. We observe, however, in the eventide, as usual, the Death-tumbrils faring Southeastward, through Saint-Antoine, towards their Barrier du Trone. Saint-Antoine's tough bowels melt; Saint-Antoine surrounds the Tumbrils, says, It shall not be. O Heavens, why should it! Hennot and Gendarmes, scouring the streets that way, bellow, with waved sabres, that it must. Quit hope, ye poor Doomed! The Tumbrils move on.

But in this set of Tumbrils there are two other things notable: one notable person; and one want of a notable person. The notable person is Lieutenant-General Loiserolles, a nobleman by birth and by nature; laying down his life here for his son.¹ In the Prison of Saint-Lazare, the night before last, hurrying to the Grate to hear the Death-list read, he caught the name of his son. The son was asleep at the moment. "I am Loiserolles," cried the old man: at Tinville's bar, an error in the Christian name is little, small objection was made. — The want of the notable person, again, is that of Deputy Paine!² Paine has sat in the Luxembourg since January, and seemed forgotten; but Fouquier had pricked him at last. The Turnkey, List in hand, is marking with chalk the outer doors of tomorrow's *Fournee*.³ Paine's outer door happened to be open, turned back on the wall; the Turnkey marked it on the side next him, and hurried on: another Turnkey came, and shut it; no chalk-mark now visible, the *Fournee* went

¹ An episode which Dickens adopted in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

² Thomas Paine (1737-1809), author of *The Age of Reason*, elected a member of the Convention.

³ Literally, the batch or baking.

without Paine. Paine's life lay not there. —

Our fifth act, of this natural Greek Drama, with its natural unities, can only be painted in gross; somewhat as that antique Painter, driven desperate, did the *foam*. For through this blessed July night, there is clangor, confusion very great, of marching troops; of Sections going this way, Sections going that; of Missionary Representatives reading Proclamations by torchlight; Missionary Legendre, who has raised force somewhere, emptying out the Jacobins, and flinging their key on the Convention table: "I have locked their door; it shall be Virtue that reopens it." Paris, we say, is set against itself, rushing confused, as Ocean-currents do; a huge Mahlstrom, sounding there, under cloud of night. Convention sits permanent on this hand; Municipality most permanent on that. The poor prisoners hear tocsin and rumor, strive to bethink them of the signals apparently of hope. Meek continual Twilight streaming up, which will be Dawn and a Tomorrow, silvers the Northern hem of Night; it wends and wends there, that meek brightness, like a silent prophecy, along the great ring-dial of the Heaven. So still, eternal! and on Earth all is confused shadow and conflict, dissidence, tumultuous gloom and glare, and "Destiny as yet sits wavering, and shakes her doubtful urn."

About three in the morning, the dissident Armed Forces have *met*. Hennot's Armed Force stood ranked in the Place de Greve; and now Barras's, which he has recruited, arrives there; and they front each other, cannon bristling against cannon. Citoyens! cries the voice of Discretion loudly enough, Before coming to bloodshed, to endless civil-war, hear the Convention Decree read: "Robespierre and all rebels Out of Law!" — Out of Law? There is terror in the sound Unarmed Citoyens disperse rapidly home. Municipal Cannoneers, in sudden whirl, anxiously unanimous, range themselves on the Convention side, with shouting. At which shout, Henriot descends from his upper room, far gone in drink as some say; finds his Place de Greve empty; the cannons' mouth turned towards him; and on the whole, — that it is now the catastrophe!

Stumbling in again, the wretched drunk-sobered Henriot announces: "All is lost!" "*Miserable*, it is thou that hast lost it!" cry they; and fling him, or else he flings himself, out of window: far enough down; into masonwork and horror of cesspool; not into death but worse. Augustin Robespierre follows him; with the like fate. Saint-Just, they say, called on Lebas to kill him, who would not. Couthon crept under a table; attempting to kill himself; not doing it. — On entering that Sanhedrim of Insurrection, we find all as good as extinct, undone, ready for seizure. Robespierre was sitting on a chair, with pistol-shot blown through not his head but his under-jaw; the suicidal hand had fulfilled. With prompt zeal, not without trouble, we gather these wrecked Conspirators; fish up even Henriot and Augustin, bleeding and foul, pack them all, rudely enough, into carts; and shall, before sunrise, have them safe under lock and key. Amid shoutings and embracings.

Robespierre lay in an anteroom of the Convention Hall, while his Prison-escort was getting ready; the mangled jaw bound up rudely with bloody linen: a spectacle to men. He lies stretched on a table, a deal-box his pillow; the sheath of the pistol is still clenched convulsively in his hand. Men bully him, insult him: his eyes still indicate intelligence; he speaks no word. "He had on the sky-blue coat he had got made for the Feast of the *Etre Supreme*" — O Reader, can thy hard heart hold out against that? His trousers were nankeen; the stockings had fallen down over the ankles. He spake no word more in this world.

And so, at six in the morning, a victorious Convention adjourns. Re'port flies over Pans as on golden wings; penetrates the Prisons; irradiates the faces of those that were ready to perish: turnkeys and *moutons*, fallen from their high estate, look mute and blue. It is the 28th day of July, called 10th of Thermidor, year 1794.

Fouquier had but to identify; his Prisoners being already Out of Law. At four in the afternoon, never before were the streets of Paris seen so crowded. From the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Revolution, for

thither again go the Tumbrils this time, it is one dense stirring mass; all windows crammed; the very roofs and ridge-tiles budding forth human Curiosity, in strange gladness. The Death-tumbrils, with their motley Batch of 5 Outlaws, some Twenty-three or so, from Maximilien to Mayor Fleuriot and Simon the Cordwainer, roll on. All eyes are on Robespierre's Tumbril, where he, his jaw bound in dirty linen, with his half-dead 10 Brother, and half-dead Henriot, lie shattered; their "seventeen hours" of agony about to end. The Gendarmes point their swords at him, to show the people which is he. A woman springs on the Tumbril; clutching 15 the side of it with one hand; waving the other Sibyl-like; and exclaims: "The death of thee gladdens my very heart, *menivre de joie*"; Robespierre opened his eyes, "*Scelerat*, go down to Hell, with the curses of all wives 20 and mothers!" — At the foot of the scaffold, they stretched him on the ground till his turn came. Lifted aloft, his eyes again opened; caught the bloody axe. Samson wrenched the coat off him; wrenched the dirty linen 25 from his jaw: the jaw fell powerless, there burst from him a cry, hideous to hear and see. Samson, thou canst not be too quick.

Samson's work done, there bursts forth shout on shout of applause. Shout, which 30 prolongs itself not only over Paris, but over France, but over Europe, and down to this generation. Deservedly, and also undeservedly. O unhappiest Advocate of Arras, wert thou worse than other Advocates? 35 Stricter man, according to his Formula, to his Credo and his Cant, of probities, benevolences, pleasures-of-virtue, and such like, lived not in that age. A man fitted, in some luckier settled age, to have become one of 40 those incorruptible barren Pattern-Figures, and have had marble-tablets and funeral-sermons. His poor landlord, the Cabinet-maker in the Rue Saint-Honore, loved him; his Brother died for him. May God be 45 merciful to him, and to us!

This is the end of the Reign of Terror; new glorious *Revolution* named of *Thermidor*; of Thermidor 9th, year 2; which being interpreted into old slave-style means 27th of 50 July 1794. Terror is ended; and death in the

Place de la Revolution, were the "*Tail of Robespierre*" once executed; which service Fouquier in large Batches is swiftly managing.

Coleridge

From *Life of John Sterling*, 1851

One of Carlyle's intimate friends in London was John Sterling, whose life he wrote in 1851. Sterling was a young man of great personal friendliness and charm, who played the part of Charles Lamb in being a bond of union among many men of widely different opinions. Since Sterling was in ill-health and came rarely to London, his friends formed a circle known as the Sterling Club to meet him on his visits. Sterling introduced Carlyle to Coleridge, when the latter was living at Highgate shortly before his death. The pen-picture which Carlyle drew in the fifth chapter of the *Life of Sterling* is one of his most graphic portraits. Although Carlyle wrote with some asperity about Coleridge, it must be recognized that he owed much to him. Both men were fighting for faith in a spiritual rather than a mechanistic universe.

Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill, in those years, looking down on London and its smoke-tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle; attracting towards him the thoughts of innumerable brave souls still engaged there. His express contributions to poetry, philosophy, or any specific province of human literature or enlightenment, had been small and sadly intermittent; but he had, especially among young enquiring men, a higher than literary, a kind of prophetic or magician character. He was thought to hold, he alone in England, the key of German and other Transcendentalisms; knew the sublime secret of believing by "the reason" what "the understanding" had been obliged to fling out as incredible; and could still, after Hume and Voltaire had done their best and worst with him, profess himself an orthodox Christian, and say and print to the Church of England, with its singular old rubrics and surplices at Allhallowtide, *Esto perpetua*. A sublime man; who, alone in those dark days, had saved his crown of spiritual manhood; escaping from the black materialisms, and revolutionary deluges, with "God, Freedom, Immortality" still his: a king of men. The

practical intellects of the world did not much heed him, or carelessly reckoned him a meta-physical dreamer: but to the rising spirits of the young generation he had this dusky sublime character; and sat there as a kind of *Magus*, girt in mystery and enigma; his Dodona¹ oak-grove (Mr. Gillman's house at Highgate) whispering strange things, uncertain whether oracles or jargon.

The Gillmans did not much encourage company, or excitation of any sort, round their sage; nevertheless access to him, if a youth did reverently wish it, was not difficult. He would stroll about the pleasant garden with you, sit in the pleasant rooms of the place, — perhaps take you to his own peculiar room, high up, with a rearward view, which was the chief view of all. A really charming outlook, in fine weather. Close at hand, wide sweep of flowery leafy gardens, their few houses mostly hidden, the very chimney-pots veiled under blossomy umbrage, flowed gloriously down hill; gloriously issuing in wide-tufted undulating plain-country, rich in all charms of field and town. Waving blooming country of the brightest green; dotted all over with handsome villas, handsome groves; crossed by roads and human traffic, here inaudible or heard only as a musical hum: and behind all swam, under olive-tinted haze, the illimitable ocean of London, with its domes and steeples definite in the sun, big Paul's and the many memories attached to it hanging high over all. Nowhere, of its kind, could you see a grander prospect on a bright summer day, with the set of the air going southward, — southward, and so draping with the city-smoke not you but the city. Here for hours would Coleridge talk, concerning all conceivable or inconceivable things; and liked nothing better than to have an intelligent, or failing that, even a silent and patient human listener. He distinguished himself to all that ever heard him as at least the most surprising talker extant in this world, — and to some small minority, by no means to all, as the most excellent.

The good man, he was now getting old, towards sixty perhaps; and gave you the idea of a life that had been full of sufferings; 50

a life heavy-laden, half-vanquished, still swimming painfully in seas of manifold physical and other bewilderment. Brow and head were round, and of massive weight, but the face was flabby and irresolute. The deep eyes, of a light hazel, were as full of sorrow as of inspiration; confused pain looked mildly from them, as in a kind of mild astonishment. The whole figure and air, good and amiable otherwise, might be called flabby and irresolute; expressive of weakness under possibility of strength. He hung loosely on his limbs, with knees bent, and stooping attitude; in walking, he rather shuffled than decisively stepped; and a lady once remarked, he never could fix which side of the garden walk would suit him best, but continually shifted, in corkscrew fashion, and kept trying both. A heavy-laden, high-aspiring and surely much-suffering man. His voice, naturally soft and good, had contracted itself into a plaintive snuffle and singsong; he spoke as if preaching, — you would have said, preaching earnestly and also hopelessly the weightiest things. I still recollect his "object" and "subject," terms of continual recurrence in the Kanteian province; and how he sang and snuffled them into "ommject" and "sum-m-mject," with a kind of solemn shake or quaver, as he rolled along. No talk, in his century or in other, could be more surprising—

To the man himself Nature had given, in high measure, the seeds of a noble endowment; and to unfold it had been forbidden him. A subtle lynx-eyed intellect, tremulous pious sensibility to all good and all beautiful; truly a ray of empyrean light; — but imbedded in such weak laxity of character, in such indolences and esuriences as had made strange work with it. Once more, the tragic story of a high endowment with an insufficient will. An eye to discern the divineness of the Heaven's splendors and lightnings, the insatiable wish to revel in their godlike radiances and brilliances; but no heart to front the scathing terrors of them, which is the first condition of your conquering an abiding place there. The courage necessary for him, above all things, had been denied this man. His life, with such ray of the empyrean in it, was great and terrible to him; and he had not

¹ The seat of an oracle of Zeus in Epirus.

valiantly grappled with it, he had fled from it; sought refuge in vague day-dreams, hollow compromises, in opium, in theosophic metaphysics. Harsh pain, danger, necessity, slavish harnessed toil, were of all things abhorrent to him. And so the empyrean element, lying smothered under the terrene, and yet inextinguishable there, made sad writhings. For pain, danger, difficulty, steady slaving toil, 5 and other highly disagreeable behests of destiny, shall in no wise be shirked by any brightest mortal that will approve himself loyal to his mission in this world; nay, precisely the higher he is, the deeper will be the disagreeableness, and the detestability to flesh and blood, of the tasks laid on him, and the heavier too, and more tragic, his penalties, if he neglect them——

Thomas Babington Macaulay - 1800-1859

When Chesterton remarked of Lord Macaulay that he "seemed sometimes to talk as if clocks produced clocks, or guns had families of little pistols, or a penknife littered like a pig," he was satirizing the almost superstitious attitude of the great Whig writer toward progress, which he seemed to believe was automatic. In this attitude, however, Macaulay was truly representative of the middle class which was enjoying great prosperity with the extension of industry and trade. He was also an example of the working of that Victorian compromise by which the middle class associated itself with the aristocracy to maintain a political equilibrium, while the aristocracy recruited its ranks, and invigorated its leadership, by admitting men from the middle class.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was a happy and precocious child. His mother, for whom he had a passionate devotion, was of Quaker lineage; his father, an ex-governor of Sierra Leone, was a Presbyterian who devoted most of his life, after the birth of his eldest son, to anti-slavery agitation, and edited in that cause *The Christian Observer*. Before he was nine, the child had made for himself a "Compendium of Universal History," an accounting for dates from the creation to the year 1800, the date of his own birth.

At eighteen, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he chiefly distinguished himself for his friendliness and his eloquent and witty conversation. It was at Cambridge, under the influence of his friend, Charles Austin, that he made the one notable change of opinion in his whole life. He came to the university a Tory, and became a Whig — at first a cause of unnecessary alarm to his pious father, who could not foresee that his son would maintain moderation as a fetish throughout a life lived in stormy semi-revolutionary times.

Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* from time to time published short historical and classical essays by Macaulay; but his serious entry into the field of English literature was his essay on Milton, published in August, 1815, in *The Edinburgh Review*. This essay excited applause both from the public and from his fellow writers. The following year he was called to the bar (but he wrote more than he practiced), and two years later was made a Commissioner in Bankruptcy by Lord Lyndhurst. His father's firm, Babington and Macaulay, having dwindled almost to nothing, the small security of the commissionership was fortunate both for Macaulay and his family, for whom he always felt constant affection and responsibility.

Macaulay entered Parliament in the midst of the battle over the Reform Bill, and his first speech on the subject swept England as had his essay on Milton. Sir Robert Peel said of it,

"Portions were as beautiful as anything I have ever heard or read." His parliamentary career was soon halted by the necessity of accepting a place on the Supreme Council of India, at a salary of ten thousand pounds a year, by which he hoped to reinstate the family fortunes which were growing acutely distressful. His five years in India were largely spent as president of a commission to study Indian jurisprudence, and in drafting a new Indian penal code. In his leisure he formed a plan for writing a history of England. Upon his return to England in 1838, he entered Parliament again as member for Edinburgh, and in the following year became Secretary at War in Lord Melbourne's cabinet. *The Lays of Ancient Rome* were published in 1841, and in 1843 he collected and published his *Essays*. He began to work on his *History* in earnest, and from that time gradually relinquished interest in active political life. The first two volumes of the *History of England* appeared in December, 1848, and, before the publication of volumes III and IV, seven years later, had been translated into twelve European tongues. His view of history, unlike Carlyle's, was largely political; and as Macaulay was a Whig, he made his account of England from the accession of James II an apology for the action of the Whig noblemen who conducted the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and upheld the government of William and Mary against the efforts of the Stuarts, supported by France, to overthrow it. Macaulay died in 1859 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay was distinctly a man of his own time, which he was never weary of contrasting to its advantage with earlier periods. He shared its admiration of material prosperity and its trust in political progress. Although he had something of the romantic feeling for the past, inherited from Sir Walter Scott, he was rather of the realistic mind that we associate with the early eighteenth century. The most famous chapter of his *History* is the third, in which he writes with great detail of the social and material life of all classes in England at the time of the Restoration. He wrote many biographical essays for *The Edinburgh Review* on Englishmen (Bacon, Johnson, Hastings, Givè, Temple), and on European subjects (Machiavelli, Ranke's *History of the Popes*). In his prose Macaulay sought, above all, clearness, but he brought to his writing a mastery of all the devices of a splendid rhetoric. His historical work is remarkable for the skill with which he maintains his narrative of simultaneous series of events, moving, as it were, on different planes. Force he derived from sharply contrasted statements, which have the incisiveness of epigrams. He enjoyed paradox, such as the contrast between Bacon's squalid private character and his splendid public service. He also gave popular form in his verse to stories from classical history, in his *Lays of Ancient Rome* and *Lays of Ancient Greece*. Altogether it is not too much to say that the ideas of historical events and characters now current are largely those which Macaulay made popular. Doubtless his absorption in his own time is a reason for the decline in his reputation. Men who cared for spiritual rather than material things, like Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold, reprobated Macaulay's complacency and trust in machinery, mechanical or political. Carlyle passed the severest verdict on him in saying: "He has no vision."

The standard edition of Macaulay's works is edited by his nephew, G. O. Trevelyan, who has also written the chief biography (1908). A brief life by J. Cotter Morison is included in the English Men of Letters series.

Milton

1825

The *Essay on Milton*, published in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1825, marked the beginning of Macaulay's literary career. The essay shows his opinions and style fully formed. As a Whig in politics, he believed in the supremacy of Parliament over the Crown. As a Liberal, he defended freedom of opinion and speech. Born himself into the middle class, he admired the moral virtues of the Puritans. He was thus prepared to sympathize with Milton in his life, and to defend his views. He had already achieved that mastery of antithesis and epigram, best seen in his contrast of Roundhead and Cavalier, and in his arraignment of Charles I; and his reading had furnished him with a multitude of allusions. The use of antithesis and of allusions remained marked qualities of his style.

Towards the close of the year 1813, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign dispatches written by Milton while he filled the office of secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials¹ and the Rye House Plot.² The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed, "To Mr. Skinner, Merchant." On examination the large manuscript proved to be the long-lost essay on the *Doctrines of Christianity*,³ which, according to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner.⁴ Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament; and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But what-

¹ These followed the unfounded charges of Titus Gates that there was a plot to overthrow Protestantism and establish the Roman Catholic Church in 1678.

² A conspiracy to murder Charles II and his brother James in 1683.

³ Early editors of Milton.

⁴ Cyriac Skinner was perhaps a pupil, certainly the most intimate of Milton's younger friends. The twenty-first sonnet was addressed to him.

ever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner,¹ who was commanded by his Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honorable to his talents and to his character. His version is not, indeed, very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of this subject compelled him to use many words

That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.²

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes, of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone, and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

¹ A chaplain of George IV, later Bishop of Winchester.

² From Milton's eleventh sonnet.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without suspecting him of the former, nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi*¹ to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, — a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius

and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known, and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied by their own powers the want of instruction; and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created: he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must, therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule.¹ The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simpler words and vivid impressions.

We think that, as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark

¹ Milton's *Defence of the English People*.

¹ In the *Life of Milton*, by Samuel Johnson.

ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely, the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's little dialogues on political economy could teach Montague² or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive and then abstract. They advance from particular images to

general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical; that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations — of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge, but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury,¹ he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius,² or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in *The Fable of the Bees*. But could Mandeville³ have created an lago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man — a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives

¹ Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671-1713), third Earl of Shaftesbury.

² Claude Helvetius (1715-71), a French philosopher.

³ Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), whose chief work, *The Fable of the Bees*, is a paradoxical defense of the thesis that private vices produce public benefits.

¹ Mrs. Jane Marcet (1769-1858).

² Charles Montague (1661-1712), afterwards Lord Halifax, Chancellor of the Exchequer under William III.

so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colors. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigor and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:

As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.¹

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet, — a fine frenzy, doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry, but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just, but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent, but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence, of all people, children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding Hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society, men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in

its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare, but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, — the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists,¹ according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping-knife while he shouts his death song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth, and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries.

¹ *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. i., 17.

¹ Professional reciters of verse.

raries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labor, and long meditation employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education; he was a profound and elegant classical scholar; he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature; he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination; nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the Middle Ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the *Paradise Lost* should have written the *Epistle to Manso* was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton, the artificial manner indispensable

to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

About him exercised heroic games

The unarmed youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.¹

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most un-

¹ *Paradise Lost*, *Iv*, 551-54.

imaginative man must understand the *Iliad*. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed unless the mind of the reader cooperate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the keynote, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing; but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence, substitute one synonym for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale,¹ when he stood crying, "Open Wheat," "Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden² in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost* is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known, or more frequently repeated, than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of as-

sociated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood — the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamored knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as attar of roses differs from ordinary rosewater, the close-packed essence from the thin, diluted mixture. They are, indeed, not so much poems as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are, perhaps, no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single movable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us. successively, from the uniform of a hus-

¹ *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*.

² In *The State of Innocence*, an opera by Dryden, based on *Paradise Lost*.

sar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters — patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers — the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself without reserve to his own devotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavored to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the *Samson* was written, sprang from the ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists cooperated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. ¹Eschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer, and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinged with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and *Æschylus*. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The Book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writings, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort

of similarity; but it is the similarity, not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance, but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly — much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed, the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet"¹ sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairyland kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the *Samson Agonistes*. Had Milton taken *Æschylus* for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent, he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The *Comus* is framed on the model of the Italian masque, as the *Samson* is framed on the model of the Greek tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the *Faithful Shepherdess** as the

¹ So called in Milton's eighth sonnet.

³ A pastoral drama by John Fletcher (1579-1625).

Faithful Shepherdess is to the *Aminta*¹ or the *Aminta* to the *Pastor Ftdo.*² It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May Day.³ Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the *Comus* to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the *Samson*. He made his masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," said the excellent Sir Henry Wotton⁴ in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain *Dorique*⁵ delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly

confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labor of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own Good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of *Thyrsis*,¹ he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the clyseian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the *Paradise Regained*, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the *Paradise Lost*, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the *Paradise Lost* to the *Paradise Regained* is not more decided than the superiority of the *Paradise Regained* to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner.

¹ *Thyrsis*, a traditional name for a character in pastoral drama, used by Milton in *Comus*.

³ *Comus*, lines 1012, 1013.

¹ A pastoral drama by the Italian poet Tasso (1544-95), more famous for his *Jerusalem Delivered*.

² A pastoral drama by Guarini (1537-1612).

³ The first of May was a holiday for chimney-sweeps.

⁴ Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639) was a poet and diplomat, long Ambassador to the Venetian Republic.

⁵ The Doric mood, in which the *Pastorals* of Theocritus were written, has come to typify the pastoral genre.

We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveler. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn, not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem, but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which Jed from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon¹ was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Aries.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out, huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea monster which the mariner mistakes for an island.² When he addresses himself to battle against the

guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas; his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod: "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome, and his other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Gary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar house in the eleventh book of the *Paradise Lost*¹ with the last ward of Malebolge² in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery: Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."³

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedence between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The *Divine Comedy* is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death;⁴ who has read the dusky characters⁵ on the portal within which there

¹ Phlegethon, the burning river, one of the streams in the Greek Hades and in Dante's *Inferno*. Aqua Cheta is a river of Romagna.

² *Paradise Lost*, i, 194; iv, 985.

¹ Book xi, 477 seq.

³ The eighth circle of Hell. The word means, approximately, "horrible plate."

⁴ *Inferno*, *xxix*, 46-51.

⁵ i.e., for the death of the soul. *Inferno*, i, 117.

⁶ "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." *Inferno*, m, 9.

is no hope; who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon;¹ who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo.² His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer.³ His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel.⁴ The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust unless it were told with the strongest 10 air of veracity; with a sobriety even in its horrors; with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis⁵ differ 15 from those of Gulliver. The author of *Amadis* would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift—the nautical observations, the af- 20 fected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being 25 told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of 30 pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him; and, as this is a point on which many rash and ill- 40 considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery is that of attempting to philosophize 45 too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of

which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of 10 this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word, but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not 15 with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if 20 they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colors to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions, but the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants 25 of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshiped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In 30 like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record 35 of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which 40 Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than 45 this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few

¹ *Inferno*, ix, 56.

² The names of fiends. *Inferno*, xxi, 120, 121.

³ *Inferno*, final canto. *Purgatorio*, ix, 112.

⁴ The hero of *Amadis of Gaul*, an early Spanish romance of chivalry.

worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception, but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy,¹ and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor,² and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George³ took the place of Mars. St. Elmo⁴ consoled the manner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity, and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings, but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations we infer that no poet, who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous,

¹ The Academy was the seat of Platonic teaching; the Portico, of the Stoic.

² The attendant of Roman executives, who carried as his badge of authority *the fasces*, an ax in a bundle of rods.

³ St. George of Cappadocia, the patron saint of England.

⁴ St. Elmo replaced Castor and Pollux and became the patron of Italian sailors.

was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical coloring can produce no illusion when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the

exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest, but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and demons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful, ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata¹ in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an *auto da fe*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet, austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobrates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock.² They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and demons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology.

It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticos, in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favorite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart — the gigantic Titans and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of Heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters, also, are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture; he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a con-

¹ *Inferno*, x, 32.

² Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), the author of *The Messiah*, is often called "the German Milton."

siderable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, colored by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit, that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the *Divine Comedy* we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness."¹ The gloom of his character discolors all the passions of men and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woeful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover, and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been dis-

tinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favorite writers of the sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of *Comus* — grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of satyrs and goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions and glowing with patriotic hopes — such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects,

¹Jobx,22.

or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells beautiful as fairyland are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works, but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja¹ in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet, as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed forever, led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthology,² or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a

writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind — at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Anmanes,¹ liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of these principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The Civil War, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty labored under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly.¹² Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative

¹ Vincenzo da Filicaia (1642-1707), Florentine poet and scholar.

² The collection of Greek lyric verse from 400 B.C. to 500 A.D.

¹ Persian deities, Oromasdes representing the principle of good, Arimanes, the principle of evil.

¹² *Spectator* No. n.

of Mrs. Hutchinson.¹ May's² *History of the Parliament* is good, but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow³ is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause — Oldmixon,⁴ for instance, and Catherine Macaulay⁵ — have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candor or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language — that of Clarendon⁶ and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned, according as the resistance of the people to Charles I shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage-ground, but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the

advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favor of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favor of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud,¹ while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices — a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant, but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential and take only what is accidental; they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be anything unsound, these flesh flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that their

Labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil.³

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a ty-

¹ Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson (1620-59), whose life of her husband was published in 1806.

² Thomas May (1594-1650).

³ General Edmund Ludlow (1620-93), whose *Memoirs* are referred to.

⁴ John Oldmixon (1673-1742).

⁵ Mrs. Catherine Macaulay (1733-91).

⁶ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1608-74), in his *History of the Rebellion* wrote from the point of view of a Royalist, as did David Hume (1711-76) in his *History of England*.

¹ William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, who was beheaded by Parliament.

² *Paradise Lost* i, 164, 165.

rant, the solemn recognition of popular rights — liberty, security, toleration — all go for nothing with them. One sect¹ there was which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire² there was so unhappily circumstanced that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them, not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America: they stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury³ are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era! The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory.⁴ They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic or Frederick the Protestant.⁵ On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James II was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant revolution.

But this certainly was not the case, nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than

is to be found in Goldsmith's *Abridgment* believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning, and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily, not to Popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic, but they excluded Catholics from the Crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution,¹ declared the throne vacant, was this: "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this: Had Charles I broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the king himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of, James II to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional

¹ The Declaration of Right, 1689.

¹ Roman Catholics. ² Ireland.
³ John, Lord Somers (1652-1716), Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (1660-1718), respectively Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State under William III.

* The Whig toast to the memory of William III.

* Frederick the Great, King of Prussia; Ferdinand V, King of Spain.

attack on the freedom of debate. The right of petition was grossly violated. Arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the king had consented to so many reforms and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship money¹ had been given up, the Star Chamber² had been abolished, provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of Parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He, too, had offered to call a free Parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the king. He had, no doubt, passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives, but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind; a man who made and broke promises with equal facility; a man whose honor had been a hundred times pawned and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect

to the Petition of Right.¹ The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted, but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim — by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase — infringed by the perfidious king who had recognized them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another Parliament. Another chance was given to our fathers; were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Rot le veult*² Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James II no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious

¹ The Petition of Right, presented to Charles I in 1628, declared against taxation without the consent of Parliament, unlawful imprisonment, quartering of troops, etc.

² "The King so wills," the formula of royal consent to a parliamentary act.

¹ A method of taxation employed by Charles I.

² The Court of the Star Chamber was an unconstitutional device of Charles I.

zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who he beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath, and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates,¹ and the defense is that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, "a good man, but a bad king." We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations, and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has labored, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it

would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them, but those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers reveling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy men¹ shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag — all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the Civil War. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible

¹ Believers in establishing by force a Kingdom of Christ, a fifth monarchy in succession to those of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome.

¹ Archbishop Laud (1573-1645).

than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our Civil War. The heads of the Church and State reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion; it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres.¹ It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion, and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the

same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, skepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance, and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Anosto tells a pretty story¹ of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her; accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors or recognize faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on,

¹ A Spanish town near Cadiz. Macaulay seems to think of it as a river.

¹ *Orlando Furioso*, XLIII, 72.

and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of public liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blamable excesses of that time. The favorite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the king. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides.¹ We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The king can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister, only, ought to be responsible for the acts of the sovereign. If so, why not im-

peach Jeffreys¹ and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the 5th of November,² thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our king and governor, can, on the 30th of January,³ contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the king from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage; his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been

¹ George Jeffreys (1648-89), who as judge sent to execution many of the sympathizers with Monmouth's rebellion against James II.

² The anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, and of the landing of William III in England.

³ The anniversary of the execution of Charles I.

¹ Members of the High Court of Justice which tried Charles I.

perfectly reconciled to the father; they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blamable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred, and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion, but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius¹ would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*sEnea: magni dextra*"* gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell — his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems,

no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But, even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded, indeed, the first place in the Commonwealth, but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar.¹ Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his Parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then it must be acknowledged he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble

¹ Claude Salmasius (1588-1683), French professor at Leyden, who wrote a *Defense of Charles I.*

² "The right hand of great vEneas."

¹ Simon Bolivar (1788-1830), called the Liberator, led the revolt in South America against Spain.

course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect that, at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honor been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice,¹ were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second Protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease arc the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against

each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents,¹ sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love; of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices; the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds; the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The king cringed to his rival² that he might trample on his people; sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed with complacent infamy her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the State. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha³ of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch;⁴ and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race, accursed of God and man, was a second time driven forth to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a byword and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And for that purpose it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only

¹ The Independents, of whom Milton was one, desired no general church government.

² Louis XIV of France.

³ 1 Corinthians xvi, 22.

⁴ *Paradise Lost*, n, 43-225.

¹ The petition that Cromwell accept the title of King and govern with the advice of Parliament.

to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of campfollowers, a useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose; who kissed the hand of the king in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649; who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn; who dined on calves' heads or on broiled rumps, and cut down oak branches or stuck them up, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy

of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

*Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
Che mortati perigli in se contiene:
Hor qui tener afren nostro desio,
Ed esser cauti molto a noi corviene.¹*

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy; who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, — were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles II was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play,² turn from the specious caskets which contain only the death's-head and the fool's-head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging in general terms an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which

¹ "See here the fount of laughter! see the stream
To which such fatal qualities belong!"

"Now," they exclaimed, "let us avoid the dream
Of warm desire, and in resolve he strong."

Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, xv, 57, Fairfax's translation.
² *Merchant of Venice*, in, ii.

other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems, crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt, for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed His will by the pen of the Evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had

been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men: the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion, the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker, but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane,¹ he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood,² he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid His face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their mind from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes

¹ Sir Henry Vane the Younger (1612-62).

² Charles Fleetwood (1620-70), Cromwell's son-in-law.

might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus¹ with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach, and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system — intolerance and extravagant austerity, that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstons and their De Montforts, their Dominies and their Escobars.² Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that tune, doubting Thomases or careless Galhoss³ with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshipers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotmcs⁴ of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to

affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the king was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ — with the mutes who throng their ante-chambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our Royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa, and, like the Red Cross Knight,¹ they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth, they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more cr-

¹ *Fuene Qijfene*, v. Artegal personifies Justice.

² Antonio Escobar y Mendoza (159-1669), a Spanish Jesuit and casuist.
³ See *Arts* xviii, 17.

⁴ Or Girondists, the moderate party of the French Revolution, led by Jean Pierre Bmsot (1754-93)

¹ In the *Faerie Queene*, I.

rancous than their political opinions they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues — courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

As ever in his gnat Taskmaster's eye

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest skeptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and Jove. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best

with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero¹ of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination, but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Sirens, yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe, but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy² with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the "Penscros," which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents, but his hand is firm. He docs naught in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a foresworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship money and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press³ and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the

¹ Ulysses. ² pamphlets on church government.

³ Milton's *Ateofaquitua*.

¹ From Milton's seventh sonnet.

objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the king and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem,¹ who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

Oh, ye mistook, ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dis severing power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here,
In stony fetters fixed, and motionless.²

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle, but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system,³ in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded — the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest

literary services. He never came up in the rear when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide.¹ He attacked the prevailing systems of education.² His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility:

30 *Nitor in adversum; nee me, qui cetera, vincit
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.*³

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should in our time be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his

¹ In the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643); and *Eikonoklastes* (1649).

² In *Of Education* (1644).

³ A reference to the sun, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, u, 72, 73; "I contend against opposition; nor does that force which conquers all else subdue me, and I ride on in a contrary way to the rapid heavens."

¹ *Comus*. ^a *Comus*, lines 815-19.

³ In *Areopagitica*.

feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the treatise *Of Reformation* and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. But the length to which our remarks have Already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day, that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word; the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it; the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues; the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Ellwood,¹ the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we

¹ Thomas Ellwood (1629-1713), in whose *Autobiography* there is an account of Milton.

cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize, and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr¹ of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

FROM Francis Bacon

1837

The essay on Bacon, written in review of *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England*. A New Edition. By Basil Montagu, Esq., 16 vols., London, 1825-1834, appeared in the *Edinburgh*

¹ In Massinger's play of that name.

Review for July, 1837. It is one of the longest and most characteristic of Macaulay's essays. Beginning with an account of Bacon's life and character, it continues with an appreciation of his philosophy, with which Macaulay was in entire sympathy. The extracts here given bear witness to Macaulay's own practical habit of mind, his reliance on applied science as a means of promoting welfare, and his belief in the machinery of well-being as a test of civilization — an attitude to which such prophets as Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold were sternly opposed.

Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings. All the schools condemned that office as degrading; some censured it as immoral. Once indeed Posidonius, a distinguished writer of the age of Cicero and Caesar, so far forgot himself as to enumerate, among the humbler blessings which mankind owed to philosophy, the discovery of the principle of the arch, and the introduction of the use of metals. This eulogy was considered as an affront, and was taken up with proper spirit. Seneca¹ vehemently disclaims these insulting compliments. Philosophy, according to him, has nothing to do with teaching men to rear arched roofs over their heads. The true philosopher does not care whether he has an arched roof or any roof. Philosophy has nothing to do with teaching men the uses of metals. She teaches us to be independent of all material substances, of all mechanical contrivances. The wise man lives according to nature. Instead of attempting to add to the physical comforts of his species, he regrets that his lot was not cast in that golden age when the human race had no protection against the cold but the skins of wild beasts, no screen from the sun but a cavern. To impute to such a man any share in the inven-

tion or improvement of a plough, a ship, or a mill is an insult. "In my own time," says Seneca, "there have been inventions of this sort, transparent windows, tubes for diffusing warmth equally through all parts of a building, shorthand, which has been carried to such a perfection that a writer can keep pace with the most rapid speaker. But the inventing of such things is drudgery for the lowest slaves; philosophy lies deeper. It is not her office to teach men how to use their hands. The object of her lessons is to form the soul. *Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad usus necessarios opifex.*" If the *non* were left out, this last sentence would be no bad description of the Baconian philosophy, and would, indeed, very much resemble several expressions in the *Novum Organum*. "We shall next be told," exclaims Seneca, "that the first shoemaker was a philosopher." For our own part, if we are forced to make our choice between the first shoemaker and the author of the three books "On Anger," we pronounce for the shoemaker. It may be worse to be angry than to be wet. But shoes have kept millions from being wet; and we doubt whether Seneca ever kept anybody from being angry.

It is very reluctantly that Seneca can be brought to confess that any philosopher had ever paid the smallest attention to anything that could possibly promote what vulgar people would consider as the well-being of mankind. He labors to clear Democritus² from the disgraceful imputation of having made the first arch, and Anacharsis³ from the charge of having contrived the potter's wheel. He is forced to own that such a thing might happen; and it may also happen, he tells us, that a philosopher may be swift of foot. But it is not in his character of philosopher that he either wins a race or invents a machine. No, to be sure. The business of a philosopher was to declaim in praise of poverty with two millions sterling out at usury, to meditate epigrammatic conceits about the evils of luxury, in gardens which

¹ It is not, I say, a maker of instruments for necessary use. Seneca, *Epist.* 90.

² A Greek philosopher of the fifth century B. C.

³ A Scythian prince who visited Athens in the sixth century B. C.; one of the Seven Sages.

¹ Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.-65, A.D.), Roman philosopher and tragedian, the tutor of Nero.

moved the envy of sovereigns, to rant about liberty, while fawning on the insolent and pampered freedmen of a tyrant, to celebrate the divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before written a defence of the murder of a mother by a son.¹

From the cant of this philosophy, a philosophy meanly proud of its own unprofitableness, it is delightful to turn to the lessons of the great English teacher. We can almost forgive all the faults of Bacon's life when we read that singularly graceful and dignified passage: "*Ego certe, ut de me ipso, quod res est, loquar, et in its qua nunc edo, et in its qua in posterum meditor, dignitatem ingenii et nomtis met, si qua sit, sapius sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam; quique architectus fortasse tn philosophta et scientiis esse debeam, etiam operarius, et bajulus, et qutdvs demum fio, cum hand pauca qua omntno fiert necesse sit, alii autem ob innatam superbiam subterfugant, tpsi sustineam et exsequar*"² This *philantropia*, which, as he said in one of the most remarkable of his early letters, "was so fixed in his mind, as it could not be removed," this majestic humility, this persuasion that nothing can be too insignificant for the attention of the wisest, which is not too insignificant to give pleasure or pain to the meanest, is the great characteristic distinction, the essential spirit of the Baconian philosophy. We trace it in all that Bacon has written on Physics, on Laws, on Morals. And we conceive that from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of his system directly and almost necessarily sprang.

The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy from the time of Socrates downwards, and took

¹ Slurs at Seneca.

² "As for myself, to speak the truth, I have frequently neglected the glory of my order, name, and learning, both in the works I now publish and those which I have already designed to execute, in following out my direct purpose of advancing the happiness of mankind; so that I may fairly say, though marked out by nature to be the architect of philosophy and the sciences, I have submitted to become a common workman and laborer, there being many mean things necessary to the erection of the structure, which others, out of a natural disdain, refused to attend to." *De Augmentis*, lib. vii, cap. i.

possession of intellects with which that of Seneca cannot for a moment be compared. It pervades the dialogues of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints from which it may be inferred that, in his opinion, the prevalence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event, and constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors.¹

Assuredly if the tree which Socrates planted and Plato watered is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon, if we judge of the tree by its fruits, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favorable. When we sum up all the useful truths which we owe to that philosophy, to what do they amount? We find, indeed, abundant proofs that some of those who cultivated it were men of the first order of intellect. We find among their writings incomparable specimens both of dialectical and rhetorical art. We have no doubt that the ancient controversies were of use, in so far as they served to exercise the faculties of the disputants; for there is no controversy so idle that it may not be of use in this way. But, when we look for something more, for something which adds to the comforts or alleviates the calamities of the human race, we are forced to own ourselves disappointed. We are forced to say with Bacon that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation, that it was neither a vineyard nor an olive-ground, but an intricate wood of briars and thistles, from which those who lost themselves in it brought back many scratches and no food....

The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by comparing his views on some important subjects

¹ *Novum Organum*, lib. i, aph. 71, 79. *De Augmentis*, lib. in, cap. 4. *De principis, atque originibus. Cogitata et ysa. Redargutio philosophiarum.* (Macauley.)
² *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 73. (Macauley.)

with those of Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of being able to reckon and compute in the ordinary transactions of life, passes to what he considers as a far more important advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us, habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and raises us above the material universe. He would have his disciples apply themselves to this study, not that they may be able to buy or sell, not that they may qualify themselves to be shopkeepers or travelling merchants, but that they may learn to withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable essences of things.¹

Bacon, on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge, only on account of its uses with reference to that visible and tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists, and laments the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of curiosity, powers the whole exertion of which is required for purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient expressions, which may be of use in physical researches.²

The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometers, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead men to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth.³ Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far that he con-

sidered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas, it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power on mathematical principles.¹ Plato remonstrated with his friend, and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to discipline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes² in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry was degraded by being employed to produce anything useful. It was with difficulty that he was induced to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions which were the wonder of hostile nations, and always spoke of them slightly as mere amusements, as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses, which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer Bacon lived the stronger this feeling became. When in 1605 he wrote the two books on the *Advancement of Learning*, he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics; but he at the same time admitted that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was "no less worthy than that which was principal and intended." But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, near twenty years later, he published the *De Augmentis*, which is the *Treatise on the Advancement of Learning*, greatly expanded and care-

¹ Plutarch, *Sympos.*, viii, and *Life of Marcellus*. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius. (Macauley.)

² *De Augmentis*, lib. III, cap. 6. (Macauley.)

³ Plato's *Republic*, book vii. (Macauley.)

³ Archimedes was a geometer of Syracuse in the third century B.C., who used his mathematics in applied mechanics.

fully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians, "delicias et fastum mathematicorum."¹ Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge, he pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage or auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy; she ought to demean herself as such, and he declares that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts — a prediction which would have made Plato shudder — that as more and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favorable to the study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact, in our opinion, admits of only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending the empire of man over matter.² If Bacon erred here, we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the opposite error of Plato. We have no patience with a philosophy which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in order to preserve their shapes, takes pains to be barren for fear of being homely.

On the greatest and most useful of all human inventions, the invention of alphabetical writing, Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which, in his opinion, soon became indispensable to those who used it, which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory, and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know anything. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient king of Egypt.¹ But it is evident from the context that they were his own, and so they were understood to be by Quintilian.³ Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different.³ The powers of memory, he observes, without the help of writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare, which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. "These two

¹ pretensions and pride of the mathematicians.

² Compare the passage relating to mathematics in the Second Book of the *Advancement of Learning*, with the *De Augmentis*, lib. in, cap. 6. (Macauley.)

¹ Plato's *Phidrus*. (Macauley.)

² Quintilian, xi. (Macauley.) Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (35-95), a Roman rhetorician.

* *De Augmentis*, lib. v, cap. 5. (Macauley.)

performances," he says, "are much of the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder, but neither is entitled to our respect."

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared to be of very disputable advantages.¹ He did not indeed object to quick cures for acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease, which repairs frames enervated by lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine, which encourages sensuality by mitigating the natural punishment of the sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased to retain its entire energy, had no share of his esteem. A life protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The exercise of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated, so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better. Such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation. If they engage in any vigorous mental exercise, they are troubled with giddiness and fullness of the head, all which they lay to the account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at once. He quotes mythical authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples that the practice of the sons of 'sculapius, as described by Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences, that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated in a well-regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make imperfect men comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and good, whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In Plato's opinion

¹ Plato's *Republic*, book m. (Macaulay.)

man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end; and that end was to increase the pleasures and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a *capui lupinum*² because he could not read the *Timaeus*³ without a headache, was a notion which the humane spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian, to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable, to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great Physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body....

The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than no-

¹ The *Heptameron*, of Marguerite, Queen of Navarre (1492-1549), sister of Francis I of France.

² A wolf's head, i.e., a dunce.

³ One of the most abstruse dialogues of Plato.

thing. They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born. A philosophy which should enable a man to feel perfectly happy while in agonies of pain would be better than a philosophy which assuages pain. But we know that there are remedies which will assuage pain; and we know that the ancient sages liked the toothache just as little as their neighbors. A philosophy which should extinguish cupidity would be better than a philosophy which should devise laws for the security of property. But it is possible to make laws which shall, to a very great extent, secure property. And we do not understand how any motives which the ancient philosophy furnished could extinguish cupidity. We know indeed that the philosophers were no better than other men. From the testimony of friends as well as of foes, from the confessions of Epictetus and Seneca, as well as from the sneers of Lucian¹ and the fierce invectives of Juvenal,² it is plain that these teachers of virtue had all the vices of their neighbors, with the additional vice of hypocrisy. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object, but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been de-claiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers them-

selves, instead of a progressive improvement there was a progressive degeneracy. An abject superstition which Democritus or Anaxagoras³ would have rejected with scorn, added

5 the last disgrace to the long dotage of the Stoic and Platonic schools. Those unsuccessful attempts to articulate which are so delightful and interesting in a child, shock and disgust in an aged paralytic; and in the same
10 way, those wild and mythological fictions which charm us, when we hear them lisped by Greek poetry in its infancy, excite a mixed sensation of pity and loathing, when mumbled by Greek philosophy in its old age. We
15 know that guns, cutlery, spy-glasses, clocks, are better in our time than they were in the time of our fathers, and were better in the time of our fathers than they were in the time of our grandfathers. We might, there-
20 fore, be inclined to think that, when a philosophy which boasted that its object was the elevation and purification of the mind, and which for this object neglected the sordid office of ministering to the comforts of the
25 body, had flourished in the highest honor during many hundreds of years, a vast moral amelioration must have taken place. Was it so? Look at the schools of this wisdom four centuries before the Christian era and
30 four centuries after that era. Compare the men whom those schools formed at those two periods. Compare Plato and Libanius.⁴ Compare Pericles and Julian.⁵ This philosophy confessed, nay boasted, that for every end
35 but one it was useless. Had it attained that one end?

Suppose that Justinian,⁶ when he closed the schools of Athens, had called on the last few sages who still haunted the Portico,⁷ and lingered round the ancient plane-trees, to show their title to public veneration: suppose that he had said: "A thousand years have elapsed since, in this famous city, Socrates posed Protagoras and Hippias,⁸ during those

¹ A Greek philosopher of the fifth century B.C.

² A Greek sophist of the fourth century A.D.

³ The Emperor Julian, called the Apostate (331-63).
⁴ The Emperor Justinian (483-565), who ruled at Constantinople.

⁵ The Portico, in Athens, was the teaching place of Zeno the Stoic, as the Academy was of Plato.

⁶ In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*.

¹ A Greek satirist (120-200).

² A Latin satirist (60-140).

thousand years a large proportion of the ablest men of every generation has been employed in constant efforts to bring to perfection the philosophy which you teach; that philosophy has been munificently patronized by the powerful; its professors have been held in the highest esteem by the public; it has drawn to itself almost all the sap and vigor of the human intellect: and what has it effected? What profitable truth has it taught us which we should not equally have known without it? What has it enabled us to do which we should not have been equally able to do without it?" Such questions, we suspect, would have puzzled Simplicius¹ and Isidore.² Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for mankind, and his answer is ready; "It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendor of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will be its starting-post to-morrow."

Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers re-

ceived their direction from common sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories *de fimbis*, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honor, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feelings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated. The plan of eradicating them by conceits like those of Seneca, or syllogisms like those of Chrysippus,³ was too preposterous to be for a moment entertained by a mind like his. He did not understand what wisdom there could be in changing names where it was impossible to change things; in denying that blindness, hunger, the gout, the rack, were evils, and calling them *airoTpoTfjYiJLeva*,⁴ in refusing to acknowledge that health, safety, plenty, were good things, and dubbing them by the name of *d5ia<Eopa*.⁵ In his opinions on all these subjects, he was not a Stoic, nor an Epicurean, nor an Academic, but what would have been called by Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, a mere *ISubrijs*, a mere common man. And it was precisely because he was so that his name makes so great an era in the history of the world. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. It was because, in order to lay his foundations, he went down into those parts of human nature which lie low, but which are not liable to change, that the fabric which he reared has risen to so stately an elevation, and stands with such immovable strength—

By stimulating men to the discovery of new truth, Bacon stimulated them to employ the inductive method, the only method, even the

¹ A neo-Platonist of the sixth century.

² A Spanish ecclesiastic of the sixth century.

³ A Greek Stoic philosopher of the third century B.C.

⁴ A term in Stoic philosophy for the lesser goods.

⁵ Indifferent.

ancient philosophers and the schoolmen themselves being judges, by which new truth can be discovered. By stimulating men to the discovery of useful truth, he furnished them with a motive to perform the inductive process well and carefully. His predecessors had been, in his phrase, not interpreters, but anticipators of nature. They had been content with the first principles at which they had arrived by the most scanty and slovenly induction. And why was this? It was, we conceive, because their philosophy proposed to itself no practical end, because it was merely an exercise of the mind. A man who wants to contrive a new machine or a new medicine has a strong motive to observe accurately and patiently, and to try experiment after experiment. But a man who merely wants a theme for disputation or declamation has no such motive. He is therefore content with premises grounded on assumption, or on the most scanty and hasty induction. Thus, we conceive, the schoolmen acted. On their foolish premises they often argued with great ability; and as their object was "assensum subjugare, non res,"¹ to be victorious in controversy, not to be victorious over nature, they were consistent. For just as much logical skill could be shown in reasoning on false as on true premises. But the followers of the new philosophy, proposing to themselves the discovery of useful truth as their object, must have altogether failed of attaining that object if they had been content to build theories on superficial induction.

Bacon has remarked² that, in ages when philosophy was stationary, the mechanical arts went on improving. Why was this? Evidently because the mechanic was not content with so careless a mode of induction as served the purpose of the philosopher. And why was the philosopher more easily satisfied than the mechanic? Evidently because the object of the mechanic was to mold things, whilst the object of the philosopher was only to mold words. Careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a

good syllogism. But it is indispensable to the making of a good shoe. Mechanics, therefore, have always been, as far as the range of their humble but useful callings extended, not anticipators but interpreters of nature. And when a philosophy arose, the object of which was to do on a large scale what the mechanic does on a small scale, to extend the power and to supply the wants of man, the truth of the premises, which logically is a matter altogether unimportant, became a matter of the highest importance; and the careless induction with which men of learning had previously been satisfied gave place, of necessity, to an induction far more accurate and satisfactory.

What Bacon did for inductive philosophy may, we think, be fairly stated thus. The objects of preceding speculators were objects which could be attained without careful induction. Those speculators, therefore, did not perform the inductive process carefully. Bacon stirred up men to pursue an object which could be attained only by induction, and by induction carefully performed; and consequently induction was more carefully performed. We do not think that the importance of what Bacon did for inductive philosophy has ever been overrated. But we think that the nature of his services is often mistaken, and was not fully understood even by himself. It was not by furnishing philosophers with rules for performing the inductive process well, but by furnishing them with a motive for performing it well, that he conferred so vast a benefit on society.

To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits. It cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon — we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not of Bacon the lawyer and politician — there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. The promises which he made to mankind might, to a superficial reader, seem to resemble the rants which a great dramatist has put into the

¹ *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 29. (Macauley.) "To conquer assent, not facts."

² *De Augmentis*, lib. I. (Macauley.)

mouth of an Oriental conqueror half-crazed by good fortune and by violent passions:

He shall have chariots easier than air,
Which I will have invented; and thyself
That art the messenger shall ride before him,
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
I know not how yet.

But Bacon performed what he promised. In truth, Fletcher would not have dared to make 10 Arbaces promise, in his wildest fits of excitement, the title of what the Baconian philosophy has performed.

The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in four words, much 15 hope, little faith; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may be done; an indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind 20 seems to us to have been absolutely perfect. He was at once the Mammon and the Surly² of his friend Ben. Sir Epicure did not indulge in visions more magnificent and gigantic. Surly did not sift evidence with 25 keener and more sagacious incredulity.

Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness 30 of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small fine mind of Labruey³ had not a more delicate tact than the large intellect of Bacon. The *Essays* contain abundant proofs that no 35 nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, would escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding 40 resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equalled, though perhaps never surpassed.

¹ From *A King and No King*, by John Fletcher.

² Sir Epicure Mammon and Surly are characters in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*.

³ Jean de la Bruyere (1641-96), a French moralist and writer of characters.

But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of 5 heaven, darted down into the new creation:

Round he surveyed, — and well might, where
he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade, — from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon.

His knowledge differed from that of other men, as a terrestrial globe differs from an Atlas which contains a different country on every leaf. The towns and roads of England, France, and Germany are better laid down in the Atlas than on the globe. But while we are looking at England we see nothing of France; and while we are looking at France we see nothing of Germany. We may go to the Atlas to learn the bearings and distances of York and Bristol, or of Dresden and Prague. But it is useless if we want to know the bearings and distances of France and Martinique, or of England and Canada. On the globe we shall not find all the market towns in our own neighborhood; but we shall learn from it the comparative extent and the relative position of all the kingdoms of the earth. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, 40 than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The art 45 which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was a knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

The mode in which he communicated his
¹ *Paradise Lost*, in, 555-60.

thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices; yet he never engaged in any controversy: nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works might with propriety have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled *Cogitata et visa*.¹ "Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit." These are thoughts which have occurred to me: weigh them well: and take them or leave them.

Borgia² said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy, not with steel, but with chalk; for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying, and loved to apply it to the victories of his own intellect.³ His philosophy, he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance, without a contest, into every understanding fitted, by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously, first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought; and, secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, pre-eminently discursive and capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted with the vicious taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He

had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of *Hudibras*.⁴ Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him, to a morbid degree. When he abandoned himself to it without reserve, as he did in the *Sapientia Vcterum* and at the end of the second book of the *De Augmentis* the feats which he performed were not merely admirable, but portentous, and almost shocking. On those occasions we marvel at him as clowns on a fair-day marvel at a juggler, and can hardly help thinking that the devil must be in him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wanted, with scarcely any other object than to astonish and amuse. But it occasionally happened that, when lie was engaged in grave and profound investigations, his wit obtained the mastery over all his other faculties, and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could possibly have fallen. We will give the most striking instance which at present occurs to us. In the third book of the *De Augmentis* he tells us that there are some principles which are not peculiar to one science, but are common to several. That part of philosophy which concerns itself with these principles is, in his nomenclature, designated as *philosophia prima*. He then proceeds to mention some of the principles with which this *philosophia prima* is conversant. One of them is this. An infectious disease is more likely to be communicated while it is in progress than when it has reached its height. This, says he, is true in medicine. It is also true in morals; for we see that the example of very abandoned men injures public morality less than the example of men in whom vice has not yet extinguished all good qualities. Again, he tells us that in music a discord ending in a concord is agreeable, and that the same thing may be noted in the affections. Once more,

¹ *Things Thought and Seen*.

² Rodrigo Borgia, Pope Alexander VI (1431-1503).

³ *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 35 and elsewhere. (Macauley.)

⁴ Samuel Butler (1612-80).

⁵ *Wisdom of the Ancients* (1609).

he tells us, that in physics the energy with which a principle acts is often increased by the antiperistasis of its opposite; and that it is the same in the contests of factions. If the making of ingenious and sparkling similitudes like these be indeed the *philosophia prima*, we are quite sure that the greatest philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. The similitudes which we have cited are very happy similitudes. But that a man like Bacon should have taken them for more, that he should have thought the discovery of such resemblances as these an important part of philosophy, has always appeared to us one of the most singular facts in the history of letters.

The truth is that his mind was wonderfully quick in perceiving analogies of all sorts. But, like several eminent men whom we could name, both living and dead, he sometimes appeared strangely deficient in the power of distinguishing rational from fanciful analogies, analogies which are arguments from analogies which are mere illustrations, analogies like that which Bishop Butler¹ so ably pointed out, between natural and revealed religion, from analogies like that which Addison discovered, between the series of Grecian gods carved by Phidias and the series of English kings painted by Kneller. This want of discrimination has led to many strange political speculations. Sir William Temple deduced a theory of government from the properties of the pyramid. Mr. Southey's whole system of finance is grounded on the phenomena of evaporation and rain. In theology, this perverted ingenuity has made still wilder work. From the time of Irenaeus and Origen² down to the present day, there has not been a single generation in which great divines have not been led into the most absurd expositions of Scripture, by mere incapacity to distinguish analogies proper, to use the scholastic phrase, from analogies metaphorical.³ It is curious that Bacon has himself mentioned this very kind of delusion

among the *idola specus*;¹ and has mentioned it in language which, we are inclined to think, shows that he knew himself to be subject to it. It is the vice, he tells us, of subtle minds to attach too much importance to slight distinctions; it is the vice, on the other hand, of high and discursive intellects to attach too much importance to slight resemblances; and he adds that, when this last propensity is indulged to excess, it leads men to catch at shadows instead of substances.²

Yet we cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For, to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind for ever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannize over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigor. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world, amidst things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or in those romances on which the curate and barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an *auto-da-fe*, amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin, fountains more wonderful than the golden water of Panzade,³ conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero, arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo, remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras.⁴ Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worth-

¹ Joseph Butler (1692-1752), Bishop of Durham.

² Fathers of the Church in the second and third centuries.

³ See some interesting remarks on this subject in Bishop Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*' dialogue iv. (Macaulay.)

¹ idols of the cave.

² *Novum Organum*, lib. i, aph. 55. (Macaulay.)

³ A reference to the "Story of the Sisters who envied their Younger Sister," from the *Arabian Nights*.

⁴ Ruggiero, Astolfo, and Fierabras are all characters in the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto.

less when compared with the mighty secrets which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be read there. He knew that all the wonders wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles when compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit, and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scott. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire."¹ We might refer to many instances. But we will content ourselves with the strongest, the description of the House of Solomon in the *New Atlantis*. By most of Bacon's contemporaries, and by some people of our time, this remarkable passage would, we doubt not, be considered as an ingenious rodomontade, a counterpart to the adventures of Sinbad or Baron Munchausen. The truth is, that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently distinguished by profound and serene wisdom. The boldness and originality of the fiction is far less wonderful than the nice discernment which carefully excluded from that long list of prodigies everything that can be pronounced impossible, everything that can be proved to lie beyond the mighty magic of induction and time. Already some parts, and not the least startling parts, of this glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter; and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In general, the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period of the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its

fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It has generally lost something of its bloom and freshness before the sterner faculties have reached maturity; and is commonly withered and barren while those faculties still retain all their energy. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy. This seems, however, to have been the case with Bacon. His boyhood and youth appear to have been singularly sedate. His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planned before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedly planned while he was still young. He observed as vigilantly, meditated as deeply, and judged as temperately when he gave his first work to the world as at the close of his long career. But in eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far superior to those of his youth. In this respect the history of his mind bears some resemblance to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, though written on a subject which the coldest metaphysician could hardly treat without being occasionally betrayed into florid writing, is the most unadorned of all Burke's works. It appeared when he was twenty-five or twenty-six. When, at forty, he wrote the *Thoughts on the Causes of the existing Discontents*, his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty, his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit; and when he died, at almost seventy, it had become ungracefully gorgeous. In his youth he wrote on the emotions produced by mountains and cascades, by the masterpieces of painting and sculpture, by the faces and necks of beautiful women, in the style of a Parliamentary report. In his old age he discussed treaties and tariffs in the most fervid and brilliant language of romance. It is strange that the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and the *Letter to a Noble Lord*, should be the productions of one man. But it is far more strange that the *Essay* should have been a produc-

¹ *New Atlantis*. (Macaulay.)

tion of his youth, and the *Letter* of his old age.

We will give very short specimens of Bacon's two styles. In 1597, he wrote thus: "Crafty men contemn studies; simple men 5 admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use: that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be 10 tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have 15 a great memory, if he confer little, have a present wit; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy 20 deep, morals grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend." It will hardly be disputed that this is a passage to be "chewed and digested." We do not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere com- 25 pressed so much thought into so small a space.

In the additions which Bacon afterwards made to the *Essays*, there is nothing superior in truth or weight to what we have quoted. 30 But his style was constantly becoming richer and softer. The following passage, first published in 1615, will show the extent of the change: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the 35 New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer evidence of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of 40 the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see 45 in needle-works and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge therefore of the pleasure 50 of the heart by the pleasure of the eye.

Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant' when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

It is by the *Essays* that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The *Novum Organum* and the *De Augmentis* are much talked of, but little read. They have produced 10 indeed a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the *Essays* alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate 15 contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which every- 20 body is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate 25 ability questions with which they are familiar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner-school.

Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise *De Augments*, we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the *Novum Organum*. All the peculiarities of his extraor- 35 dinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the *idola*, show a nicety of observation that has never been 40 surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prej- 45 udices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not with steel. Proposition after propo- 50 sition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and, though previously unknown, becomes

at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors of two thousand years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the *Novum Organum*, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters in which successive generations have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city, before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.

It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices to the highest post in his profession. In the meantime he took an active part in every Parliament; he was an adviser of the Crown: he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favor was likely to be of use to

him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world. The founding of a new philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the Woolsack and the Council Board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily employed. He well knew the better course, and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends." Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration, with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart, the benevolence of which was large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshipper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, and at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who used the rack, that he who first sum-

moned philosophers to the great work of interpreting nature was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly, honorably, beneficently passed, "in industrious 5 observations, grounded conclusions, and prof-

itable inventions and discoveries,"¹ with feelings very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.

¹ From a Letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh. (Macauley.)

John Henry Newman • 1801-1890

The career of John Henry Newman was marked by striking oscillations between obscurity and distinction. Born in London, February n, 1801, of middle class parents, he entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1816. He tells us in his *Apologia* that he was a shy, retiring boy, with profound religious feeling of the type known as Evangelical. Although he gained only a second class in his final examinations, he was elected a fellow of Oriel, then the leading college of the university in scholarship. He was also vicar of Saint Mary's Church in Oxford, to which his sermons began to draw the more earnest and ardent undergraduates.

Gradually he became imbued with the idea of the Church as the medium of the Christian life, in opposition to the Protestant view, which admits no intermediary between the soul and God. He was much influenced by John Keble, whose *Christian Year*, in 1827,^{na} presented the religious life in a series of poems written to fit the Church Calendar. In 1831 he made a trip to the Mediterranean with his friend, Hurrell Froude, and saw something of the order and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church. When becalmed near Palermo, on his voyage back, he wrote the best known of his hymns, "Lead, Kindly Light" (1833). He returned to his own land resolved to restore to the Church of England something of the splendor and power that had characterized the Church of the Middle Ages. In July, 1833, Keble preached a famous sermon at Oxford, insisting on the divine authority of the Church. Two months later he, with Newman, Pusey, and others began the publication of a series of papers called *Tracts for the Times*. The Tractarian, otherwise known as the Oxford Movement was begun, to take effect later in the Anglo-Catholic revival in the Church of England and in the Episcopal Church in the United States.

With his views of the divine and authoritative character of the Church, Newman was much troubled by the conflicting claims of the Roman and Anglican bodies. In 1841 he published *Tract XC* which set forth the view that the articles of the Church of England, adopted at the Reformation, were intended as a compromise between the old faith and the new, and that many of the beliefs and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church were lawful in the English Church. This publication led to a violent outburst of Protestant feeling, both in the university and outside. Newman felt himself obliged to resign his pulpit, and ultimately to retire to the outlying parish of Littlemore, where in 1845 he was admitted to the Roman Church.

Newman's apostasy, as it was called, was bitterly resented by his Protestant countrymen, and he suffered the obloquy that is the lot of the despised and rejected. He was sent to Dublin, as rector of a newly founded Catholic university, which did not succeed, and then returned to England to establish the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri at Edgbaston. While living in obscurity, he was suddenly attacked by the Reverend Charles Kingsley, an ardent Protestant, who cited a sermon by Newman, preached while still in the English Church, as

authority for the statement that veracity is not a virtue of the Roman clergy. After an exchange of pamphlets, Newman closed the controversy by issuing his *Apologia pro Vita Sua* in 1864, which gave a full and candid history of his religious opinions and of his conversion to the Roman Church. This triumphant defense of his honor as a priest appealed to Newman's fellow countrymen, and from that time forth until his death in 1890 he enjoyed a peculiar reverence, and was able to contribute largely to the advancement of the Catholic faith. His visit to Oxford after many years' absence was marked by extraordinary tributes to one of her greatest sons. He was made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879.

Newman restored to the sermon something of the importance in literature which it had enjoyed in the seventeenth century. The revival of English preaching as a literary form dates from the Oxford Movement. While at Dublin, he delivered the lectures on University subjects, later published as *The Idea of a University*, which, next to the *Apologia*, is Newman's best-known work. His *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, in 1870, is an explanation of religious faith as the operation of a special sense for truth, the illative sense, which is above all human reason. He published also many volumes of sermons and lectures, and one of poetry, which contains *The Dream of Gerontius*, a description of the hours of death and after-death of a Christian, with a definiteness and naivete that remind one of the original pre-Raphaelite painters.

Newman's English prose style is the most classically perfect of the nineteenth century. He writes with precise choice of word and delicate rhythm of sentence, an intimate sense of humor or of tenderness, and at times a sustained and sonorous eloquence. His style is in fact, in its high seriousness and grave beauty, a mirror of his character which before his death made him a saint of the English people.

Newman's works are published by Longmans, Green & Co. The *Apologia and Essays on University Subjects* are included in Everyman's Library. There is a volume of selections with an admirable introductory essay by Lewis E. Gates.

England

Tyre of the West, and glorying in the name
More than in Faith's pure fame!
Oh, trust not crafty fort nor rock¹ renowned
Earned upon hostile ground;
Wielding Trade's master-keys, at thy proud
will 5
To lock or loose its waters, England! trust
not still.

Dread thine own power! Since haughty
Babel's prime,
High towers have been man's crime.
Since her hoar age, when the huge moat lay
bare,
Strongholds have been man's snare. 10
Thy nest is in the crags; ah, refuge frail!
Mad counsel in its hour, or traitors, will
prevail.

¹ Gibraltar.

He who scanned Sodom for His righteous men
Still spares thee for thy ten;
But, should vain tongues the Bride of Heaven
defy, 15
He will not pass thee by;
For, as earth's kings welcome their spotless
guest,
So gives He them by turn, to suffer or be
blest.
1832.

The Pillar of the Cloud¹

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling
gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home —
Lead Thou me on!

¹ See the story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, Exodus, xiii.

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene — one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on.

- I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will; remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it
still

Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;

And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost
awhile.

1833-

FROM *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* 1864

The following selection is from Chapter V, which gives a general account of Newman's religious views. It is a statement of the intellectual position of a believer in the authority of the Church, as opposed to the scientific faith in conclusions drawn from observation and experiment.

Starting then with the being of a God (which, as I have said, is as certain to me as the certainty of my own existence, though when I try to put the grounds of that certainty into logical shape I find a difficulty in doing so in mood and figure to my satisfaction), I look out of myself into the world of men, and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full; and the effect upon me is, in consequence, as a matter of necessity, as confusing as if it denied that I am in existence myself. If I looked into a mirror, and did not see my face, I should have the sort of feeling which actually comes upon me, when I look into this living busy world, and see no reflexion of its Creator. This is, to me, one of the great difficulties of this absolute primary truth, to which I referred just now. Were it not for

this voice, speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist when I looked into the world. I am speaking for myself only; and I am far from denying the real force of the arguments in proof of a God, drawn from the general facts of human society, but these do not warm me or enlighten me; they do not take away the winter of my desolation, or make the buds unfold and the leaves grow within me, and my moral being rejoice. The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of "lamentations, and mourning and woe."

To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken, of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truths, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world" — all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.

What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? I can only answer, that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from His presence. Did I see a boy of good make and mind, with the tokens on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birth-place or his family connections, I should conclude that there was some mystery con-

nected with his history, and that he was one, of whom, from one cause or other, his parents were ashamed. Thus only should I be able to account for the contrast between the promise and condition of his being. And so I argue about the world; // there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact, a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God.

And now, supposing it were the blessed and loving will of the Creator to interfere in this anarchical condition of things, what are we to suppose would be the methods which might be necessarily or naturally involved in His object of mercy? Since the world is in so abnormal a state, surely it would be no surprise to me, if the interposition were of necessity equally extraordinary — or what is called miraculous. But that subject does not directly come into the scope of my present remarks. Miracles as evidence, involve an argument; and of course I am thinking of some means which does not immediately run into argument. I am rather asking what must be the face-to-face antagonist, by which to withstand and baffle the fierce energy of passion, and the all-corroding, all-dissolving scepticism of the intellect in religious inquiries? I have no intention at all to deny, that truth is the real object of our reason, and that, if it does not attain to truth, either the premiss or the process is in fault; but I am not speaking of right reason, but of reason as it acts in fact and concretely in fallen man. I know that even the unaided reason, when correctly exercised, leads to a belief in God, in the immortality of the soul, and in a future retribution; but I am considering it actually and historically; and in this point of view, I do not think I am wrong in saying that its tendency is towards a simple unbelief in matters of religion. No truth, however sacred, can stand against it, in the long run; and hence it is that in the pagan world, when our Lord came, the last traces of the religious knowledge of former times were all but dis-

appearing from those portions of the world in which the intellect had been active and had had a career.

And in these latter days, in like manner, outside the Catholic Church things are tending, with far greater rapidity than in that old time from the circumstance of the age, to atheism in one shape or other. What a scene, what a prospect, does the whole of Europe present at this day! and not only Europe, but every government and every civilization through the world, which is under the influence of the European mind! Especially, for it most concerns us, how sorrowful, in the view of religion, even taken in its most elementary, most attenuated form, is the spectacle presented to us by the educated intellect of England, France, and Germany! Lovers of their country and of their race, religious men, external to the Catholic Church, have attempted various expedients to arrest fierce wilful human nature in its onward course, and to bring it into subjection. The necessity of some form of religion, for the interests of humanity, has been generally acknowledged: but where was the concrete representative of things invisible, which would have the force and the toughness necessary to be a breakwater against the deluge? Three centuries ago the establishment of religion, material, legal, and social, was generally adopted as the best expedient for the purpose, in those countries which separated from the Catholic Church; and for a long time it was successful; but now the crevices of those establishments are admitting the enemy. Thirty years ago, education was relied upon: ten years ago there was a hope that wars would cease for ever, under the influence of commercial enterprise and the reign of the useful and fine arts, but will any one venture to say that there is anything anywhere on this earth, which will afford a fulcrum for us, whereby to keep the earth from moving onwards?

The judgment, which experience passes on establishments or education, as a means of maintaining religious truth in this anarchical world, must be extended even to Scripture, though Scripture be divine. Experience proves surely that the Bible does not

answer a purpose for which it was never intended. It may be accidentally the means of the conversion of individuals; but a book, after all, cannot make a stand against the wild living intellect of man, and in this day it begins to testify, as regards its own structure and contents, to the power of that universal solvent, which is so successfully acting upon religious establishments.

Supposing then it to be the Will of the Creator to interfere in human affairs, and to make provisions for retaining in the world a knowledge of Himself, so definite and distinct as to be proof against the energy of human scepticism, in such a case — I am far from saying that there was no other way — but there is nothing to surprise the mind, if He should think fit to introduce a power into the world, invested with the prerogative of infallibility in religious matters. Such a provision would be a direct, immediate, active, and prompt means of withstanding the difficulty, it would be an instrument suited to the need; and, when I find that this is the very claim of the Catholic Church, not only do I feel no difficulty in admitting the idea, but there is a fitness in it, which recommends it to my mind. And thus I am brought to speak of the Church's infallibility, as a provision adapted by the mercy of the Creator, to preserve religion in the world, and to restrain that freedom of thought, which of course in itself is one of the greatest of our natural gifts, and to rescue it from its own suicidal excesses. And let it be observed that, neither here nor in what follows, shall I have occasion to speak directly of the revealed body of truths, but only as they bear upon the defence of natural religion. I say, that a power, possessed of infallibility in religious teaching, is happily adapted to be a working instrument, in the course of human affairs, for smiting hard and throwing back the immense energy of the aggressive intellect: — and in saying this, as in the other things that I have to say, it must still be recollected that I am all along bearing in mind my main purpose, which is a defence of myself.

I am defending myself here from a plausible charge brought against Catholics, as will be

seen better as I proceed. The charge is this: — that I, as a Catholic, not only make profession to hold doctrines which I cannot possibly believe in my heart, but that I also believe in the existence of a power on earth, which at its own will imposes upon men any new set of *credenda*, when it pleases, by a claim to infallibility; in consequence, that my own thoughts are not my own property; that I cannot tell that to-morrow I may not have to give up what I hold to-day, and that the necessary effect of such a condition of mind must be a degrading bondage, or a bitter inward rebellion relieving itself in secret infidelity, or the necessity of ignoring the whole subject of religion in a sort of disgust, and of mechanically saying everything that the Church says, and leaving to others the defence of it. As then I have above spoken of the relation of my mind towards the Catholic Creed, so now I shall speak of the attitude which it takes up in the view of the Church's infallibility.

And first, the initial doctrine of the infallible teacher must be an emphatic protest against the existing state of mankind. Man had rebelled against his Maker. It was this that caused the divine interposition: and the first act of the divinely accredited messenger must be to proclaim it. The Church must denounce rebellion as of all possible evils the greatest. She must have no terms with it; if she would be true to her Master, she must ban and anathematize it. This is the meaning of a statement which has furnished matter for one of those special accusations to which I am at present replying: I have, however, no fault at all to confess in regard to it; I have nothing to withdraw, and in consequence I here deliberately repeat it. I said, "The Catholic Church holds it better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say, should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing without excuse." I think the principle here enunciated to be the mere preamble in the formal credentials of the Catholic Church,

as an Act of Parliament might begin with a "Whereas." It is because of the intensity of the evil which has possession of mankind, that a suitable antagonist has been provided against it; and the initial act of that divinely-commissioned power is of course to deliver her challenge and to defy the enemy. Such a preamble then gives a meaning to her position in the world, and an interpretation to her whole course of teaching and action.

In like manner she has ever put forth, with most energetic distinctness, those other great elementary truths, which either are an explanation of her mission or give a character to her work. She does not teach that human nature is irreclaimable, else wherefore should she be sent? not that it is to be shattered and reversed, but to be extricated, purified, and restored; not that it is a mere mass of evil, but that it has the promise of great things, and even now has a virtue and a praise proper to itself. But in the next place she knows and she preaches that such a restoration, as she aims at effecting in it, must be brought about, not simply through any outward provision of preaching and teaching, even though it be her own, but from a certain inward spiritual power or grace imparted directly from above, and which is in her keeping. She has it in charge to rescue human nature from its misery, but not simply by raising it upon its own level, but by lifting it up to a higher level than its own. She recognizes in it real moral excellence though degraded, but she cannot set it free from earth except by exalting it towards heaven. It was for this end that a renovating grace was put into her hands, and therefore from the nature of the gift, as well as from the reasonableness of the case, she goes on, as a further point, to insist, that all true conversion must begin with the first springs of thought, and to teach that each individual man must be in his own person one whole and perfect temple of God, while he is also one of the living stones which build up a visible religious community. And thus the distinctions between nature and grace, and between outward and inward religion, become two further articles in what I have called the preamble of her divine commission.

Such truths as these she vigorously reiterates, and pertinaciously inflicts upon mankind; as to such she observes no half-measures, no economical reserve, no delicacy or prudence. "Ye must be born again," is the simple, direct form of words which she uses after her Divine Master; "your whole nature must be re-born, your passions, and your affections, and your aims, and your conscience, and your will, must all be bathed in a new element, and reconsecrated to your Maker, and, the last not the least, your intellect." It was for repeating these points of her teaching in my own way, that certain passages of one of my volumes have been brought into the general accusation which has been made against my religious opinions. The writer has said that I was demented if I believed, and unprincipled if I did not believe in my statement that a lazy, ragged, filthy, story-telling beggar-woman, if chaste, sober, cheerful, and religious, had a prospect of heaven, which was absolutely closed to an accomplished statesman, or lawyer, or noble, be he ever so just, upright, generous, honorable, and conscientious, unless he had also some portion of the divine Christian grace; yet I should have thought myself defended from criticism by the words which our Lord used to the chief priests, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." And I was subjected again to the same alternative of imputations, for having ventured to say that consent to an unchaste wish was indefinitely more heinous than any he viewed apart from its causes, its motives, and its consequences; though a lie, viewed under the limitation of these conditions, is a random utterance, an almost outward act, not directly from the heart, however disgraceful it may be, whereas we have the express words of our Lord to the doctrine that "whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." On the strength of these texts I have surely as much right to believe in these doctrines as to believe in the doctrine of original sin, or that there is a supernatural revelation, or that a Divine Person suffered, or that punishment is eternal.

Passing now from what I have called the

preamble of that grant of power, with which the Church is invested, to that power itself, Infallibility, I make two brief remarks: on the one hand, I am not here determining anything about the essential seat of that power, because that is a question doctrinal, not historical and practical, nor, on the other hand, am I extending the direct subject-matter, over which that power has jurisdiction, beyond religious opinion: — and now as to the power itself.

This power, viewed in its fullness, is as tremendous as the giant evil which has called for it. It claims, when brought into exercise in the legitimate manner, for otherwise of course it is but dormant, to have for itself a sure guidance into the very meaning of every portion of the divine message in detail, which was committed by our Lord to His apostles. It claims to know its own limits, and to decide what it can determine absolutely and what it cannot. It claims, moreover, to have a hold upon statements not directly religious, so far as this, to determine whether they indirectly relate to religion, and, according to its own definitive judgment, to pronounce whether or not, in a particular case, they are consistent with revealed truth. It claims to decide magisterially, whether infallibly or not, that such and such statements are or are not prejudicial to the apostolic *depositum* of faith, in their spirit or in their consequences, and to allow them, or condemn and forbid them, accordingly. It claims to impose silence at will on any matters, or controversies, of doctrine, which on its own *ipse dixit*¹ it pronounces to be dangerous, or inexpedient, or inopportune. It claims that whatever may be the judgment of Catholics upon such acts, these acts should be received by them with those outward marks of reverence, submission, and loyalty, which Englishmen, for instance, pay to the presence of their sovereign, without public criticism on them, as being in their matter inexpedient, or in their manner violent or harsh. And lastly, it claims to have the right of inflicting spiritual punishment, of cutting off from the ordinary channels of the divine life, and of simply excommunicating,

^x He himself has said it, i.e., on his absolute authority.

those who refuse to submit themselves to its formal declarations. Such is the infallibility lodged in the Catholic Church, viewed in the concrete, as clothed and surrounded by the appendages of its high sovereignty: it is, to repeat what I said above, a supereminent prodigious power sent upon earth to encounter and master a giant evil.

And now, having thus described it, I profess my own absolute submission to its claim. I believe the whole revealed dogma as taught by the apostles, as committed by the apostles to the Church, and as declared by the Church to me. I receive it, as it is infallibly interpreted by the authority to whom it is thus committed, and (implicitly) as it shall be, in like manner, further interpreted by that same authority till the end of time. I submit, moreover, to the universally received traditions of the Church, in which lies the matter of those new dogmatic definitions which are from time to time made, and which in all times are the clothing and the illustration of the Catholic dogma as already defined. And I submit myself to those other decisions of the Holy See, theological or not, through the organs which it has itself appointed, which, waiving the question of their infallibility, on the lowest ground come to me with a claim to be accepted and obeyed. Also, I consider that, gradually and in the course of ages, Catholic inquiry has taken certain definite shapes, and has thrown itself into the form of a science, with a method and a phraseology of its own, under the intellectual handling of great minds, such as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas;² and I feel no temptation at all to break in pieces the great legacy of thought thus committed to us for these latter days.

All this being considered to be a profession *ex animo*³ as on my own part, so also on the part of the Catholic body, as far as I know it, it will at first sight be said that the restless intellect of our common humanity is utterly

¹ St. Athanasius (296-373), the defender of the trinitarian creed, St. Augustine (354-430), author of *The City of God*, St. Thomas Aquinas (1227-74), author of the *Summa Theologiae*, may be regarded as the supreme authorities of the Catholic Church.

³ from the heart, i.e., willingly.

weighed down to the repression of all independent effort and action whatever, so that, if this is to be the mode of bringing it into order, it is brought into order only to be destroyed. But this is far from the result, far from what I conceive to be the intention of that high Providence who has provided a great remedy for a great evil — far from borne out by the history of the conflict between infallibility and reason in the past, and the prospect of it in the future. The energy of the human intellect "does from opposition grow;" it thrives and is joyous, with a tough elastic strength, under the terrible blows of the divinely-fashioned weapon, and is never so much itself as when it has lately been overthrown. It is the custom with Protestant writers to consider that, whereas there are two great principles in action in the history of religion, authority and private judgment, they have all the private judgment to themselves, and we have the full inheritance and the superincumbent oppression of authority. But this is not so; it is the vast Catholic body itself, and it only, which affords an arena for both combatants in that awful, never-dying duel. It is necessary for the very life of religion, viewed in its large operations and its history, that the warfare should be incessantly carried on. Every exercise of infallibility is brought out into act by an intense and varied operation of the reason, from within and without, and provokes again a reaction of reason against it; and, as in a civil polity the state exists and endures by means of the rivalry and collision, the encroachments and defeats of its constituent parts, so in like manner Catholic Christendom is no simple exhibition of religious absolutism, but it presents a continuous picture of authority and private judgment alternately advancing and retreating as the ebb and flow of the tide; — it is a vast assemblage of human beings with wilful intellects and wild passions, brought together into one by the beauty and the majesty of a superhuman power — into what may be called a large reformatory or training-school, not to be sent to bed, not to be buried alive, but for the melting, refining, and molding, as in some moral factory, by an incessant noisy process

(if I may proceed to another metaphor), of the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes.

St. Paul says in one place that this apostolical power is given him to edification, and not to destruction. There can be no better account of the infallibility of the Church. It is a supply for a need, and it does not go beyond that need. Its object is, and its effect also, not to enfeeble the freedom or vigor of human thought in religious speculation, but to resist and control its extravagance. What have been its great works? All of them in the distinct province of theology: — to put down Anamism, Eutychianism, Pelagianism, Manichxism, Lutheranism, Jansenism.¹ Such is the broad result of its action in the past; — and now as to the securities which are given us that so it ever will act in time to come.

First, infallibility cannot act outside of a definite circle of thought, and it must in all its decisions, or *definitions*, as they are called, profess to be keeping within it. The great truths of the moral law, of natural religion, and of apostolical faith, are both its boundary and its foundation. It must not go beyond them, and it must ever appeal to them. Both its subject-matter, and its articles in that subject-matter, are fixed. Thus, in illustration, it does not extend to statements, however sound and evident, which are mere logical conclusions from the articles of the apostolic *depositum*; again, it can pronounce nothing about the persons of heretics, whose works fall within its legitimate province. It must ever profess to be guided by Scripture and by tradition. It must refer to the particular apostolical truth which it is enforcing, or (what is called) *defining*. Nothing, then, can be presented to me, in time to come, as part of the faith, but what I ought already to have received, and have not actually received, (if not) merely because it has not been told me. Nothing can be imposed upon me different in kind from what I hold already — much less contrary to it. The new truth which is promulgated, if it is to be called new, must be at least homogeneous, cognate,

¹ The chief heresies in the history of the Church.

implicit, viewed relatively to the old truth. It must be what I may even have guessed, or wished, to be included in the apostolic revelation; and at least it will be of such a character, that my thoughts readily concur in it or coalesce with it, as soon as I hear it. Perhaps I and others actually have always believed it, and the only question which is now decided in my behalf, is that I am henceforth to believe that I have only been holding what the apostles held before me—

FROM The Idea of a University 1852.

In 1852 Newman delivered a series of lectures, as rector of the Catholic University at Dublin, on *The Scope and Nature of University Education*, which, with other lectures on university subjects, later constituted the volume called *The Idea of a University*. The following lecture was the fourth of the original series, later numbered five. It is an excellent example of Newman's easy and persuasive style combined with logical exactness of thought. Newman held that theology, or knowledge of God, necessary to salvation, was the proper center of unity of education, on which other branches of learning were dependent. This belief was in opposition to that of Huxley, who made knowledge of the physical world, upon which our survival in this life depends, the chief objective of education. Newman's view of the value of knowledge, and the justification of philosophy, may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon*.

DISCOURSE v

Liberal Knowledge Its Own End

A University may be considered with reference either to its Students or to its Studies, and the principle, that all Knowledge is a whole and the separate Sciences parts of one, which I have hitherto been using in behalf of its studies, is equally important when we direct our attention to its students. Now then I turn to the students, and shall consider the education which, by virtue of this principle, a University will give them; and thus I shall be introduced, Gentlemen, to the second question, which I proposed to discuss, viz., whether and in what sense its teaching, viewed relatively to the taught, carries the attribute of Utility along with it.

i

I have said that all branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator. Hence it is that the Sciences, into which our knowledge may be said to be cast, have multiplied bearings one on another, and an internal sympathy, and admit, or rather demand, comparison and adjustment. They complete, correct, balance, each other. This consideration, if well-founded, must be taken into account, not only as regards the attainment of truth, which is their common end, but as regards the influence which they exercise upon those whose education consists in the study of them. I have said already, that to give undue prominence to one is to be unjust to another; to neglect or supersede these is to divert those from their proper object. It is to unsettle the boundary lines between science and science, to disturb their action, to destroy the harmony which binds them together. Such a proceeding will have a corresponding effect when introduced into a place of education. There is no science but tells a different tale, when viewed as a portion of a whole, from what it is likely to suggest when taken by itself, without the safeguard, as I may call it, of others.

Let me make use of an illustration. In the combination of colors, very different effects are produced by a difference in their selection and juxtaposition; red, green, and white change their shades, according to the contrast to which they are submitted. And, in like manner, the drift and meaning of a branch of knowledge varies with the company in which it is introduced to the student. If his reading is confined simply to one subject, however such division of labor may favor the advancement of a particular pursuit, a point into which I do not here enter, certainly it has a tendency to contract his mind. If it is incorporated with others, it depends on those others as to the kind of influence which it exerts upon him. Thus the Classics, which in England are the means of refining the taste, have in France subserved the spread of revolutionary and deistical doctrines. In

Metaphysics, again, Butler's¹ *Analogy of Religion* which has had so much to do with the conversion of members of the University of Oxford, appeared to Pitt and others, who had received a different training, to operate only in the direction of infidelity. And so again, Watson, Bishop of Llandaff,² as I think he tells us in the narrative of his life, felt the science of Mathematics to indispose the mind to religious belief, while others see in its investigations the best defence of the Christian Mysteries. In like manner, I suppose, Arcesilas³ would not have handled logic as Aristotle, nor Aristotle have criticized poets as Plato; yet reasoning and poetry are subject to scientific rules.

It is a great point then to enlarge the range of studies which a University professes, even for the sake of the students; and, though they cannot pursue every subject which is open to them, they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle. This I conceive to be the advantage of a seat of universal learning, considered as a place of education. An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he only pursues a few sciences out of the multitude. He profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and its shades, its great points and its little, as he otherwise cannot apprehend them. Hence it is that his edu-

cation is called "Liberal." A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former Discourse I have ventured to call a philosophical habit. This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a University, as contrasted with other places of teaching or modes of teaching. This is the main purpose of a University in its treatment of its students.

And now the question is asked me, What is the use of it? And my answer will constitute the main subject of the Discourses which are to follow.

2

Cautious and practical thinkers, I say, will ask of me, what, after all, is the gain of this Philosophy, of which I make such account, and from which I promise so much. Even supposing it to enable us to give the degree of confidence exactly due to every science respectively, and to estimate precisely the value of every truth which is anywhere to be found, how are we better for this master view of things, which I have been extolling? Does it not reverse the principle of the division of labor? will practical objects be obtained better or worse by its cultivation? to what then does it lead? where does it end? what does it do? how does it profit? what does it promise? Particular sciences are respectively the basis of definite arts, which carry on to results tangible and beneficial the truths which are the subjects of the knowledge attained; what is the Art of this science of sciences? what is the fruit of such a Philosophy? what are we proposing to effect, what inducements do we hold out to the Catholic community, when we set about the enterprise of founding a University?

I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that what I have already said has been sufficient to show that it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowledge is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the

¹ Joseph Butler (1692-1752), Bishop of Durham, whose *Analogy* played an important part in Newman's thought.

² Richard Watson (1737-1816), a leading Anglican theologian.

³ A Greek sceptical philosopher of the third century B.C.

human mind, that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward. And if this is true of all knowledge, it is true also of that special Philosophy, which I have made to consist in a comprehensive view of truth in all its branches, of the relations of science to science, of their mutual bearings, and their respective values. What the worth of such an acquirement is, compared with other objects which we seek — wealth or power or honor or the conveniences and comforts of life, I do not profess here to discuss; but I would maintain, and mean to show, that it is an object, in its own nature so really and undeniably good, as to be the compensation of a great deal of thought in the compassing, and a great deal of trouble in the attaining.

Now, when I say that Knowledge is, not merely a means to something beyond it, or the preliminary of certain arts into which it naturally resolves, but an end sufficient to rest in and to pursue for its own sake, surely I am uttering no paradox, for I am stating what is both intelligible in itself, and has ever been the common judgment of philosophers and the ordinary feeling of mankind. I am saying what at least the public opinion of this day ought to be slow to deny, considering how much we have heard of late years, in opposition to Religion, of entertaining, curious, and various knowledge. I am but saying what whole volumes have been written to illustrate, by a "selection from the records of Philosophy, Literature, and Art, in all ages and countries, of a body of examples, to show how the most unpropitious circumstances have been unable to conquer an ardent desire for the acquisition of knowledge."¹ That further advantages accrue to us and redound to others by its possession, over and above what it is in itself, I am very far indeed from denying; but, independent of these, we are satisfying a direct need of our nature in its very acquisition; and, whereas our nature, unlike that of the inferior creation, does not at once reach its perfection, but depends, in order to it, on a number of external aids and appliances, Knowledge, as one of the principal gifts or accessories by

which it is completed, is valuable for what its very presence in us does for us after the manner of a habit, even though it be turned to no further account, nor subserve any direct end.

3

Hence it is that Cicero, in enumerating the various heads of mental excellence, lays down the pursuit of Knowledge for its own sake, as the first of them. "This pertains most of all to human nature," he says, "for we are all of us drawn to the pursuit of Knowledge; in which to excel we consider excellent, whereas to mistake, to err, to be ignorant, to be deceived, is both an evil and a disgrace."¹ And he considers Knowledge the very first object to which we are attracted, after the supply of our physical wants. After the calls and duties of our animal existence, as they may be termed, as regards ourselves, our family, and our neighbors, follows, he tells us, "the search after truth. Accordingly, as soon as we escape from the pressure of necessary cares, forthwith we desire to see, to hear, to learn; and consider the knowledge of what is hidden, or is wonderful, a condition of our happiness."

This passage, though it is but one of many similar passages in a multitude of authors, I take for the very reason that it is so familiarly known to us; and I wish you to observe, Gentlemen, how distinctly it separates the pursuit of Knowledge from those ulterior objects to which certainly it can be made to conduce, and which are, I suppose, solely contemplated by the persons who would ask of me the use of a University or Liberal Education. So far from dreaming of the cultivation of Knowledge directly and mainly in order to our physical comfort and enjoyment, for the sake of life and person, of health, of the conjugal and family union, of the social tie and civil security, the great Orator implies, that it is only after our physical and political needs are supplied, and when we are "free from necessary duties and cares," that we are in a condition for "desiring to see, to hear, and to learn." Nor does he contemplate in the least degree the

¹ Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties. Introd. (Newman.)

¹ Cicero, *Offic. init.* (Newman.)

reflex or subsequent action of Knowledge, when acquired, upon those material goods which we set out by securing before we seek it; on the contrary, he expressly denies its bearing upon social life altogether, strange as such a procedure is to those who live after the rise of the Baconian philosophy, and he cautions us against such a cultivation of it as will interfere with our duties to our fellow-creatures. "All these methods," he says, "are engaged in the investigation of truth; by the pursuit of which to be carried off from public occupations is a transgression of duty. For the praise of virtue lies altogether in action; yet intermissions often occur, and then we recur to such pursuits; not to say that the incessant activity of the mind is vigorous enough to carry us on in the pursuit of knowledge, even without any exertion of our own." The idea of benefiting society by means of "the pursuit of science and knowledge" did not enter at all into the motives which he would assign for their cultivation.

This was the ground of the opposition which the elder Cato¹ made to the introduction of Greek Philosophy among his countrymen, when Carneades² and his companions, on occasion of their embassy, were charming the Roman youth with their eloquent expositions of it. The fit representative of a practical people, Cato estimated everything by what it produced; whereas the Pursuit of Knowledge promised nothing beyond Knowledge itself. He despised that refinement or enlargement of mind of which he had no experience.

4

Things, which can bear to be cut off from everything else and yet persist in living, must have life in themselves; pursuits, which issue in nothing, and still maintain their ground for ages, which are regarded as admirable, though they have not as yet proved themselves to be useful, must have their sufficient end in themselves, whatever it turn

¹ Marcus Porcius Cato ('231-149 B.C.), called the Censor.

² Carneades, Critolaus, and Diogenes, Athenian philosophers, visited Rome in 156 B.C. on a political embassy, and while there lectured on philosophy.

out to be. And we are brought to the same conclusion by considering the force of the epithet, by which the knowledge under consideration is popularly designated. It is common to speak of "*liberal* knowledge," of the "*liberal* arts and studies," and of a "*liberal* education," as the especial characteristic or property of a University and of a gentleman; what is really meant by the word? Now, first, in its grammatical sense it is opposed to *servile*; and by "*servile* work" is understood, as our catechisms inform us, bodily labor, mechanical employment, and the like, in which the mind has little or no part. Parallel to such works are those arts, if they deserve the name, of which the poet speaks, which owe their origin and their method to hazard, not to skill; as, for instance, the practice and operations of an empiric. As far as this contrast may be considered as a guide into the meaning of the word, liberal knowledge and liberal pursuits are exercises of mind, of reason, of reflection.

But we want something more for its explanation, for there are bodily exercises which are liberal, and mental exercises which are not so. For instance, in ancient times the practitioners in medicine were commonly slaves; yet it was an art as intellectual in its nature, in spite of the pretence, fraud, and quackery with which it might then, as now, be debased, as it was heavenly in its aim. And so in like manner, we contrast a liberal education with a commercial education or a professional, yet no one can deny that commerce and the professions afford scope for the highest and most diversified powers of mind. There is then a great variety of intellectual exercises, which are not technically called "*liberal*"; on the other hand, I say, there are exercises of the body which do receive that appellation. Such, for instance, was the palaestra, in ancient times; such the Olympic games, in which strength and dexterity of body as well as of mind gained the prize. In Xenophon we read of the young Persian nobility being taught to ride on horseback and to speak the truth; both being among the accomplishments of a gentleman. War, too, however rough a profession, has ever been accounted liberal, unless in cases

when it becomes heroic, which would introduce us to another subject.

Now comparing these instances together, we shall have no difficulty in determining the principle of this apparent variation in the application of the term which I am examining. Manly games, or games of skill, or military prowess, though bodily, are, it seems, accounted liberal; on the other hand, what is merely professional, though highly intellectual, nay, though liberal in comparison of trade and manual labor, is not simply called liberal, and mercantile occupations are not liberal at all. Why this distinction? because that alone is liberal knowledge, which stands on its own pretensions, which is independent of sequel, expects no complement, refuses to be *informed* (as it is called) by any end, or absorbed into any art, in order duly to present itself to our contemplation. The most ordinary pursuits have this specific character, if they are self-sufficient and complete; the highest lose it, when they minister to something beyond them. It is absurd to balance, in point of worth and importance, a treatise on reducing fractures with a game of cricket or a fox-chase; yet of the two the bodily exercise has that quality which we call "liberal," and the intellectual has it not. And so of the learned professions altogether, considered merely as professions; although one of them be the most popularly beneficial, and another the most politically important, and the third the most intimately divine of all human pursuits, yet the very greatness of their end, the health of the body, or of the commonwealth, or of the soul, diminishes, not increases, their claim to the appellation "liberal," and that still more, if they are cut down to the strict exigencies of that end. If, for instance, Theology, instead of being cultivated as a contemplation, be limited to the purposes of the pulpit or be represented by the catechism, it loses — not its usefulness, not its divine character, not its meritoriousness (rather it increases these qualities by such charitable condescension) — but it does lose the particular attribute which I am illustrating, just as a face worn by tears and lasting loses its beauty, or a laborer's hand loses its delicateness; — for Theology thus

exercised is not simple knowledge, but rather is an art or a business making use of Theology. And thus it appears that even what is supernatural need not be liberal, nor need a hero be a gentleman, for the plain reason that one idea is not another idea. And in like manner the Baconian Philosophy, by using its physical sciences in the service of man, does thereby transfer them from the order of Liberal Pursuits to, I do not say the inferior, but the distinct class of the Useful. And, to take a different instance, hence again, as is evident, whenever personal gain is the motive, still more distinctive an effect has it upon the character of a given pursuit; thus racing, which was a liberal exercise in Greece, forfeits its rank in times like these, so far as it is made the occasion of gambling.

All that I have been now saying is summed up in a few characteristic words of the great Philosopher. "Of possessions," he says, "those rather are useful, which bear fruit; those *liberal*, which *tend to enjoyment*. By fruitful, I mean, which yield revenue; by enjoyable, where *nothing accrues of consequence beyond the use*."^x

5

Do not suppose, Gentlemen, that in thus appealing to the ancients, I am throwing back the world two thousand years, and fettering Philosophy with the reasonings of paganism. While the world lasts, will Aristotle's doctrine on these matters last, for he is the oracle of nature and of truth. While we are men, we cannot help, to a great extent, being Aristotelians, for the great Master does but analyze the thoughts, feelings, views, and opinions of human kind. He has told us the meaning of our own words and ideas, before we were born. In many subject-matters, to think correctly, is to think like Aristotle; and we are his disciples whether we will or no, though we may not know it. Now, as to the particular instance before us, the word "liberal" as applied to Knowledge and Education, expresses a specific idea, which ever has been, and ever will be, while the nature of man is the same, just as the idea of the Beautiful is specific, or of the Sublime, or of the

^x *Aristot., Rhet. i, 5.* (Newman.)

Ridiculous, or of the Sordid. It is in the world now, it was in the world then, and, as in the case of the dogmas of faith, it is illustrated by a continuous historical tradition, and never was out of the world, from the time it came into it. There have indeed been differences of opinion from time to time, as to what pursuits and what arts came under that idea, but such differences are but an additional evidence of its reality. That idea must have a substance in it, which has maintained its ground amid these conflicts and changes, which has ever served as a standard to measure things withal, which has passed from mind to mind unchanged, when there was so much to color, so much to influence any notion or thought whatever, which was not founded in our very nature. Were it a mere generalization, it would have varied with the subjects from which it was generalized; but though its subjects vary with the age, it varies not itself. The palaestra may seem a liberal exercise to Lyncurgus, and illiberal to Seneca; coach-driving and prize-fighting may be recognized in Elis, and be condemned in England; music may be despicable in the eyes of certain moderns, and be in the highest place with Aristotle and Plato — (and the case is the same in the particular application of the idea of Beauty, or of Goodness, or of Moral Virtue, there is a difference of tastes, a difference of judgments) — still these variations imply, instead of discrediting, the archetypal idea, which is but a previous hypothesis or condition, by means of which issue is joined between contending opinions, and without which there would be nothing to dispute about.

I consider, then, that I am chargeable with no paradox, when I speak of a Knowledge which is its own end, when I call it liberal-knowledge, or a gentleman's knowledge, when I educate for it, and make it the scope of a University. And still less am I incurring such a charge, when I make this acquisition consist, not in Knowledge in a vague and ordinary sense, but in that Knowledge which I have especially called Philosophy or, in an extended sense of the word, Science; for whatever claims Knowledge has to be considered as a good, these it has in a higher

degree when it is viewed not vaguely, not popularly, but precisely and transcendently as Philosophy. Knowledge, I say, is then especially liberal, or sufficient for itself, apart from every external and ulterior object, when and so far as it is philosophical, and this I proceed to show.

6

Now bear with me, Gentlemen, if what I am about to say, has at first sight a fanciful appearance. Philosophy, then, or Science, is related to Knowledge in this way: — Knowledge is called by the name of Science or Philosophy, when it is acted upon, informed, or if I may use a strong figure, impregnated by Reason. Reason is the principle of that intrinsic fecundity of Knowledge, which, to those who possess it, is its especial value, and which dispenses with the necessity of their looking abroad for any end to rest upon external to itself. Knowledge, indeed, when thus exalted into a scientific form, is also power; not only is it excellent in itself, but whatever such excellence may be, it is something more, it has a result beyond itself. Doubtless; but that is a further consideration, with which I am not concerned. I only say that, prior to its being a power, it is a good, that it is, not only an instrument, but an end. I know well it may resolve itself into an art, and terminate in a mechanical process, and in tangible fruit; but it also may fall back upon that Reason, which informs it, and resolve itself into Philosophy. In one case it is called Useful Knowledge, in the other Liberal. The same person may cultivate it in both ways at once; but this again is a matter foreign to my subject; here I do but say that there are two ways of using Knowledge, and in matter of fact those who use it in one way are not likely to use it in the other, or at least in a very limited measure. You see, then, here are two methods of Education; the end of the one is, to be philosophical, of the other to be mechanical; the one rises towards general ideas, the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. Let me not be thought to deny the necessity, or to decry the benefit, of such attention to what is particular and practical, as

belongs to the useful or mechanical arts; life could not go on without them, we owe our daily welfare to them; their exercise is the duty of the many, and we owe to the many a debt of gratitude for fulfilling that duty. I only say that Knowledge, in proportion as it tends more and more to be particular, ceases to be Knowledge. It is a question whether Knowledge can in any proper sense be predicated of the brute creation; without pretending to metaphysical exactness of phraseology, which would be unsuitable to an occasion like this, I say, it seems to me improper to call that passive sensation, or perception of things, which brutes seem to possess, by the name of Knowledge. When I speak of Knowledge, I mean something intellectual, something which grasps what it perceives through the senses; something which takes a view of things; which sees more than the senses convey; which reasons upon what it sees, and while it sees; which invests it with an idea. It expresses itself, not in a mere enunciation, but by an enthymeme: it is of the nature of science from the first, and in this consists its dignity. The principle of real dignity in Knowledge, its worth, its desirableness, considered irrespectively of its results, is this germ within it of a scientific or a philosophical process. This is how it comes to be an end in itself; this is why it admits of being called Liberal. Not to know the relative disposition of things is the state of slaves or children; to have mapped out the Universe is the boast, or at least the ambition, of Philosophy.

Moreover, such knowledge is not a mere extrinsic or accidental advantage, which is ours to-day and another's to-morrow, which may be got up from a book, and easily forgotten again, which we can command or borrow for the occasion, carry about in our hand, and take into the market; it is an acquired illumination, it is a habit, a personal possession, and an inward endowment. And this is the reason, why it is more correct, as well as more usual, to speak of a University as a place of education, than of instruction, though, when knowledge is concerned, instruction would at first sight have seemed the more appropriate word. We are instructed,

for instance, in manual exercises, in the fine and useful arts, in trades, and in ways of business; for these are methods, which have little or no effect upon the mind itself, are contained in rules committed to memory, to tradition, or to use, and bear upon an end external to themselves. But education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of a character, it is something individual and permanent, and is commonly spoken of in connection with religion and virtue. When, then, we speak of the communication of Knowledge as being Education, we thereby really imply that that Knowledge is a state or condition of mind; and since cultivation of mind is surely worth seeking for its own sake, we are thus brought once more to the conclusion, which the word "Liberal" and the word "Philosophy" have already suggested, that there is a Knowledge, which is desirable, though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labor.

7

This, then, is the answer which I am prepared to give to the question with which I opened this Discourse. Before going on to speak of the object of the Church in taking up Philosophy, and the uses to which she puts it, I am prepared to maintain that Philosophy is its own end, and, as I conceive, I have now begun proving it. I am prepared to maintain that there is a knowledge worth possessing for what it is, and not merely for what it does; and what minutes remain to me to-day I shall devote to the removal of some portion of the indistinctness and confusion with which the subject may in some minds be surrounded.

It may be objected then, that, when we profess to seek Knowledge for some end or other beyond itself, whatever it be, we speak intelligibly; but that, whatever men may have said, however obstinately the idea may have kept its ground from age to age, still it is simply unmeaning to say that we seek Knowledge for its own sake, and for nothing else; for that it ever leads to something beyond itself, which therefore is its end, and

the cause why it is desirable; — moreover, that this end is twofold, either of this world or of the next; that all knowledge is cultivated either for secular objects or for eternal; that if it is directed to secular objects, it is called Useful Knowledge, if to eternal, Religious or Christian Knowledge; — in consequence, that if, as I have allowed, this Liberal Knowledge does not benefit the body or estate, it ought to benefit the soul, but if the fact be really so, that it is neither a physical or a secular good on the one hand, nor a moral good on the other, it cannot be a good at all, and is not worth the trouble which is accessory for its acquisition.

And then I may be reminded that the professors of this Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge have themselves, in every age, recognized this exposition of the matter, and have submitted to the issue in which it terminates; for they have ever been attempting to make men virtuous; or, if not, at least have assumed that refinement of mind was virtue, and that they themselves were the virtuous portion of mankind. This they have professed on the one hand, and on the other, they have utterly failed in their professions, so as ever to make themselves a proverb among men, and a laughing-stock both to the grave and the dissipated portion of mankind, in consequence of them. Thus they have furnished against themselves both the ground and the means of their own exposure, without any trouble at all to any one else. In a word, from the time that Athens was the University of the world, what has Philosophy taught men, but to promise without practising, and to aspire without attaining? What has the deep and lofty thought of its disciples ended in but eloquent words? Nay, what has its teaching ever meditated, when it was boldest in its remedies for human ill, beyond charming us to sleep by its lessons, that we might feel nothing at all? like some melodious air, or rather like those strong and transporting perfumes, which at first spread their sweetness over everything they touch, but in a little while do but offend in proportion as they once pleased us. Did Philosophy support Cicero under the disfavor of the fickle populace, or

nerve Seneca to oppose an imperial tyrant? It abandoned Brutus, as he sorrowfully confessed, in his greatest need, and it forced Cato, as his panegyrist strangely boasts, into the false position of defying heaven. How few can be counted among its professors, who, like Polemo,¹ were thereby converted from a profligate course, or like Anaxagoras, thought the world well lost in exchange for its possession? The philosopher in *Rasselas* taught a superhuman doctrine, and then succumbed without an effort to a trial of human affection.

"He discoursed," we are told, "with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher. He communicated the various precepts given, from time to time, for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope.... He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil."

Rasselas in a few days found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you have come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever." "Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised; we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one who has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you, then, forgot the precept," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced?... consider that external things are naturally variable, but

¹ A Platonist philosopher of the third century B.C.

truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

8

Better, far better, to make no professions, you will say, than to cheat others with what we are not, and to scandalize them with what we are. The sensualist, or the man of the world, at any rate is not the victim of fine words, but pursues a reality and gains it. The Philosophy of Utility, you will say, Gentlemen, has at least done its work; and I grant it, — it aimed low, but it has fulfilled its aim. If that man of great intellect who has been its Prophet in the conduct of life played false to his own professions, he was not bound by his philosophy to be true to his friend or faithful in his trust. Moral virtue was not the line in which he undertook to instruct men; and though, as the poet calls him, he were the "meanest" of mankind, he was so in what may be called his private capacity, and without any prejudice to the theory of induction. He had a right to be so, if he chose, for anything that the Idols of the den or the theatre had to say to the contrary. His mission was the increase of physical enjoyment and social comfort;¹ and most wonderfully, most awfully has he fulfilled his conception and his design. Almost day by day have we fresh and fresh shoots, and buds, and blossoms, which are to ripen into fruit, on that magical tree of Knowledge which he planted, and to which none of us perhaps, except the very poor, but owes, if not his present life, at least his daily food, his health, and general well-being. He was the divinely provided minister of temporal benefits to all of us so great, that, whatever I am forced to think of him as a man, I have not the heart, from mere gratitude, to speak of him severely. And, in spite of the tendencies of his philosophy, which are, as we see at this day, to depreciate, or to trample on Theology, he has himself, in his writings, gone out of his way, as if

¹ It will be seen that on the whole I agree with Lord Macaulay in his Essay on Bacon's Philosophy. I do not know whether he would agree with me. (Newman.)

with a prophetic misgiving of those tendencies, to insist on it as the instrument of that beneficent Father,¹ who, when He came on earth in visible form, took on Him first and most prominently the office of assuaging the bodily wounds of human nature. And truly, like the old mediciner in the tale, "he sat diligently at his work, and hummed, with cheerful countenance, a pious song;" and then in turn "went out singing into the meadows so gaily, that those who had seen him from afar might well have thought it was a youth gathering flowers for his beloved, instead of an old physician gathering healing herbs in the morning dew."²

Alas, that men, in the action of life or in their heart of hearts, are not what they seem to be in their moments of excitement, or in their trances or intoxications of genius — so good, so noble, so serene! Alas, that Bacon too in his own way should after all be but the fellow of those heathen philosophers who in their disadvantages had some excuse for their inconsistency, and who surprise us rather in what they did say than in what they did not do! Alas, that he too, like Socrates or Seneca, must be stripped of his holy-day coat, which looks so fair, and should be but a mockery amid his most majestic gravity of phrase; and, for all his vast abilities, should, in the littleness of his own moral being, but typify the intellectual narrowness of his school! However, granting all this, heroism after all was not his philosophy: I cannot deny he has abundantly achieved what he proposed. His is simply a Method whereby bodily discomforts and temporal wants are to be most effectually removed from the greatest number; and already, before it has shown any signs of exhaustion, the gifts of nature, in their most artificial shapes and luxurious profusion and diversity, from all quarters of the earth, are, it is undeniable, by its means brought even to our doors, and we rejoice in them.

9

Useful Knowledge then, I grant, has done its work; and Liberal Knowledge as certainly

¹ *De Augment.*, iv, 2. See Macaulay's Essay. (Newman.)
² Fouquet's *Unknown Patient*. (Newman.)

has not done its work — supposing, that is, as the objectors assume, its direct end, like Religious Knowledge, is to make men better; but this I will not for an instant allow, and unless I allow it, those objectors have said nothing to the purpose. I admit, rather I maintain, what they have been urging, for I consider Knowledge to have its end in itself. For all its friends, or its enemies, may say, I insist upon it, that it is as real a mistake to burden it with virtue or religion as with the mechanical arts. Its direct business is not to steel the soul against temptation, or to console it in affliction, any more than to set the loom in motion, or to direct the steam carriage; be it ever so much the means or the condition of both material and moral advancement, still, taken by and in itself, it as little mends our hearts as it improves our temporal circumstances. And if its eulogists claim for it such a power, they commit the very same kind of encroachment on a province not their own as the political economist who should maintain that his science educated him for casuistry or diplomacy. Knowledge is one thing, virtue is another; good sense is not conscience, refinement is not humility, nor is largeness and justness of view faith. Philosophy, however enlightened, however profound, gives no command over the passions, no influential motives, no vivifying principles. Liberal Education makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life, — these are the conatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a University; I am advocating, I shall illustrate and insist upon them, but still, I repeat, they are no guarantee for sanctity or even for conscientiousness, they may attach to the man of the world, to the profligate, to the heartless — pleasant, alas, and attractive as he shows when decked out in them. Taken by themselves, they do but seem to be what they are not; they look like virtue at a distance, but they are detected by close observers, and on the long run; and hence it is that they are

popularly accused of pretence and hypocrisy, not, I repeat, from their own fault, but because their professors and their admirers persist in taking them for what they are not, and are officious in arrogating for them a praise to which they have no claim. Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against these giants, the passion and the pride of man.

Surely we are not driven to theories of this kind in order to vindicate the value and dignity of Liberal Knowledge. Surely the real grounds on which its pretensions rest are not so very subtle or abstruse, so very strange or improbable. Surely it is very intelligible to say, and that is what I say here, that Liberal Education, viewed in itself, is simply the cultivation of the intellect as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence. Every thing has its own perfection, be it higher or lower in the scale of things; and the perfection of one is not the perfection of another. Things animate, inanimate, visible, invisible, all are good in their kind, and have a *best* of themselves, which is an object of pursuit. Why do you take such pains with your garden or your park? You see to your walks and turf and shrubberies; to your trees and drives; not as if you meant to make an orchard of the one, or corn or pasture land of the other, but because there is a special beauty in all that is goodly in wood, water, plain, and slope, brought all together by art into one shape, and grouped into one whole. Your cities are beautiful, your palaces, your public buildings, your territorial mansions, your churches, and their beauty leads to nothing beyond itself. There is a physical beauty and a moral: there is a beauty of person, there is a beauty of our moral being, which is natural virtue; and in like manner there is a beauty, there is a perfection, of the intellect. There is an ideal perfection in these various subject-matters, towards which individual instances are seen to rise, and which are the standards for all instances whatever. The Greek divinities and demigods, as the statu-

ary has molded them, with their symmetry of figure, and their high forehead and their regular features, are the perfection of physical beauty. The heroes, of whom history tells, Alexander, or Caesar, or Scipio, or Saladin, are the representatives of that magnanimity or self-mastery which is the greatness of human nature. Christianity too has its heroes, and in the supernatural order, and we call them Saints. The artist puts before him beauty of feature and form; the poet, beauty of mind, the preacher, the beauty of grace: then intellect too, I repeat, has its beauty, and it has those who aim at it. To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule, and use its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resource, address, eloquent expression, is an object as intelligible (for here we are inquiring, not what the object of a Liberal Education is worth, nor what use the Church makes of it, but what it is in itself), I say, an object as intelligible as the cultivation of virtue, while, at the same time, it is absolutely distinct from it.

10

This indeed is but a temporal object, and a transitory possession: but so are other things in themselves which we make much of and pursue. The moralist will tell us that man, in all his functions, is but a flower which blossoms and fades, except so far as a higher principle breathes upon him, and makes him and what he is immortal. Body and mind are carried on into an eternal state of being by the gifts of Divine Munificence; but at first they do but fail in a failing world, and if the powers of intellect decay, the powers of the body have decayed before them, and, as an Hospital or an Ahnshouse, though its end be ephemeral, may be sanctified to the service of religion, so surely may a University, even were it nothing more than I have as yet described it. We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away; we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it towards aims higher than its own.

The Definition of a Gentleman 1851

This famous definition occurs at the conclusion of Discourse viii, *Knowledge in Relation to Religious Duty*, of *The Idea of a University*.

It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature: like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast; — all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company, he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd, he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate, he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to

be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds; who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust, he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candor, consideration, indulgence; he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits. If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it, he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion, he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honors the ministers of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that, not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and effeminacy of feeling, which is the attendant on civilization.

Not that he may not hold a religion too, in his own way, even when he is not a Christian.

In that case his religion is one of imagination and sentiment; it is the embodiment of those ideas of the sublime, majestic, and beautiful, without which there can be no large philosophy. Sometimes he acknowledges the being of God, sometimes he invests an unknown principle or quality with the attributes of perfection. And this deduction of his reason, or creation of his fancy, he makes the occasion of such excellent thoughts, and the starting-point of so varied and systematic a teaching, that he even seems like a disciple of Christianity itself. From the very accuracy and steadiness of his logical powers, he is able to see what sentiments are consistent in those who hold any religious doctrine at all, and he appears to others to feel and to hold a whole circle of theological truths, which exist in his mind no otherwise than as a number of deductions.

Such are some of the lineaments of the ethical character, which the cultivated intellect will form, apart from religious principle. They are seen within the pale of the Church and without it, in holy men, and in profligate; they form the *beau-ideal* of the world; they partly assist and partly distort the development of the Catholic. They may subserve the education of a St. Francis de Sales¹ or a Cardinal Pole,² they may be the limits of the contemplation of a Shaftesbury or a Gibbon. Basil and Julian³ were fellow-students at the schools of Athens; and one became the Saint and Doctor of the Church, the other her scoffing and relentless foe.

¹ St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622), Bishop of Geneva.

² Reginald Cardinal Pole (1500-58) was the leader of the counter-reformation in England under Queen Mary.

³ Basil (329-70), Bishop of Caesarea, one of the greatest Fathers of the Church, and Julian (331-63), who as emperor sought to destroy it.

John Stuart Mill • 1806-1873

John Stuart Mill, born in London, May 10, 1806, was the leading representative in the nineteenth century of the rule of reason, of the application of intelligence to human affairs, which was the basis of the claim of the eighteenth century to be entitled the age of enlightenment. His father, James Mill, was the disciple of Jeremy Bentham, the leader of the school known as Utilitarian, which represented this intellectual attitude in attempts at reform of government, law, and morals. John Stuart Mill was brought up by his father to carry on this work. ' In mental development he was extraordinarily precocious. He began to learn Greek when three years old. His father was his teacher, and demanded of him, he said, "not only the utmost that I could do, but much that I could by no possibility have done." The reaction against this severe mental and moral discipline he has narrated in his *Autobiography*. He began to correspond with Carlyle, and for a time the two were intimate friends; but they remained so far apart in philosophy that they may be taken as leaders of rival schools of thought, one depending on reason, the other on intuition.

Mill stated this fundamental difference as follows: "It is one of the characteristic prejudices of the reaction of the nineteenth century against the eighteenth, to accord to the unreasoning elements in human nature the infallibility which the eighteenth century is supposed to have ascribed to the reasoning elements. For the apotheosis of Reason we have substituted that of Instinct; and we call everything instinct which we find in ourselves and for which we cannot trace any rational foundation."

Mill was for most of his life an employee of the East India Company. He married, in 1851, Mrs. Taylor, "the lady whose incomparable worth had made her friendship the greatest source to me of both happiness and of improvement, during many years in which we never expected to be in any closer relation to one another." He was elected to Parliament in 1865, but defeated in 1868. Thereafter he retired to Avignon, in southern France, where he died in 1873.

Mill succeeded Jeremy Bentham and James Mill as leader of the Utilitarian School. The Utilitarians believed in a system of morals, based not on supernatural sanctions, but on the practice of individual and social conduct with the objective of obtaining "the greatest happiness for the greatest number." The Liberal attitude with regard to individual liberty is clearly expressed by Mill: "The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right." This view is in sharp contrast to Carlyle's contention that the wise and good have a direct duty to govern the weak and foolish. The Utilitarians developed much of the political philosophy characteristic of the liberal movement in the nineteenth century — individual freedom, democracy through representation, limitation of governmental interference with individual enterprise, often called *laissez-faire*, universal education, free trade. This endeavor to treat human affairs in accordance with theory and reason was violently opposed by Carlyle and his followers, who believed rather in the working in society of laws of which man remains unconscious, or which are revealed only in flashes of intuition.

Mill never outgrew the effects of his early severe training. He was always somewhat austere, aloof, *but* scrupulous in his relations to his fellow men. When a candidate for Parliament, he was asked at a public meeting if he had said that the English working classes, though ashamed of lying, were generally liars. He replied "I did," and the crowd cheered him. He was of the highest type of intellectual rectitude, and, as Professor Laski has said, he raised the moral stature of his generation.

Mill treated many of the most important subjects of the period in *A System of Logic* (1843), *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), *On Liberty* (1859), *Utilitarianism* (1863), *Autobiography* (1873). Three essays on religion were published after his death (1874). The *Autobiography* with an introduction by Professor Harold J. Laski (1914) is in the World's Classics series.

Mill's Letters were published by H. S. R. Elliot (1910). A life by W. L. Courtney is in The Great Writers' series (1889). Professor Emery Neff's *Carlyle and Mill* (1914) is an admirable study.

FROM *Autobiography*

1873

Mill made a notable contribution to the records of personal experience, of which the nineteenth century produced so many, in his *Autobiography*, written after his defeat for Parliament in 1868. As Sir Leslie Stephen has noted, it is almost wholly lacking in the qualities which give charm to that class of literature. It has neither the eloquence of Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*, nor the winning appeal of Newman in the *Apologia*. And yet, as Professor Laski remarks, it is a document of first importance in the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. Chapter V, following the account of John Mill's careful education by his father to render him supreme in things of the mind, contains the famous description of his discovery of the inadequacy of merely intellectual pursuits without cultivation of the emotions.

CHAPTER V

A Crisis in My Mental History. One Stage Onward

From the winter of 1811, when I first read Bentham, and especially from the commencement of the Westminster Review, I had what might truly be called an object in life; to be a reformer of the world. My conception of my own happiness was entirely identified with this object. The personal sympathies I wished for were those of fellow laborers in this enterprise. I endeavored to pick up as many flowers as I could by the way, but as a serious and permanent personal satisfaction to rest upon, my whole reliance was placed on this; and I was accustomed to felicitate myself

on the certainty of a happy life which I enjoyed, through placing my happiness in something durable and distant, in which some progress might be always making, while it could never be exhausted by complete attainment. This did very well for several years, during which the general improvement going on in the world, and the idea of myself as engaged with others in struggling to promote it, seemed enough to fill up an interesting and animated existence. But the time came when I awakened from this as from a dream. It was in the autumn of 1816. I was in a dull state of nerves, such as everybody is occasionally liable to; unsusceptible to enjoyment or pleasurable excitement; one of those moods when what is pleasure at other times, becomes insipid or indifferent; the state, I should think, in which converts to Methodism usually are, when smitten by their first "conviction of sin." In this frame of mind it occurred to me to put the question directly to myself: "Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to, could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be a great joy and happiness to you?" And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, "No!" At this my heart sank within me: the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down. All my happiness was to have been found in the continual pursuit of this end. The end had ceased to charm, and how could there ever again be an interest in the

means? I seemed to have nothing left to live for.

At first I hoped that the cloud would pass away of itself; but it did not. A night's sleep, the sovereign remedy for the smaller vexations of life, had no effect on it. I awoke to a renewed consciousness of the woeful fact. I carried it with me into all companies, into all occupations. Hardly anything had power to cause me even a few minutes' oblivion of it. For some months the cloud seemed to grow thicker and thicker. The lines in Coleridge's "Dejection" — I was not then acquainted with them — exactly describe my case:

A grief without a pang, void, dark and drear,
A drowsy, stifled, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet or relief
In word, or sigh, or tear.

In vain I sought relief from my favorite books; those memorials of past nobleness and greatness from which I had always hitherto drawn strength and animation. I read them now without feeling, or with the accustomed feeling *minus* all its charm; and I became persuaded, that my love of mankind, and of excellence for its own sake, had worn itself out. I sought no comfort by speaking to others of what I felt. If I had loved any one sufficiently to make confiding my griefs a necessity, I should not have been in the condition I was. I felt, too, that mine was not an interesting, or in any way respectable distress. There was nothing in it to attract sympathy. Advice, if I had known where to seek it, would have been most precious. The words of Macbeth to the physician often occurred to my thoughts. But there was no one on whom I could build the faintest hope of such assistance. My father, to whom it would have been natural to me to have recourse in any practical difficulties, was the last person to whom, in such a case as this, I looked for help. Everything convinced me that he had no knowledge of any such mental state as I was suffering from, and that even if he could be made to understand it, he was not the physician who could heal it. My education, which was wholly his work, had been conducted without any regard to the possibility of its ending in this result; and I

saw no use in giving him the pain of thinking that his plans had failed, when the failure was probably irremediable, and, at all events, beyond the power of *his* remedies. Of other friends, I had at that time none to whom I had any hope of making my condition intelligible. It was however abundantly intelligible to myself; and the more I dwelt upon it, the more hopeless it appeared.

My course of study had led me to believe, that all mental and moral feelings and qualities, whether of a good or of a bad kind, were the results of association; that we love one thing, and hate another, take pleasure in one sort of action or contemplation, and pain in another sort, through the clinging of pleasurable or painful ideas to those things, from the effect of education or of experience. As a corollary from this, I had always heard it maintained by my father, and was myself convinced, that the object of education should be to form the strongest possible associations of the salutary class, associations of pleasure with all things beneficial to the great whole, and of pain with all things hurtful to it. This doctrine appeared inexpugnable; but it now seemed to me, on retrospect, that my teachers had occupied themselves but superficially with the means of forming and keeping up these salutary associations. They seemed to have trusted altogether to the old familiar instruments, praise and blame, reward and punishment. Now, I did not doubt that by these means, begun early, and applied unremittingly, intense associations of pain and pleasure, especially of pain, might be created, and might produce desires and aversions capable of lasting undiminished to the end of life. But there must always be something artificial and casual in associations thus produced. The pains and pleasures thus forcibly associated with things, are not connected with them by any natural tie; and it is therefore, I thought, essential to the durability of these associations, that they should have become so intense and inveterate as to be practically indissoluble, before the habitual exercise of the power of analysis had commenced. For I now saw, or thought I saw, what I had always before received with incredulity — that the

habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings: as indeed it has, when no other mental habit is cultivated, and the analysing spirit remains without its natural complements and correctives. The very excellence of analysis (I argued) is that it tends to weaken and undermine whatever is the result of prejudice; that it enables us mentally to separate ideas which have only casually clung together: and no associations whatever could ultimately resist this dissolving force, were it not that we owe to analysis our clearest knowledge of the permanent sequences in nature; the real connexions between Things, not dependent on our will and feelings; natural laws, by virtue of which, in many cases, one thing is inseparable from another in fact; which laws, in proportion as they are clearly perceived and imaginatively realized, cause our ideas of things which are always joined together in Nature, to cohere more and more closely in our thoughts. Analytic habits may thus even strengthen the associations between causes and effects, means and ends, but tend altogether to weaken those which are, to speak familiarly, a *mere* matter of feeling. They are therefore (I thought) favorable to prudence and clear-sightedness, but a perpetual worm at the root both of the passions and of the virtues; and, above all, fearfully undermine all desires, and all pleasures, which are the effects of association, that is, according to the theory I held, all except the purely physical and organic; of the entire insufficiency of which to make life desirable, no one had a stronger conviction than I had. These were the laws of human nature, by which, as it seemed to me, I had been brought to my present state. All those to whom I looked up, were of opinion that the pleasure of sympathy with human beings, and the feelings which made the good of others, and especially of mankind on a large scale, the object of existence, were the greatest and surest sources of happiness. Of the truth of this I was convinced, but to know that a feeling would make me happy if I had it, did not give me the feeling. My education, I thought, had failed to create these feelings in sufficient strength to resist the dissolving influence of analysis, while the

whole course of my intellectual cultivation had made precocious and premature analysis the inveterate habit of my mind. I was thus, as I said to myself, left stranded at the commencement of my voyage, with a well-equipped ship and a rudder, but no sail; without any real desire for the ends which I had been so carefully fitted out to work for: no delight in virtue, or the general good, but also just as little in anything else. The fountains of vanity and ambition seemed to have dried up within me, as completely as those of benevolence. I had had (as I reflected) some gratification of vanity at too early an age: I had obtained some distinction, and felt myself of some importance, before the desire of distinction and of importance had grown into a passion: and little as it was which I had attained, yet having been attained too early, like all pleasures enjoyed too soon, it had made me *blase* and indifferent to the pursuit. Thus neither selfish nor unselfish pleasures were pleasures to me. And there seemed no power in nature sufficient to begin the formation of my character anew, and create in a mind now irretrievably analytic, fresh associations of pleasure with any of the objects of human desire.

These were the thoughts which mingled with the dry heavy dejection of the melancholy winter of 1826-17. During this time I was not incapable of my usual occupations. I went on with them mechanically, by the mere force of habit. I had been so drilled in a certain sort of mental exercise, that I could still carry it on when all the spirit had gone out of it. I even composed and spoke several speeches at the debating society, how, or with what degree of success, I know not. Of four years continual speaking at that society, this is the only year of which I remember next to nothing. Two lines of Coleridge, in whom alone of all writers I have found a true description of what I felt, were often in my thoughts, not at this time (for I had never read them), but in a later period of the same mental malady:

Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.

In all probability my case was by no means so peculiar as I fancied it, and I doubt not

that many others have passed through a similar state; but the idiosyncrasies of my education had given to the general phenomenon a special character, which made it seem the natural effect of causes that it was hardly possible for time to remove. I frequently asked myself, if I could, or if I was bound to go on living, when life must be passed in this manner. I generally answered to myself, that I did not think I could possibly bear it beyond a year. When, however, not more than half that duration of time had elapsed, a small lay of light broke in upon my gloom, I was reading, accidentally, Marmontel's *Memoires*, and came to the passage which relates his father's death, the distressed position of the family, and the sudden inspiration by which he, then a mere boy, felt and made them feel that he would be everything to them — would supply the place of all that they had lost. A vivid conception of the scene and its feelings came over me, and I was moved to tears. From this moment my burden grew lighter. The oppression of the thought that all feeling was dead within me, was gone. I was no longer hopeless: I was not a stock or a stone. I had still, it seemed, some of the material out of which all worth of character, and all capacity for happiness, are made. Relieved from my ever present sense of irremediable wretchedness, I gradually found that the ordinary incidents of life could again give me some pleasure, that I could again find enjoyment, not intense, but sufficient for cheerfulness, in sunshine and sky, in books, in conversation, in public affairs; and that there was, once more, excitement, though of a moderate kind, in exerting myself for my opinions, and for the public good. Thus the cloud gradually drew off, and I again enjoyed life: and though I had several relapses, some of which lasted many months, I never again was as miserable as I had been.

The experiences of this period had two very marked effects on my opinions and character. In the first place, they led me to adopt a theory of life, very unlike that on

which I had before acted, and having much in common with what at that time I certainly had never heard of, the anti-self-consciousness theory of Carlyle. I never, indeed, wavered in the conviction that happiness is the test of all rules of conduct, and the end of life. But I now thought that this end was only to be attained by not making it the direct end. Those only are happy (I thought) who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even on some art or pursuit, followed not as a means, but as itself an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find happiness by the way. The enjoyments of life (such was now my theory) are sufficient to make it a pleasant thing, when they are taken *en passant*, without being made a principal object. Once make them so, and they are immediately felt to be insufficient. They will not bear a scrutinizing examination. Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so. The only chance is to treat, not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life. Let your self-consciousness, your scrutiny, your self-interrogation, exhaust themselves on that; and if otherwise fortunately circumstanced you will inhale happiness with the air you breathe, without dwelling on it or thinking about it, without either forestalling it in imagination, or putting it to flight by fatal questioning. This theory now became the basis of my philosophy of life. And I still hold to it as the best theory for all those who have but a moderate degree of sensibility and of capacity for enjoyment, that is, for the great majority of mankind.

The other important change which my opinions at this time underwent, was that I, for the first time, gave its proper place, among the prime necessities of human well-being, to the internal culture of the individual. I ceased to attach almost exclusive importance to the ordering of outward circumstances, and the training of the human being for speculation and for action.

I had now learnt by experience that the passive susceptibilities needed to be cultivated as well as the active capacities, and required

¹ Jean François Marmontel (1723-99) was brought up by the Jesuits, but later became a disciple of Voltaire and a contributor to the *Encyclopedic*.

to be nourished and enriched as well as guided. I did not, for an instant, lose sight of, or undervalue, that part of the truth which I had seen before; I never turned recreant to intellectual culture, or ceased to consider the power and practice of analysis as an essential condition both of individual and of social improvement. But I thought that it had consequences which required to be corrected, by joining other kinds of cultivation with it. The maintenance of a due balance among the faculties, now seemed to me of primary importance. The cultivation of the feelings became one of the cardinal points in my ethical and philosophical creed. And my thoughts and inclinations turned in an increasing degree towards whatever seemed capable of being instrumental to that object.

I now began to find meaning in the things which I had read or heard about the importance of poetry and art as instruments of human culture. But it was some time longer before I began to know this by personal experience. The only one of the imaginative arts in which I had from childhood taken great pleasure, was music; the best effect of which (and in this it surpasses perhaps every other art) consists in exciting enthusiasm, in winding up to a high pitch those feelings of an elevated kind which are already in the character, but to which this excitement gives a glow and a fervor, which, though transitory at its utmost height, is precious for sustaining them at other times. This effect of music I had often experienced, but like all my pleasurable susceptibilities it was suspended during the gloomy period. I had sought relief again and again from this quarter, but found none. After the tide had turned, and I was in process of recovery, I had been helped forward by music, but in a much less elevated manner. I at this time first became acquainted with Weber's *Oberon*,¹ and the extreme pleasure which I drew from its delicious melodies did me good, by showing me a source of pleasure to which I was as susceptible as ever. The good, however, was much impaired by the thought, that the pleasure of music (as is quite true of such

pleasure as this was, that of mere tune) fades with familiarity, and requires either to be revived by intermittence, or fed by continual novelty. And it is very characteristic both of my then state, and of the general tone of my mind at this period of my life, that I was seriously tormented by the thought of the exhaustibility of musical combinations. The octave consists only of five tones and two semi-tones, which can be put together in only a limited number of ways, of which but a small proportion are beautiful: most of these, it seemed to me, must have been already discovered, and there could not be room for a long succession of Mozarts and Webers, to strike out, as these had done, entirely new and surpassingly rich veins of musical beauty. This source of anxiety may, perhaps, be thought to resemble that of the philosophers of Laputa,¹ who feared lest the sun should be burnt out. It was, however, connected with the best feature in my character, and the only good point to be found in my very unromantic and in no way honorable distress. For though my dejection, honestly looked at, could not be called other than egotistical, produced by the rum, as I thought, of my fabric of happiness, yet the destiny of mankind in general was ever in my thoughts, and could not be separated from my own. I felt that the flaw in my life, must be a flaw in life itself, that the question was, whether, if the reformers of society and government could succeed in their objects, and every person in the community were free and in a state of physical comfort, the pleasures of life, being no longer kept up by struggle and privation, would cease to be pleasures. And I felt that unless I could see my way to some better hope than this for human happiness in general, my dejection must continue; but that if I could see such an outlet, I should then look on the world with pleasure; content as far as I was myself concerned, with any fair share of the general lot.

This state of my thoughts and feelings made the fact of my reading Wordsworth for the first time (in the autumn of 1818), an important event in my life. I took up the collection of his poems from curiosity, with no

¹ An opera by Karl Maria von Weber (1786-1846), one of the romantic German composers.

¹ *The Voyage to Laputa* is the third part of *Gulliver's Travels*.

expectation of mental relief from it, though I had before resorted to poetry with that hope. In the worst period of my depression, I had read through the whole of Byron (then new to me), to try whether a poet, whose peculiar department was supposed to be that of the intenser feelings, could rouse any feeling in me. As might be expected, I got no good from this reading, but the reverse. The poet's state of mind was too like my own. His was the lament of a man who had worn out all pleasures, and who seemed to think that life, to all who possess the good things of it, must necessarily be the vapid, uninteresting thing which I found it. His Harold and Manfred had the same burden on them which I had; and I was not in a frame of mind to desire any comfort from the vehement sensual passion of his Giaours, or the sullenness of his Laras. But while Byron was exactly what did not suit my condition, Wordsworth was exactly what did. I had looked into *The Excursion* two or three years before, and found little in it; and I should probably have found as little, had I read it at this time. But the miscellaneous poems, in the two-volume edition of 1815 (to which little of value was added in the latter part of the author's life), proved to be the precise thing for my mental wants at that particular juncture.

In the first place, these poems addressed themselves powerfully to one of the strongest of my pleasurable susceptibilities, the love of rural objects and natural scenery; to which I had been indebted not only for much of the pleasure of my life, but quite recently for relief from one of my longest relapses into depression. In this power of rural beauty over me, there was a foundation laid for taking pleasure in Wordsworth's poetry; the more so, as his scenery lies mostly among mountains, which, owing to my early Pyrenean excursion, were my ideal of natural beauty. But Wordsworth would never have had any great effect on me, if he had merely placed before me beautiful pictures of natural scenery. Scott does this still better than Wordsworth, and a very second-rate landscape does it more effectually than any poet. What made Wordsworth's poems a medicine for my

state of mind, was that they expressed, not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, and of thought colored by feeling, under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings, which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared in by all human beings; which had no connexion with struggle or imperfection, but would be made richer by every improvement in the physical or social condition of mankind. From them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed. And I felt myself at once better and happier as I came under their influence. There have certainly been, even in our own age, greater poets than Wordsworth; but poetry of deeper and loftier feeling could not have done for me at that time what his did. I needed to be made to feel that there was real, permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation. Wordsworth taught me this, not only without turning away from, but with a greatly increased interest in the common feelings and common destiny of human beings. And the delight which these poems gave me, proved that with culture of this sort, there was nothing to dread from the most confirmed habit of analysis. At the conclusion of the Poems came the famous Ode, falsely called Platonic, "Intimations of Immortality;" in which, along with more than his usual sweetness of melody and rhythm, and along with the two passages of grand imagery but bad philosophy so often quoted, I found that he too had had similar experience to mine, that he also had felt that the first freshness of youthful enjoyment of life was not lasting; but that he had sought for compensation, and found it, in the way in which he was now teaching me to find it. The result was that I gradually, but completely, emerged from my habitual depression, and was never again subject to it. I long continued to value Wordsworth less according to his intrinsic merits, than by the measure of what he had done for me. Compared with the greatest poets, he may be said to be the poet of unpoetical natures, possessed of

quiet and contemplative tastes. But unpoetical natures are precisely those which require poetic cultivation. This cultivation Wordsworth is much more fitted to give, than poets who are intrinsically far more poets than he

FROM *On Liberty* 1859

Mill regarded *On Liberty* as the most individual of his works. It is in effect the textbook of the movement in the nineteenth century known as Liberalism. It shows the belief in the human intellect and its development by education, respect for the individual, and distrust of government, which were the creed of the Liberals. Above all, it emphasizes freedom of discussion as indispensable to the working of democracy through a representative government. In this it follows closely in many points the arguments which Milton had urged in the *Areopagitica* two centuries before. The argument is diametrically opposed to Carlyle's. (See p. 390.)

CHAPTER I

Introductory

The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages, but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this

contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the Government. By liberty, was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest, who, at all events, did not hold it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying on the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks, by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort, supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and, to attain this, or when already in some

degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came, in the progress of human affairs, when men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees this new demand for elective and temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation of the power itself. *That* (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannizing over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of which it could itself dictate the use to be made. The power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which it still apparently predominates. Those who admit any limit to what a gov-

ernment may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it, had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of a usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised, and the "self-government" spoken of is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority; the people, consequently *may* desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals loses

none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant — society collectively over the separate individuals who compose it — its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind was warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

CHAPTER II

Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion

The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by, when any defence would be necessary of the "liberty of the press" as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear. This aspect of the question, besides,

has been so often and so triumphantly enforced by preceding writers, that it need not be specially insisted on in this place. Though the law of England, on the subject of the press, is as servile to this day as it was in the time of the Tudors, there is little danger of its being actually put in force against political discussion, except during some temporary panic, when fear of insurrection drives ministers and judges from their propriety;¹ and, speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended, that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public. Let us suppose, therefore, that the government is entirely at one with the people, and never thinks of exerting any power of coercion unless in agreement with what it conceives to be their voice. But I deny the

¹ These words had scarcely been written, when, as if to give them an emphatic contradiction, occurred the Government Press Prosecutions of 1858. That ill-judged interference with the liberty of public discussion has not, however, induced me to alter a single word in the text, nor has it at all weakened my conviction that, moments of panic excepted, the era of pains and penalties for political discussion has, in our own country, passed away. For, in the first place, the prosecutions were not persisted in; and, in the second, they were never, properly speaking, political prosecutions. The offence charged was not that of criticizing institutions, or the acts or persons of rulers, but of circulating what was deemed an immoral doctrine, the lawfulness of Tyrannicide.

If the arguments of the present chapter are of any validity, there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered. It would, therefore, be irrelevant and out of place to examine here, whether the doctrine of Tyrannicide deserves that title. I shall content myself with saying that the subject has been at all times one of the open questions of morals; that the act of a private citizen in striking down a criminal, who, by raising himself above the law, has placed himself beyond the reach of legal punishment or control, has been accounted by whole nations, and by some of the best and wisest of men, not a crime, but an act of exalted virtue; and that, right or wrong, it is not of the nature of assassination, but of civil war. As such, I hold that the instigation to it, in a specific case, may be a proper subject of punishment, but only if an overt act has followed, and at least a probable connection can be established between the act and the instigation. Even then, it is not a foreign government, but the very government assailed, which alone, in the exercise of self-defence, can legitimately punish attacks directed against its own existence. (Mill.)

right of the people to exercise such coercion, either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate. The best government has no more title to it than the worst. It is as noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion, than when in opposition to it. If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to the owner; if to be obstructed in the enjoyment of it were simply a private injury, it would make some difference whether the injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on many. But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation, those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.

It is necessary to consider separately these two hypotheses, each of which has a distinct branch of the argument corresponding to it. We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion, and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still.

First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind, and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not the worse for being common.

Unfortunately for the good sense of man-

kind, the fact of their fallibility is far from carrying the weight in their practical judgment which is always allowed to it in theory; for while every one well knows himself to be fallible, few think it necessary to take any precautions against their own fallibility, or admit the supposition that any opinion, of which they feel very certain, may be one of the examples of the error to which they acknowledge themselves to be liable. Absolute princes, or others who are accustomed to unlimited deference, usually feel this complete confidence in their own opinions on nearly all subjects. People more happily situated, who sometimes hear their opinions disputed, and are not wholly unused to be set right when they are wrong, place the same unbounded reliance only on such of their opinions as are shared by all who surround them, or to whom they habitually defer; for in proportion to a man's want of confidence in his own solitary judgment, does he usually repose, with implicit trust, on the infallibility of "the world" in general. And the world, to each individual, means the part of it with which he comes in contact; his party, his sect, his church, his class of society; the man may be called, by comparison, almost liberal and large-minded to whom it means anything so comprehensive as his own country or his own age. Nor is his faith in this collective authority at all shaken by his being aware that other ages, countries, sects, churches, classes, and parties have thought, and even now think, the exact reverse. He devolves upon his own world the responsibility of being in the right against the dissentient worlds of other people, and it never troubles him that mere accident has decided which of these numerous worlds is the object of his reliance, and that the same causes which make him a Churchman in London, would have made him a Buddhist or a Confucian in Peking. Yet it is as evident in itself, as any amount of argument can make it, that ages are no more infallible than individuals; every age having held many opinions which subsequent ages have deemed not only false but absurd; and it is as certain that many opinions now general will be rejected by future ages, as it is that many, once general, are rejected by the present.

The objection likely to be made to this argument would probably take some such form as the following. There is no greater assumption of infallibility in forbidding the propagation of error, than in any other thing which is done by public authority on its own judgment and responsibility. Judgment is given to men that they may use it. Because it may be used erroneously, are men to be told that they ought not to use it at all? To prohibit what they think pernicious, is not claiming exemption from error, but fulfilling the duty incumbent on them, although fallible, of acting on their conscientious conviction. If we were never to act on our opinions, because those opinions may be wrong, we should leave all our interests uncared for, and all our duties unperformed. An objection which applies to all conduct can be no valid objection to any conduct in particular. It is the duty of governments, and of individuals, to form the truest opinions they can; to form them carefully, and never impose them upon others unless they are quite sure of being right. But when they are sure (such reasoners may say), it is not conscientiousness but cowardice to shrink from acting on their opinions, and allow doctrines which they honestly think dangerous to the welfare of mankind, either in this life or in another, to be scattered abroad without restraint, because other people, in less enlightened times, have persecuted opinions now believed to be true. Let us take care, it may be said, not to make the same mistake: but governments and nations have made mistakes in other things, which are not denied to be fit subjects for the exercise of authority: they have laid on bad taxes, made unjust wars. Ought we therefore to lay on no taxes, and, under whatever provocation, make no wars? Men, and governments, must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must, assume our opinion to be true for the guidance of our own conduct: and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious.

I answer, that it is assuming very much more. There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.

Let us now pass to the second division of the argument, and dismissing the supposition that any of the received opinions may be false, let us assume them to be true, and examine into the worth of the manner in which they are likely to be held, when their truth is not freely and openly canvassed. However unwillingly a person who has a strong opinion may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that, however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.

There is a class of persons (happily not quite so numerous as formerly) who think it enough if a person assents undoubtingly to what they think true, though he has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion, and could not make a tenable defence of it against the most superficial objections. Such persons, if they can once get their creed taught from authority, naturally think that no good, and some harm, comes of its being allowed to be questioned. Where their influence prevails, they make it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerably, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument. Waiving, however, this possibility — assuming that the true opinion abides in the mind, but abides as a prejudice, a belief independent of, and proof against, argument — this is not the way in which truth ought to be

held by a rational being. This is not knowing the truth. Truth, thus held, is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth.

If the intellect and judgment of mankind ought to be cultivated, a thing which Protestants at least do not deny, on what can these faculties be more appropriately exercised by any one, than on the things which concern him so much that it is considered necessary for him to hold opinions on them? If the cultivation of the understanding consists in one thing more than in another, it is surely in learning the grounds of one's own opinions. Whatever people believe, on subjects on which it is of the first importance to believe rightly, they ought to be able to defend against at least the common objections. But, some one may say, "Let them be taught the grounds of their opinions. It does not follow that opinions must be merely parroted because they are never heard controverted. Persons who learn geometry do not simply commit the theorems to memory, but understand and learn likewise the demonstrations; and it would be absurd to say that they remain ignorant of the grounds of geometrical truths, because they never hear any one deny, and attempt to disprove them." Undoubtedly: and such teaching suffices on a subject like mathematics, where there is nothing at all to be said on the wrong side of the question. The peculiarity of the evidence of mathematical truths is that all the argument is on one side. There are no objections, and no answers to objections. But on every subject on which difference of opinion is possible, the truth depends on a balance to be struck between two sets of conflicting reasons. Even in natural philosophy, there is always some other explanation possible of the same facts; some geocentric theory instead of heliocentric, some phlogiston instead of oxygen; and it has to be shown why that other theory cannot be the true one: and until this is shown, and until we know how it is shown, we do not understand the grounds of our opinion. But when we turn to subjects infinitely more complicated, to morals, religion, politics, social relations, and the business of life, three-fourths of the arguments

for every disputed opinion consist in dispelling the appearances which favor some opinion different from it. The greatest orator, save one, of antiquity, has left it on record that he always studied his adversary's case with as great, if not still greater, intensity than even his own. What Cicero practised as the means of forensic success requires to be imitated by all who study any subject in order to arrive at the truth. He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side, if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion. The rational position for him would be suspension of judgment, and unless he contents himself with that, he is either led by authority, or adopts, like the generality of the world, the side to which he feels most inclination. Nor is it enough that he should hear the arguments of adversaries from his own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations. That is not the way to do justice to the arguments, or bring them into real contact with his own mind. He must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest, and do their very utmost for them. He must know them in their most plausible and persuasive form; he must feel the whole force of the difficulty which the true view of the subject has to encounter and dispose of, else he will never really possess himself of the portion of truth which meets and removes that difficulty. Ninety-nine in a hundred of what are called educated men are in this condition; even of those who can argue fluently for their opinions. Their conclusion may be true, but it might be false for anything they know: they have never thrown themselves into the mental position of those who think differently from them, and considered what such persons may have to say; and consequently they do not, in any proper sense of the word, know the doctrine which they themselves profess. They do not know those parts of it which explain and justify the remainder; the considerations which show that

a fact which seemingly conflicts with another is reconcilable with it, or that, of two apparently strong reasons, one and not the other ought to be preferred. All that part of the truth which turns the scale, and decides the judgment of a completely informed mind, they are strangers to; nor is it ever really known, but to those who have attended equally and impartially to both sides, and endeavored to see the reasons of both in the strongest light. So essential is this discipline to a real understanding of moral and human subjects, that if opponents of all important truths do not exist, it is indispensable to imagine them, and supply them with the strongest arguments which the most skilful devil's advocate can conjure up.

If, however, the mischievous operation of the absence of free discussion, when the received opinions are true, were confined to leaving men ignorant of the grounds of those opinions, it might be thought that this, if an intellectual, is no moral evil, and does not affect the worth of the opinions, regarded in their influence on the character. The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate. Instead of a vivid conception and a living belief, there remain only a few phrases retained by rote; or, if any part, the shell and husk only of the meaning is retained, the finer essence being lost. The great chapter in human history which this fact occupies and fills, cannot be too earnestly studied and meditated on.

It is illustrated in the experience of almost all ethical doctrines and religious creeds. They are all full of meaning and vitality to those who originate them, and to the direct disciples of the originators. Their meaning continues to be felt in undiminished strength, and is perhaps brought out into even fuller consciousness, so long as the struggle lasts to give the doctrine or creed an ascendancy over other creeds. At last it either prevails, and becomes the general opinion, or its progress

stops; it keeps possession of the ground it has gained, but ceases to spread further. When either of these results has become apparent, controversy on the subject flags, and gradually dies away. The doctrine has taken its place, if not as a received opinion, as one of the admitted sects or divisions of opinion: those who hold it have generally inherited, not adopted it; and conversion from one of these doctrines to another, being now an exceptional fact, occupies little place in the thoughts of their professors. Instead of being, as at first, constantly on the alert either to defend themselves against the world, or to bring the world over to them, they have subsided into acquiescence, and neither listen, when they can help it, to arguments against their creed, nor trouble dissentients (if there be such) with arguments in its favor. From this time may usually be dated the decline in the living power of the doctrine. We often hear the teachers of all creeds lamenting the difficulty of keeping up in the minds of believers a lively apprehension of the truth which they nominally recognize, so that it may penetrate the feelings, and acquire a real mastery over the conduct. No such difficulty is complained of while the creed is still fighting for its existence: even the weaker combatants then know and feel what they are fighting for, and the difference between it and other doctrines; and in that period of every creed's existence, not a few persons may be found, who have realized its fundamental principles in all the forms of thought, have weighed and considered them in all their important bearings, and have experienced the full effect on the character which belief in that creed ought to produce in a mind thoroughly imbued with it. But when it has come to be an hereditary creed, and to be received passively, not actively — when the mind is no longer compelled, in the same degree as at first, to exercise its vital powers on the questions which its belief presents to it, there is a progressive tendency to forget all of the belief except the formularies, or to give it a dull and torpid assent, as if accepting it on trust dispensed with the necessity of realizing it in consciousness, or testing it by personal experience,

until it almost ceases to connect itself at all with the inner life of the human being. Then are seen the cases, so frequent in this age of the world as almost to form the majority, in which the creed remains as it were outside the mind, incrusting and petrifying it against all other influences addressed to the higher parts of our nature; manifesting its power by not suffering any fresh and living conviction to get in, but itself doing nothing for the mind or heart, except standing sentinel over them to keep them vacant.

It still remains to speak of one of the principal causes which make diversity of opinion advantageous, and will continue to do so until mankind shall have entered a stage of intellectual advancement which at present seems at an incalculable distance. We have hitherto considered only two possibilities: that the received opinion may be false, and some other opinion, consequently, true; or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension and deep feeling of its truth. But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them; and the nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth, of which the received doctrine embodies only a part. Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth. They are a part of the truth; sometimes a greater, sometimes a smaller part, but exaggerated, distorted, and disjointed from the truths by which they ought to be accompanied and limited. Heretical opinions, on the other hand, are generally some of these suppressed and neglected truths, bursting the bonds which kept them down, and either seeking reconciliation with the truth contained in the common opinion, or fronting it as enemies, and setting themselves up, with similar exclusiveness, as the whole truth. The latter case is hitherto the most frequent, as, in the human mind, one-sidedness has always been the rule, and many-sidedness the exception. Hence, even in revolutions of opinion, one

part of the truth usually sets while another rises. Even progress, which ought to super-add, for the most part only substitutes, one partial and incomplete truth for another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the new fragment of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces. Such being the partial character of prevailing opinions, even when resting on a true foundation, every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious, with whatever amount of error and confusion that truth may be blended. No sober judge of human affairs will feel bound to be indignant because those who force on our notice truths which we should otherwise have overlooked, overlook some of those which we see. Rather, he will think that so long as popular truth is one-sided, it is more desirable than otherwise that unpopular truth should have one-sided assertors too; such being usually the most energetic, and the most likely to compel reluctant attention to the fragment of wisdom which they proclaim as if it were the whole.

Thus, in the eighteenth century, when nearly all the instructed, and all those of the uninstructed who were led by them, were lost in admiration of what is called civilization, and of the marvels of modern science, literature, and philosophy, and while greatly overrating the amount of unlikeness between the men of modern and those of ancient times, indulged the belief that the whole of the difference was in their own favor; with what a salutary shock did the paradoxes of Rousseau explode like bombshells in the midst, dislocating the compact mass of one-sided opinion, and forcing its elements to recombine in a better form and with additional ingredients. Not that the current opinions were on the whole farther from the truth than Rousseau's were; on the contrary, they were nearer to it; they contained more of positive truth, and very much less of error. Nevertheless there lay in Rousseau's doctrine, and has floated down the stream of opinion along with it, a considerable amount of exactly those truths which the popular

opinion wanted; and these are the deposit which was left behind when the flood subsided. The superior worth of simplicity of life, the enervating and demoralizing effect of the trammels and hypocrisies of artificial society, are ideas which have never been entirely absent from cultivated minds since Rousseau wrote; and they will in time produce their due effect, though at present needing to be asserted as much as ever, and to be asserted by deeds, for words, on this subject, have nearly exhausted their power.

In politics, again, it is almost a commonplace, that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life; until the one or the other shall have so enlarged its mental grasp as to be a party equally of order and of progress, knowing and distinguishing what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away. Each of these modes of thinking derives its utility from the deficiencies of the other; but it is in a great measure the opposition of the other that keeps each within the limits of reason and sanity. Unless opinions favorable to democracy and to aristocracy, to property and to equality, to co-operation and to competition, to luxury and to abstinence, to sociality and individuality, to liberty and discipline, and all the other standing antagonisms of practical life, are expressed with equal freedom, and enforced with equal talent and energy, there is no chance of both elements obtaining their due; one scale is sure to go up, and the other down. Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners. On any of the great open questions just enumerated, if either of the two opinions has a better claim than the other, not merely to be tolerated, but to be encouraged and countenanced, it is the one which happens at the particular time and place to be in a minority. That is the opinion which, for the time being,

represents the neglected interests, the side of human well-being which is in danger of obtaining less than its share. I am aware that there is not, in this country, any intolerance of differences of opinion on most of these topics. They are adduced to show, by admitted and multiplied examples, the universality of the fact, that only through diversity of opinion is there, in the existing state of human intellect, a chance of fair play to all sides of the truth. When there are persons to be found who form an exception to the apparent unanimity of the world on any subject, even if the world is in the right, it is always probable that dissentients have something worth hearing to say for themselves, and that truth would lose something by their silence.

Before quitting the subject of freedom of opinion, it is fit to take some notice of those who say that the free expression of all opinions should be permitted, on condition that the manner be temperate, and do not pass the bounds of fair discussion. Much might be said on the impossibility of fixing where these supposed bounds are to be placed; for if the test be offence to those whose opinions are attacked, I think experience testifies that this offence is given whenever the attack is telling and powerful, and that every opponent who pushes them hard, and whom they find it difficult to answer, appears to them, if he shows any strong feeling on the subject, an intemperate opponent. But this, though an important consideration in a practical point of view, merges in a more fundamental objection. Undoubtedly the manner of asserting an opinion, even though it be a true one, may be very objectionable, and may justly incur severe censure. But the principal offences of the kind are such as it is mostly impossible, unless by accidental self-betrayal, to bring home to conviction. The gravest of them is, to argue sophistically, to suppress facts or arguments, to misstate the elements of the case, or misrepresent the opposite opinion. But all this, even to the most aggravated degree, is so continually done in perfect good faith, by persons who are not considered, and in many other re-

spects may not deserve to be considered, ignorant or incompetent, that it is rarely possible, on adequate grounds, conscientiously to stamp the misrepresentation as morally culpable; and still less could law presume to interfere with this kind of controversial misconduct. With regard to what is commonly meant by intemperate discussion, namely invective, sarcasm, personality, and the like, the denunciation of these weapons would deserve more sympathy if it were ever proposed to interdict them equally to both sides; but it is only desired to restrain the employment of them against the prevailing opinion: against the unprevailing they may not only be used without general disapproval, but will be likely to obtain for him who uses them the praise of honest zeal and righteous indignation. Yet whatever mischief arises from their use is greatest when they are employed against the comparatively defenceless; and whatever unfair advantage can be derived by any opinion from this mode of asserting it, accrues almost exclusively to received opinions. The worst offence of this kind which can be committed by a polemic is to stigmatize those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men. To calumny of this sort, those who hold any unpopular opinion are peculiarly exposed, because they are in general few and uninfluential, and nobody but themselves feels much interested in seeing justice done them; but this weapon is, from the nature of the case, denied to those who attack a prevailing opinion: they can neither use it with safety to themselves, nor, if they could, would it do anything but recoil on their own cause. In general, opinions contrary to those commonly received can only obtain a hearing by studied moderation of language, and the most cautious avoidance of unnecessary offence, from which they hardly ever deviate even in a slight degree without losing ground: while unmeasured vituperation employed on the side of the prevailing opinion really does deter people from professing contrary opinions, and from listening to those who profess them. For the interest, therefore, of truth and justice, it is far more important to restrain this employment of vituperative language

than the other; and, for example, if it were necessary to choose, there would be much more need to discourage offensive attacks on infidelity than on religion. It is, however, obvious that law and authority have no business with restraining either, while opinion ought, in every instance, to determine its verdict by the circumstances of the individual case; condemning every one, on whichever side of the argument he places himself, in whose mode of advocacy either want of candor, or malignity, bigotry, or intolerance of feeling manifest themselves, but not inferring these vices from the side which a person takes, though it be the contrary side of the question to our own, and giving merited honor to every one, whatever opinion he may hold, who has calmness to see and honesty to state what his opponents and their opinions really are, exaggerating nothing to their discredit, keeping nothing back which tells, or can be supposed to tell, in their favor. This is the real morality of public discussion: and if often violated, I am happy to think that there are many controversialists who to a great extent observe it, and a still greater number who conscientiously strive towards it.

CHAPTER in

Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-Being

Such being the reasons which make it imperative that human beings should be free to form opinions, and to express their opinions without reserve; and such the baneful consequences to the intellectual, and through that to the moral nature of man, unless this liberty is either conceded, or asserted in spite of prohibition; let us next examine whether the same reasons do not require that men should be free to act upon their opinions — to carry these out in their lives, without hindrance, either physical or moral, from their fellow-men, so long as it is at their own risk and peril. This last proviso is of course indispensable. No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity when the circumstances in,

which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor, or that private property is robbery, ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer, or when handed about among the same mob in the form of a placard. Acts, of whatever kind, which, without justifiable cause, do harm to others, may be, and in the more important cases absolutely require to be, controlled by the unfavorable sentiments, and, when needful, by the active interference of mankind. The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. But if he refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost. That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognizing all sides of the truth, are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opinions. As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite

the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

In maintaining this principle, the greatest difficulty to be encountered does not lie in the appreciation of means towards an acknowledged end, but in the indifference of persons in general to the end itself. If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated by the terms civilization, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be undervalued and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty. But the evil is, that individual spontaneity is hardly recognized by the common modes of thinking as having any intrinsic worth, or deserving any regard on its own account. The majority, being satisfied with the ways of mankind as they now are (for it is they who make them what they are), cannot comprehend why those ways should not be good enough for everybody; and what is more, spontaneity forms no part of the ideal of the majority of moral and social reformers, but is rather looked on with jealousy, as a troublesome and perhaps rebellious obstruction to the general acceptance of what these reformers, in their own judgment, think would be best for mankind. Few persons, out of Germany, even comprehend the meaning of the doctrine which Wilhelm von Humboldt,¹ so eminent both as a *savant* and as a politician, made the text of a treatise — that "the end of man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole;" that, therefore, the object "towards which every human being must ceaselessly direct his efforts, and on which especially those who design to influence their fellow-men must ever keep their

eyes, is the individuality of power and development;" that for this there are two requisites, "freedom, and variety of situations," and that from the union of these arise "individual vigor and manifold diversity" which combine themselves in "originality."¹

Little, however, as people are accustomed to a doctrine like that of Von Humboldt, and surprising as it may be to them to find so high a value attached to individuality, the question, one must nevertheless think, can only be one of degree. No one's idea of excellence in conduct is that people should do absolutely nothing but copy one another. No one would assert that people ought not to put into their mode of life, and into the conduct of their concerns, any impress whatever of their own judgment, or of their own individual character. On the other hand, it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if nothing whatever had been known in the world before they came into it; as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another. Nobody denies that people should be so taught and trained in youth as to know and benefit by the ascertained results of human experience. But it is the privilege and proper condition of a human being, arrived at the maturity of his faculties, to use and interpret experience in his own way. It is for him to find out what part of recorded experience is properly applicable to his own circumstances and character. The traditions and customs of other people are, to a certain extent, evidence of what their experience has taught *them*; presumptive evidence, and as such, have a claim to his deference: but, in the first place, their experience may be too narrow; or they may not have interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances and customary characters; and his circumstances or his character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to cus-

¹ Friedrich Wilhelm Christian Karl Ferdinand von Humboldt (1767-1835), a German philologist and author.

¹ *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, from the German of Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, pp. 11-13. (Mill.)

torn, merely as custom, does not educate or
 develop in him any of the qualities which
 are the distinctive endowment of a human
 being. The human faculties of perception,
 judgment, discriminative feeling, mental ac-
 tivity, and even moral preference, are exer-
 cised only in making a choice. He who
 does anything because it is the custom makes
 no choice. He gains no practice either in
 discerning or in desiring what is best. The
 mental and moral, like the muscular powers,
 are improved only by being used. The fac-
 ulties are called into no exercise by doing a
 thing merely because others do it, no more
 than by believing a thing only because others
 believe it. If the grounds of an opinion arc
 not conclusive to the person's own reason,
 his reason cannot be strengthened, but is
 likely to be weakened, by his adopting it; and
 if the inducements to an act are not such as
 are contemporaneous to his own feelings and
 character (where affection, or the rights of
 others, are not concerned) it is so much done
 towards rendering his feelings and charac-
 ter inert and torpid, instead of active and
 energetic.

He who lets the world, or his own portion
 of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no
 need of any other faculty than the apc-hke
 one of imitation. He who chooses his plan
 for himself, employs all his faculties. He
 must use observation to see, reasoning and
 judgment to foresee, activity to gather ma-
 terials for decision, discrimination to decide,
 and when he has decided, firmness of self-
 control to hold to his deliberate decision.
 And these qualities he requires and exercises
 exactly in proportion as the part of his con-
 duct which he determines according to his
 own judgment and feelings is a large one. It
 is possible that he might be guided in some
 good path, and kept out of harm's way, with-
 out any of these things. But what will be
 his comparative worth as a human being?
 It really is of importance, not only what men
 do, but also what manner of men they are
 that do it. Among the works of man, which
 human life is rightly employed in perfecting
 and beautifying, the first in importance surely
 is man himself. Supposing it were possible
 to get houses built, corn grown, battles

fought, causes tried, and even churches erected
 and prayers said, by machinery — by automa-
 tons in human form — it would be a consider-
 able loss to exchange for these automatons
 even the men and women who at present
 inhabit the more civilized parts of the world,
 and who assuredly are but starved specimens
 of what nature can and will produce. Hu-
 man nature is not a machine to be built after
 a model, and set to do exactly the work
 prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires
 to grow and develop itself on all sides, ac-
 cording to the tendency of the inward forces
 which make it a living thing.

It will probably be conceded that it is de-
 sirable people should exercise their under-
 standings, and that an intelligent following
 of custom, or even occasionally an intelligent
 deviation from custom, is better than a blind
 and simply mechanical adhesion to it. To a
 certain extent it is admitted that our un-
 derstanding should be our own: but there is not
 the same willingness to admit that our de-
 sires and impulses should be our own like-
 wise, or that to possess impulses of our own,
 and of any strength, is anything but a peril
 and a snare. Yet desires and impulses are
 as much a part of a perfect human being as
 beliefs and restraints: and strong impulses are
 only perilous when not properly balanced;
 when one set of aims and inclinations is de-
 veloped into strength, while others, which
 ought to co-exist with them, remain weak
 and inactive. It is not because men's desires
 are strong that they act ill; it is because their
 consciences are weak. There is no natural
 connection between strong impulses and a
 weak conscience. The natural connection is
 the other way. To say that one person's
 desires and feelings are stronger and more
 various than those of another, is merely to
 say that he has more of the raw material of
 human nature, and is therefore capable, per-
 haps of more evil, but certainly of more good.
 Strong impulses are but another name for
 energy. Energy may be turned to bad uses;
 but more good may always be made of an en-
 ergetic nature, than of an indolent and im-
 passive one. Those who have most natural
 feeling are always those whose cultivated
 feelings may be made the strongest. The

same strong susceptibilities which make the personal impulses vivid and powerful, are also the source from whence are generated the most passionate love of virtue, and the sternest self-control. It is through the cultivation of these that society both does its duty and protects its interests: not by rejecting the stuff of which heroes are made, because it knows not how to make them. A person whose desires and impulses are his own — are the expression of his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture — is said to have a character. One whose desires and impulses are not his own, has no character, no more than a steam-engine has a character. If, in addition to being his own, his impulses are strong, and are under the government of a strong will, he has an energetic character. Whoever thinks that individuality of desires and impulses should not be encouraged to unfold itself, must maintain that society has no need of strong natures — is not the better for containing many persons who have much character — and that a high general average of energy is not desirable.

In some early states of society, these forces might be, and were, too much ahead of the power which society then possessed of disciplining and controlling them. There has been a time when the element of spontaneity and individuality was in excess, and the social principle had a hard struggle with it. The difficulty then was to induce men of strong bodies or minds to pay obedience to any rules which required them to control their impulses. To overcome this difficulty, law and discipline, like the Popes struggling against the Emperors, asserted a power over the whole man, claiming to control all his life in order to control his character — which society had not found any other sufficient means of binding. But society has now fairly got the better of individuality; and the danger which threatens human nature is not the excess, but the deficiency, of personal impulses and preferences. Things are vastly changed since the passions of those who were strong by station or by personal endowment were in a state of habitual rebellion against laws and ordinances, and required to be rigorously chained up to enable the per-

sons within their reach to enjoy any particle of security. In our times, from the highest class of society down to the lowest, every one lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship. Not only in what concerns others, but in what concerns only themselves, the individual or the family do not ask themselves — what do I prefer? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play, and enable it to grow and thrive? They ask themselves, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station and pecuniary circumstances? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? I do not mean that they choose what is customary in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of, they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done: peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct, are shunned equally with crimes: until by dint of not following their own nature they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved: they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly their own. Now is this, or is it not the desirable condition of human nature?

It is so, on the Calvinistic theory. According to that, the one great offence of man is self-will. All the good of which humanity is capable is comprised in obedience. You have no choice; thus you must do, and no otherwise: "whatever is not a duty, is a sin." Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for any one until human nature is killed within him. To one holding this theory of life, crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities, is no evil: man needs no capacity, but that of surrendering himself to the will of God: and if he uses any of his faculties for any other purpose but to do that supposed will more effectually, he is better without

them. This is the theory of Calvinism; and it is held, in a mitigated form, by many who do not consider themselves Calvinists; the mitigation consisting in giving a less ascetic interpretation to the alleged will of God; asserting it to be his will that mankind should gratify some of their inclinations; of course not in the manner they themselves prefer, but in the way of obedience, that is, in a way prescribed to them by authority; and, therefore, by the necessary condition of the case, the same for all.

In some such insidious form there is at present a strong tendency to this narrow theory of life, and to the pinched and hidebound type of human character which it patronizes. Many persons, no doubt, sincerely think that human beings thus cramped and dwarfed are as their Maker designed them to be, just as many have thought that trees are a much finer thing when clipped into pollards, or cut out into figures of animals, than as nature made them. But if it be any part of religion to believe that man was made by a good Being, it is more consistent with that faith to believe that this Being gave all human faculties that they might be cultivated and unfolded, not rooted out and consumed, and that he takes delight in every nearer approach made by his creatures to the ideal conception embodied in them, every increase in any of their capabilities of comprehension, of action, or of enjoyment. There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. "Pagan self-assertion" is one of the elements of human worth, as well as "Christian self-denial."¹ There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by

¹ Sterling's *Essays*. (Mill.)

cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings, and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. In proportion to the development of his individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is therefore capable of being more valuable to others. There is a greater fullness of life about his own existence, and when there is more life in the units there is more in the mass which is composed of them. As much compression as is necessary to prevent the stronger specimens of human nature from encroaching on the rights of others cannot be dispensed with; but for this there is ample compensation even in the point of view of human development. The means of development which the individual loses by being prevented from gratifying his inclinations to the injury of others, are chiefly obtained at the expense of the development of other people. And even to himself there is a full equivalent in the better development of the social part of his nature, rendered possible by the restraint put upon the selfish part. To be held to rigid rules of justice for the sake of others, develops the feelings and capacities which have the good of others for their object. But to be restrained in things not affecting their good, by their mere displeasure, develops nothing valuable, except such force of character as may unfold itself in resisting the restraint. If acquiesced in, it dulls and blunts the whole nature. To give any fair play to the nature of each, it is essential that different persons should be allowed to lead different lives. In proportion as this latitude has been exercised in any age, has that age been noteworthy to posterity. Even despotism does not produce its worst effects, so long as individuality exists under it; and whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be

called, and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men.

Having said that the individuality is the same thing with development, and that it is only the cultivation of individuality which produces, or can produce, well-developed human beings, I might here close the argument: for what more or better can be said of any condition of human affairs than that it brings human beings themselves nearer to the best thing they can be? or what worse can be said of any obstruction to good than that it prevents this? Doubtless, however, these considerations will not suffice to convince those who most need convincing; and it is necessary further to show, that these developed human beings are of some use to the undeveloped — to point out to those who do not desire liberty, and would not avail themselves of it, that they may be in some intelligible manner rewarded for allowing other people to make use of it without hindrance.

In the first place, then, I would suggest that they might possibly learn something from them. It will not be denied by anybody, that originality is a valuable element in human affairs. There is always need of persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer, but also to commence new practices, and set the example of more enlightened conduct, and better taste and sense in human life. This cannot well be gainsaid by anybody who does not believe that the world has already attained perfection in all its ways and practices. It is true that this benefit is not capable of being rendered by everybody alike: there are but few persons, in comparison with the whole of mankind, whose experiments, if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice. But these few are the salt of the earth; without them, human life would become a stagnant pool. Not only is it they who introduce good things which did not before exist; it is they who keep the life in those which already exist. If there were nothing new to be done, would human intellect cease to be necessary? Would it be a reason why those who do the old things

should forget why they are done, and do them like cattle, not like human beings? There is only too great a tendency in the best beliefs and practices to degenerate into the mechanical; and unless there were a succession of persons whose ever-recurring originality prevents the grounds of those beliefs and practices from becoming merely traditional, such dead matter would not resist the smallest shock from anything really alive, and there would be no reason why civilization should not die out, as in the Byzantine Empire. Persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow. Genius can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere of freedom*. Persons of genius are, *ex vi termini*,¹ more individual than any other people — less capable, consequently, of fitting themselves, without hurtful compression, into any of the small number of molds which society provides in order to save its members the trouble of forming their own character. If from timidity they consent to be forced into one of these molds, and to let all that part of themselves which cannot expand under the pressure remain unexpanded, society will be little the better for their genius. If they are of a strong character, and break their fetters, they become a mark for the society which has not succeeded in reducing them to commonplace, to point out with solemn warning as "wild," "erratic," and the like; much as if one should complain of the Niagara river for not flowing smoothly between its banks like a Dutch canal.

I insist thus emphatically on the importance of genius, and the necessity of allowing it to unfold itself freely both in thought and in practice, being well aware that no one will deny the position in theory, but knowing also that almost every one, in reality, is totally indifferent to it. People think genius a fine thing if it enables a man to write an exciting poem, or paint a picture. But in its true sense, that of originality in thought and action, though no one says that it is not a thing to be admired, nearly all, at heart, think that they can do very well without it.

¹ by definition.

Unhappily this is too natural to be wondered at. Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of. They cannot see what it is to do for them: how should they? If they could see what it would do for them, it would not be originality. The first service which originality has to render them, is that of opening their eyes: which being once fully done, they would have a chance of being themselves original. Meanwhile, recollecting that nothing was ever yet done which some one was not the first to do, and that all good things which exist are the fruits of originality, let them be modest enough to believe that there is something still left for it to accomplish, and assure themselves that they are more in need of originality, the less they are conscious of the want.

In sober truth, whatever homage may be professed, or even paid, to real or supposed mental superiority, the general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind. In ancient history, in the Middle Ages, and in a diminishing degree through the long transition from feudality to the present time, the individual was a power in himself; and if he had either great talents or a high social position, he was a considerable power. At present individuals are lost in the crowd. In politics it is almost a triviality to say that public opinion now rules the world. The only power deserving the name is that of masses, and of governments while they make themselves the organ of the tendencies and instincts of masses. This is as true in the moral and social relations of private life as in public transactions. Those whose opinions go by the name of public opinion are not always the same sort of public: in America they are the whole white population; in England, chiefly the middle class. But they are always a mass, that is to say, collective mediocrity. And what is a still greater novelty, the mass do not now take their opinions from dignitaries in Church or State, from ostensible leaders, or from books. Their thinking is done for them by men much like themselves, addressing them or speaking in their name, on the spur of the moment, through the newspapers. I am not

complaining of all this. I do not assert that anything better is compatible, as a general rule, with the present low state of the human mind. But that does not hinder the government of mediocrity from being mediocre government. No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few. The initiation of all wise or noble things comes and must come from individuals; generally at first from some one individual. The honor and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following that initiative; that he can respond internally to wise and noble things, and be led to them with his eyes open. I am not countenancing the sort of "hero-worship" which applauds the strong man of genius for forcibly seizing on the government of the world and making it do his bidding in spite of itself. All he can claim is, freedom to point out the way. The power of compelling others into it is not only inconsistent with the freedom and development of all the rest, but corrupting to the strong man himself. It does seem, however, that when the opinions of masses of merely average men are everywhere become or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought. It is in these circumstances most especially, that exceptional individuals, instead of being deterred, should be encouraged in acting differently from the mass. In other times there was no advantage in their doing so, unless they acted not only differently but better. In this age, the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service. Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric. Eccentricity has

always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigor, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.

CHAPTER iv

Of the Limits to the Authority of Society over the Individual

What, then, is the rightful limit to the sovereignty of the individual over himself? Where does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?

Each will receive its proper share, if each has that which more particularly concerns it. To individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society.

Though society is not founded on a contract, and though no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract in order to deduce social obligations from it, every one who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit, and the fact of living in society renders it indispensable that each should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct towards the rest. This conduct consists, first, in not injuring the interests of one another; or rather certain interests, which either by express legal provision or by tacit understanding, ought to be considered as rights; and secondly, in each person's bearing his share (to be fixed on some equitable principle) of the labors and sacrifices incurred for defending the society or its members from injury and molestation. These conditions society is justified in enforcing, at all costs to those who endeavor to withhold fulfillment. Nor is this all that society may do. The acts of an individual may be hurtful to others, or wanting in due consideration for their welfare, without going to the length of violating any of their constituted rights. The offender may then be justly punished by opinion, though not by law. As soon as any

part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion. But there is no room for entertaining any such question when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides himself, or needs not affect them unless they like (all the persons concerned being of full age, and the ordinary amount of understanding). In all such cases, there should be perfect freedom, legal and social, to do the action and stand the consequences.

The distinction between the loss of consideration which a person may rightly incur by defect of prudence or of personal dignity, and the reprobation which is due to him for an offence against the rights of others, is not a merely nominal distinction. It makes a vast difference both in our feelings and in our conduct towards him whether he displeases us in things in which we think we have a right to control him, or in things in which we know that we have not. If he displeases us, we may express our distaste, and we may stand aloof from a person as well as from a thing that displeases us; but we shall not therefore feel called on to make his life uncomfortable. We shall reflect that he already bears, or will bear, the whole penalty of his error; if he spoils his life by mismanagement, we shall not, for that reason, desire to spoil it still further: instead of wishing to punish him, we shall rather endeavor to alleviate his punishment, by showing him how he may avoid or cure the evils his conduct tends to bring upon him. He may be to us an object of pity, perhaps of dislike, but not of anger or resentment; we shall not treat him like an enemy of society: the worst we shall think ourselves justified in doing is leaving him to himself, if we do not interfere benevolently by showing interest or concern for him. It is far otherwise if he has infringed the rules necessary for the protection of his fellow-creatures, individually or collectively. The evil consequences of his acts do not then fall on himself, but on others; and society, as the protector of all its members, must retaliate

on him; must inflict pain on him for the express purpose of punishment, and must take care that it be sufficiently severe. In the one case, he is an offender at our bar, and we are called on not only to sit in judgment on him, but, in one shape or another, to execute our own sentence: in the other case, it is not our part to inflict any suffering on him, except what may incidentally follow from our using the same liberty in the regulation of our own affairs, which we allow to him in his.

The distinction here pointed out between the part of a person's life which concerns only himself, and that which concerns others, many persons will refuse to admit. How (it may be asked) can any part of the conduct of a member of society be a matter of indifference to the other members? No person is an entirely isolated being; it is impossible for a person to do anything seriously or permanently hurtful to himself, without mischief reaching at least to his near connections, and often far beyond them. If he injures his property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes, by a greater or less amount, the general resources of the community. If he deteriorates his bodily or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering the services which he owes to his fellow-creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burden on their affection or benevolence; and if such conduct were very frequent, hardly any offence that is committed would detract more from the general sum of good. Finally, if by his vices or follies a person does no direct harm to others, he is nevertheless (it may be said) injurious by his example; and ought to be compelled to control himself, for the sake of those whom the sight or knowledge of his conduct might corrupt or mislead.

And even (it will be added) if the consequences of misconduct could be confined to the vicious or thoughtless individual, ought society to abandon to their own guidance those who are manifestly unfit for it? If protection against themselves is confessedly due to children and persons under age, is not society equally bound to afford it to persons

of mature years who are equally incapable of self-government? If gambling, or drunkenness, or incontinence, or idleness, or uncleanness, are as injurious to happiness, and as great a hindrance to improvement, as many or most of the acts prohibited by law, why (it may be asked) should not law, so far as is consistent with practicability and social convenience, endeavor to repress these also? And as a supplement to the unavoidable imperfections of law, ought not opinion at least to organize a powerful police against these vices, and visit rigidly with social penalties those who are known to practice them? There is no question here (it may be said) about restricting individuality, or impeding the trial of new and original experiments in living. The only things it is sought to prevent are things which have been tried and condemned from the beginning of the world until now; things which experience has shown not to be useful or suitable to any person's individuality. There must be some length of time and amount of experience after which a moral or prudential truth may be regarded as established: and it is merely desired to prevent generation after generation from falling over the same precipice which has been fatal to their predecessors.

I fully admit that the mischief which a person does to himself may seriously affect, both through their sympathies and their interests, those nearly connected with him and, in a minor degree, society at large. When, by conduct of this sort, a person is led to violate a distinct and assignable obligation to any other person or persons, the case is taken out of the self-regarding class, and becomes amenable to moral disapprobation in the proper sense of the term. If, for example, a man, through intemperance or extravagance, becomes unable to pay his debts, or, having undertaken the moral responsibility of a family, becomes from the same cause incapable of supporting or educating them, he is deservedly reprobated, and might be justly punished; but it is for the breach of duty to his family or creditors, not for the extravagance. If the resources which ought to have been devoted to them, had been diverted from them for the most

prudent investment, the moral culpability would have been the same. George Barnwell¹ murdered his uncle to get money for his mistress, but if he had done it to set himself up in business, he would equally have been hanged. Again, in the frequent case of a man who causes grief to his family by addiction to bad habits, he deserves reproach for his unkindness or ingratitude; but so he may for cultivating habits not in themselves vicious, if they are painful to those with whom he passes his life, or who from personal ties are dependent on him for their comfort. Whoever fails in the consideration generally due to the interests and feelings of others, not being compelled by some more imperative duty, or justified by allowable self-preference, is a subject of moral disapprobation for that failure, but not for the cause of it, nor for the errors, merely personal to himself, which may have remotely led to it. In like manner, when a person disables himself, by conduct purely self-regarding, from the performance of some definite duty incumbent on him to the public, he is guilty of a social offence. No person ought to be punished simply for being drunk; but a soldier or a policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty. Whenever, in short, there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public, the case is taken out of the province of liberty, and placed in that of morality or law.

CHAPTER v

Applications

I have already observed that, owing to the absence of any recognized general principles, liberty is often granted where it should be withheld, as well as withheld where it should be granted; and one of the cases in which, in the modern European world, the sentiment of liberty is the strongest, is a case where, in my view, it is altogether misplaced. A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns; but he ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another, under the

pretext that the affairs of the other are his own affairs. The State, while it respects the liberty of each in what specially regards himself, is bound to maintain a vigilant control over his exercise of any power which it allows him to possess over others. This obligation is almost entirely disregarded in the case of the family relations, a case, in its direct influence on human happiness, more important than all others taken together. The almost despotic power of husbands over wives needs not be enlarged upon here, because nothing more is needed for the complete removal of the evil than that wives should have the same rights, and should receive the protection of law in the same manner, as all other persons; and because, on this subject, the defenders of established injustice do not avail themselves of the plea of liberty, but stand forth openly as the champions of power. It is in the case of children that misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfilment by the State of its duties. One would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally, and not metaphorically, a part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest interference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them; more jealous than of almost any interference with his own freedom of action: so much less do the generality of mankind value liberty than power. Consider, for example, the case of education. Is it not almost a self-evident axiom, that the State should require and compel the education, up to a certain standard, of every human being who is born its citizen? Yet who is there that is not afraid to recognize and assert this truth? Hardly any one indeed will deny that it is one of the most sacred duties of the parents (or, as law and usage now stand, the father), after summoning a human being into the world, to give to that being an education fitting him to perform his part well in life towards others and towards himself. But while this is unanimously declared to be the father's duty, scarcely anybody, in this country, will bear to hear of obliging him to perform it. Instead of his being required to make any exertion or sacrifice for securing education to his child, it is left to his choice

¹ George Barnwell was the hero of a play by that name, by George Lillo, produced in 1731.

to accept it or not when it is provided gratis! It still remains unrecognized, that to bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body, but instruction and training for its mind, is a moral crime, both against the unfortunate offspring and against society; and that if the parent does not fulfil this obligation, the State ought to see it fulfilled, at the charge, as far as possible, of the parent.

Were the duty of enforcing universal education once admitted there would be an end to the difficulties about what the State should teach, and how it should teach, which now convert the subject into a mere battlefield for sects and parties, causing the time and labor which should have been spent in educating to be wasted in quarrelling about education. If the government would make up its mind to require for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of providing one. It might leave to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased, and content itself with helping to pay the school fees of the poorer classes of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one else to pay for them. The objections which are urged with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education; which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for molding people to be exactly like one another: and as the mold in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by

the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence. Unless, indeed, when society in general is in so backward a state that it could not or would not provide for itself any proper institutions of education unless the government undertook the task: then, indeed, the government may, as the less of two great evils, take upon itself the business of schools and universities, as it may that of joint stock companies, when private enterprise, in a shape fitted for undertaking great works of industry, does not exist in the country. But in general, if the country contains a sufficient number of persons qualified to provide education under government auspices, the same persons would be able and willing to give an equally good education on the voluntary principle, under the assurance of remuneration afforded by a law rendering education compulsory, combined with State aid to those unable to defray the expense.

I have reserved for the last place a large class of questions respecting the limits of government interference, which, though closely connected with the subject of this Essay, do not, in strictness, belong to it. These are cases in which the reasons against interference do not turn upon the principle of liberty: the question is not about restraining the actions of individuals, but about helping them, it is asked whether the government should do, or cause to be done, something for their benefit, instead of leaving it to be done by themselves, individually or in voluntary combination.

The objections to government interference, when it is not such as to involve infringement of liberty, may be of three kinds.

The first is, when the thing to be done is likely to be better done by individuals than by the government. Speaking generally, there is no one so fit to conduct any business, or to determine how or by whom it shall be conducted, as those who are personally interested in it. This principal condemns the interferences, once so common, of the legislature, or the officers of government, with the

ordinary processes of industry. But this part of the subject has been sufficiently enlarged upon by political economists, and is not particularly related to the principles of this Essay.

The second objection is more nearly allied to our subject. In many cases, though individuals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education — a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal. This is a principal, though not the sole, recommendation of jury trial (in cases not political); of free and popular local and municipal institutions; of the conduct of industrial and philanthropic enterprises by voluntary associations. These are not questions of liberty, and are connected with that subject only by remote tendencies; but they are questions of development. It belongs to a different occasion from the present to dwell on these things as parts of national education; as being, in truth, the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns — habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another. Without these habits and powers, a free constitution can neither be worked nor preserved; as is exemplified by the too-often transitory nature of political freedom in countries where it does not rest upon a sufficient basis of local liberties. The management of purely local business by the localities, and of the great enterprises of industry by the union of those who voluntarily supply the pecuniary means, is further recommended by all the advantages which have been set forth in this Essay as belonging to individuality of development, and diversity of modes of action. Government operations tend to

be everywhere alike. With individuals and voluntary associations, on the contrary, there are varied experiments, and endless diversity of experience. What the State can usefully do is to make itself a central depository, and active circulator and diffuser, of the experience resulting from many trials. Its business is to enable each experimentalist to benefit by the experiments of others; instead of tolerating no experiments but its own.

The third and most cogent reason for restricting the interference of government is the great evil of adding unnecessarily to its power. Every function superadded to those already exercised by the government causes its influence over hopes and fears to be more widely diffused, and converts, more and more, the active and ambitious part of the public into hangers-on of the government, or of some party which aims at becoming the government. If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint-stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration; if the employes of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the government, and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And the evil would be greater, the more efficiently and scientifically the administrative machinery was constructed — the more skilful the arrangements for obtaining the best qualified hands and heads with which to work it. In England it has of late been proposed that all the members of the civil service of government should be selected by competitive examination, to obtain for these employments the most intelligent and instructed persons procurable; and much has been said and written for and against this proposal. One of the arguments most insisted on by its opponents is that the occupation of a permanent official servant of the State does not hold out sufficient prospects of emolument and importance

to attract the highest talents, which will always be able to find a more inviting career in the professions, or in the service of companies and other public bodies. One would not have been surprised if this argument had been used by the friends of the proposition, as an answer to its principal difficulty. Coming from the opponents it is strange enough. What is urged as an objection is the safety-valve of the proposed system. If indeed all the high talent of the country *could* be drawn into the service of the government, a proposal tending to bring about that result might well inspire uneasiness. If every part of the business of society which required organized concert, or large and comprehensive views, were in the hands of the government, and if government offices were universally filled by the ablest men, all the enlarged culture and practiced intelligence in the country, except the purely speculative, would be concentrated in a numerous bureaucracy, to whom alone the rest of the community would look for all things: the multitude for direction and dictation in all they had to do; the able and aspiring for personal advancement. To be admitted into the ranks of this bureaucracy, and when admitted, to rise therein, would be the sole objects of ambition. Under this *regime*, not only is the outside public ill-qualified, for want of practical experience, to criticize or check the mode of operation of the bureaucracy, but even if the accidents of

despotic or the natural working of popular institutions occasionally raise to the summit a ruler or rulers of reforming inclinations, no reform can be effected which is contrary to the interest of the bureaucracy. Such is the melancholy condition of the Russian empire, as shown in the accounts of those who have had sufficient opportunity of observation. The Czar himself is powerless against the bureaucratic body; he can send any one of them to Siberia, but he cannot govern without them, or against their will. On every decree of his they have a tacit veto, by merely refraining from carrying it into effect. In countries of more advanced civilization and of a more insurrectionary spirit, the public, accustomed to expect everything to be done for them by the State, or at least to do nothing for themselves without asking from the State not only leave to do it, but even how it is to be done, naturally hold the State responsible for all evil which befalls them, and when the evil exceeds their amount of patience, they rise against the government, and make what is called a revolution; whereupon somebody else, with or without legitimate authority from the nation, vaults into the seat, issues his orders to the bureaucracy, and everything goes on much as it did before; the bureaucracy being unchanged, and nobody else being capable of taking their place.

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Alfred, Lord Tennyson • 1809-1892.

The most popular of Victorian poets, Alfred Tennyson, was born August 6, 1809, *ⁿ Somersby, in Lincolnshire, where his father was rector. He attended at Louth the village school, which he disliked, leaving to continue his studies under his father at home, and writing much verse, largely under the influence of Byron. In 1816 he and his brother Charles (with a few contributions from Frederick) published *Poems by Two Brothers*; and two years later together they entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Here Tennyson became a member of a group nicknamed, because of their moral earnestness, "The Apostles," among whom were his closest friend Arthur Hallam, son of the historian, Spedding, the Bacon scholar, and Milnes, later Lord Houghton, the biographer of Keats. Thackeray and Edward Fitzgerald, both in Cambridge at the time, were not members. In 1819 Tennyson

won the Chancellor's Medal with a poem on Timbuctoo; in 1830 he published *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*; and the next year, because of his father's illness, he left the university without a degree. In 1831 he produced a volume, *Poems*, which was attacked by most of the reviewers, especially Lockhart in the *Quarterly*. In the following year Tennyson was further depressed by the sudden death of Hallam, who was engaged to his sister. For ten years he published nothing. Whatever the causes, these were years of doubt, introspection, pain. In 1837 he moved the family — now in his charge after his two elder brothers left home — from Somersby to Epping, near London. In spite of the companionship of most of the prominent writers in town, Tennyson remained restless and sensitive. Gradually the call of the sea and the moors of Lincolnshire, the yearning for adventure and dangerous freedom, were stilled, and the desire for comfort, physical and moral, for peace and faith and certainty, became dominant in him.

In 1841 Tennyson broke his ten years' silence with the publication of a new volume entitled *Poems*. This volume brought him genuine recognition, and, four years later, a small government pension. In 1847 appeared *The Princess*; and in 1850 occurred three events which determined largely the course of his future life: his marriage to Emily Sellwood, to whom he had been engaged for over a dozen years; the publication of *In Memoriam*, and his appointment as Poet Laureate to succeed Wordsworth. From now until his death, Tennyson is the spokesman and singer of Victorian England, voicing its ideals and feelings.

In 1852 appeared the splendid *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*; in 1853 Tennyson acquired a house at Farringford on the Isle of Wight, where he was a distant neighbor, and warm admirer, of Her Majesty the Queen at Osborne; in 1854 he published *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, in 1855 *Maud*, in 1859 the 'rst *Idylls of the King*, in 1864 *Enoch Arden*. In 1869 he built Aldworth, a Gothic structure, in Surrey, near the border of Sussex. This and Farringford were his two homes until his death. In 1875 "e began a series of poetic plays, most striking of which were *Queen Mary* (1875); *Harold* (1876); and *Becket* (1884) — the " trilogy of England." In the latter year Tennyson was raised to the peerage and became Lord Tennyson. Although much hurt by the death, in 1886, of Lionel, his younger son, and by the passing, to use his own words, "of the old reverence and chivalrous feeling in the world," he continued working to the end. He died October 6, 1892, and was given a public funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Tennyson began his career as an heir of the romantic poets, especially of Keats. Like them he was attracted by medieval themes, as in *The Lady of Shalott*. Growing up in close contact with nature along the coast of Lincolnshire, he developed a special faculty for using landscape as a background for human character, as in *The Lotos-Eaters*. Although a scholar, he treated classical themes in the romantic manner, as in *Cenone*. Like many of the greater figures among the Victorians, however, he felt the duty of dealing with the realities of the age and the complex social problems that confronted it. Undoubtedly the influence of Carlyle counted for much in this development. *The Palace of Art* is an allegory of the struggle between the claims of art and those of life. *Locksley Hall* represents the Byronic mood of a young man giving way to belief in progress and hope in society. *In Memoriam* shows his belief in Nature as the handmaid of God yielding, under the impact of science, to a recognition of the opposition between Christian faith and the world of nature.

Tennyson tried to deal with modern material, but his life was too secluded to give him mastery in this field or to make him altogether sympathetic. His bitter reaction against the social world that was changing about him is shown in *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*. He never lost his trust, however, in progress through evolution, his belief in a spiritual

world permeated by what Carlyle called "the divine idea" (as seen in *The Higher Pantheism*), and his faith in personal immortality as giving meaning to the moral struggle, as in *Wages*. Above all, he had faith in England and Englishmen. Poems like *The Revenge* and the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* mark him as pre-eminently a national poet, in succession to the great Elizabethans, Milton, and Wordsworth.

Tennyson surpassed in popularity all other Victorian poets. Today the inevitable reaction has set in, and in literary circles that like to sneer at everything "Victorian" he is given much less honor than he deserves. In many of his poems he is cautious and complacently didactic, expressing commonplace formulae sentimentally in verses that nearly always, however, exhibit skill and polish. No English poet since Pope has surpassed him in the technical skill with which he weaves into melody the sounds of the English language, a skill which (like Swinburne's) sometimes produces the effect of excessive sweetness. Tennyson is greatest as a lyric poet, and as such, when at his best, is second to no writer in English. His supreme lyrics, as those in *Maud*, *In Memoriam*, and *The Princess*, are a perfect blending of emotional impulse and exquisite form.

In the complex and bitter fight between theory and fact, the old and the new, which is at the bottom of Victorianism, Tennyson often turned to compromise. He remains a monument of a great period, an era regarded by many as "the golden age of missed opportunities." But it cannot be forgotten that "to perplexed and anxious minds he brought complete intellectual and moral relief" (Nicolson).

The best one-volume editions are Macmillan's and the Cambridge. Stimulating studies of Tennyson are Harold Nicolson's analysis and summary (1923), and Hugh I'A. Fausset's *Tennyson, a Modern Portrait* (1923). There are good commentaries by Waugh, S. Brooke, and others. The official biography has been written by his son Hallam (i vols., 1897).

The Poet

This poem, written while Tennyson was still an undergraduate at Cambridge, shows how early he was conscious of his mission as a poet.

The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of
scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro* good and
ill, s
He saw thro' his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he threaded
The secretest walks of fame: 10
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were
headed
And winged with flame,

Like Indian reeds¹ blown from his silver
tongue,
And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe² unto Caucasus they sung, 15
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
Them earthward till they lit;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,
The fruitful wit 20

Cleaving took root, and springing forth anew
Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnished all abroad to fling 25
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breathing
spring
Of Hope and Youth.

¹ darts shot from blow-pipes. ² Gibraltar.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
 beams,
 Tho' one did fling the fire; 30
 Heaven flowed upon the soul in many dreams
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
 world
 Like one great garden showed,
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark up-
 curled, 35
 Rare sunrise flowed.

And Freedom reared in that august sunrise
 Her beautiful bold brow,
 When rites and forms before his burning eyes
 Melted like snow. 40

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
 Sunned by those orient skies;
 But round about the circles of the globes
 Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in
 flame 45
 WISDOM, a name to shake
 All evil dreams of power — a sacred name.
 And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
 And as the lightning to the thunder 50
 Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
 sword
 Of wrath her right arm whirled,
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with bis
 word 55
 She shook the world.
 Pub. 1830.

The Lady of Shalott

Tennyson here tells the story of Lancelot and Elaine very simply, but against a mystical background. The Lady of Shalott emerges from her world of shadows into the world of reality through her interest in Lancelot. The form Shalott, for the English Astolat, is probably from the Italian *Scalotta* (French, *Escalot*).

PART I

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-towered Camelot;¹ 5
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver, 10
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers, 15
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
 Slide the heavy barges trailed 20
 By slow horses; and unhailed
 The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand? 25
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheery 30
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to towered Camelot;
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy 35
 Lady of Shalott."

PART i

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay 40
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
¹ King Arthur's city.

And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott. 45

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot; 50
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad, 55
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue 60
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights, 65
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed: 70
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 3

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves, 75
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A redcross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field, 80
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily 85
As he rode down to Camelot;
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,

And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott. 90

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together, 95
As he rode down to Camelot;
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed; 100
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river 105
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room, no
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side; 115
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 4

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining 121
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote 125
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse —
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance —
With a glassy countenance 130
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;

The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott. 135

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right —
The leaves upon her falling light —
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot; 140
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy, 145
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide 150
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery, 155
A gleaming shape she floated by,
A corse between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame, 160
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer; 165
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace, 170
The Lady of Shalott."
Pub. 1832.

CEnone

The theme of the poem is the tragic sorrow of (Enone after she was deserted by Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy, who left her for Helen.

There lies a vale in Ida,¹ lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.

¹ A mountain range near Troy.

The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand 5
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roars
The long brook falling thro' the cloven ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus¹ 10
Stands up and takes the morning; but in
front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas² and Ilion's³ columned citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn 15
Of Paris, once her playmate⁴ on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her
neck
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
shade 20
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper
cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill;
The grasshopper is silent in the grass; 25
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds arc dead.
The purple flowers droop, the golden bee
Is lily-cradled, I alone awake. 29
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aware of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O
Caves 35
That house the cold crowned snake! O
mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,

¹ One of the peaks of Ida.

² The territory in Asia Minor where Troy is located.

³ Troy's.

⁴ When Paris was a shepherd, after he had been abandoned by his mother, who feared that he would cause the downfall of Troy.

Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,¹ 40
A cloud that gathered shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 45
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine.
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horned, white-
hooved, 50
Came up from reedy Simois² all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft;
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
dropt eyes 55
I sat alone; white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved, a leopard skin
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair
Clustered about his temples like a God's;
And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow
brightens 60
When the wind blows the foam, and all my
heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he
came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white
palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold, 65
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

" 'My own CEnone,
Beautiful-browed CEnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind in-
graven 70
"For the most fair," would seem to award it
thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread³ haunt

¹ The walls of Troy, according to one legend, rose to Apollo's music.
A brook on Mt. Ida. ³ mountain-nymph.

The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 75
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged¹ in the halls of Peleus²; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere
due; 80

But light-foot Iris³ brought it yester-evt,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Here⁴ comes to-day,
Pallas⁵ and Aphrodite,⁶ claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine, 86
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnight; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides 91
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they
came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded
bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel, 95
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garland in the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and
thro'. ioo

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops, a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and
leaned
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew. 104
Then first I heard the voice of her⁷ to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestioned, overflowing revenue no

¹ At the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis.

³ The father of Achilles.

³ The Rainbow, messenger of the Gods.

⁴ Juno. ⁵ Minerva. ⁶ Venus. ⁷ Juno.

Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a
vale
And river-sundered champaign clothed with
corn,
Or labored mines undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
From many an inland town and haven
large, 115
Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of
power,
'Which in all action is the end of all; 120
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom — from all neighbor
crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from
me,
From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee
king-born, 125
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in
power
Only, are likest gods, who have attained
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss 130
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of
power
Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she
stood 135
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek 140
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-con-
trol,
These three alone lead life to sovereign
power.¹
Yet not for power, (power of herself

¹ Much of Tennyson's philosophy is incorporated in this speech of Pallas.

Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear; 146
And, because right is fight, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts. 150
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,

If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair, 155
Unbiassed by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to
thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks, 160
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased,
And Paris pondered, and I cried, 'O Paris, 165
Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me I

"O mother Ida, many-fountaincd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian¹ Aphrodite beautiful, 170
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian¹
wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep
hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder; from the violets her light
foot 175
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes, 180
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whispered in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'³

¹ Idalium and Paphos were towns in Cyprus famous for their worship of Venus.

³ Helen.

She spoke and laughed; I shut my sight for
fear:

But when I looked, Paris had raised his
arm, 185

And I beheld great Here's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die. 190

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday, 194
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,¹
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouched fawning in the weed. Most loving
is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
prest

Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains 201
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

⁴⁴O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy
ledge 205

High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Fostered the callow eaglet — from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark
morn

The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more 211
Shall lone CEnone see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them, never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling
stars. 215

⁴⁴O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the
glens,

Of the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable,³ that uninvited came 220
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,

¹ leopard. ² Eris, the goddess of strife.

And bred this change; that I might speak my
mind

And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men. .

⁴⁴O mother, hear me yet before I die. 226
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these! 231
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth, 235
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live,
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die. 240

⁴⁴O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and
more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost
hills, 245

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born. Her child! — a shudder comes
Across me: never child be born of me, 250
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

⁴⁴O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love 256
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra,¹ for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound 260
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.²

¹ The daughter of Priam, who could foretell events
but who never was believed.

² Cassandra predicted the Trojan war and the fall of
Troy.

What this may be I know not, but I know
That, whercsoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."
Pub. 1832.

The Palace of Art

In this poem, Tennyson presents symbolically the torment of an artist as he meditates upon the question of art and life. It concludes with the hope of a nobler art devoted to the service of humanity. The poem is notable for its pictorial quality.

I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnished
brass, 5
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
The rock rose clear, or winding stair. 10
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round,"
I said,
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast
shade 15
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:
"Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
In this great mansion, that is built for me,
So royal-rich and wide." 20

Four courts I made, East, West and South
and North,
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
A flood of fountain-foam. 24

And round the cool green courts there ran a row
Of cloisters, branched like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
That lent broad verge¹ to distant lands, 30
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one
swell
Across the mountain streamed below
In misty folds, that floating as they fell 35
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seemed
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odor steamed
From out a golden cup. 40

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze
upon
My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?" 44

For that sweet incense rose and never failed,
And, while day sank or mounted higher,
The light aerial gallery, golden-railed,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stained and
traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires 50
From shadowed grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did
pass, 55
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul. 60

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter
blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.
¹ horizon.

One seemed all dark and red — a tract of
sand, 65

And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One showed an iron coast and angry waves.
You seemed to hear them climb and fall 70
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low, 75
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,¹
And hoary² to the wind. 80

And one, a foreground black with stones and
slags;
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher
All barred with long white cloud the scornful
crags;
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray twilight
poured 85
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep — all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair.
As fit for every mood of mind, 90
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
there,
Not less than truth designed.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx 95
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-walled city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair

¹ olives.

² Because of the whitish underside of the leaves.

Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;¹
An angel looked at her. 100

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,
A group of Houris² bowed to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Other's deeply-wounded son³ 105
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watched by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw no
The wood-nymph,⁴ stayed the Ausonian
king⁵ to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrailed,⁶
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama⁷ slowly sailed
A summer fanned with spice. 116

Or sweet Europa's⁸ mantle blew unclasped,
From off her shoulder backward borne;
From one hand drooped a crocus; one hand
grasped
The mild bull's golden horn. 120

Or else flushed Ganymede,⁹ his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillared town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair 125
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, designed.

Then in the towers I placed great bells that
swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;

¹ The patron saint of music.

³ Mohammed's beautiful attendants.

³ King Arthur. ⁴ Egeria.

⁵ Numa Pompilius, second king of Rome, taught by Egeria.

⁶ indented. ⁷ The Cupid of Hindu mythology.

⁸ Zeus, in the shape of a bull, carried Europa away on his back.

⁹ The cupbearer of the Gods, brought to Zeus by an eagle.

- And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung 131
The royal dai's round.
- For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasped his
song, 135
And somewhat grimly smiled.
- And there the Ionian father¹ of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin. 140
- Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.
- Below was all mosaic choicely planned 145
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail.
- The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toiled onward, pricked with goads and
stings; 150
Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;
- Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man de-
clined, 155
And trusted any cure.
- But over these she trod; and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne;
She sat betwixt the shining oriels,
To sing her songs alone. 160
- And thro' the topmost oriels' colored flame
Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,²
The first of those who know.
- And all those names that in their motion
were 165
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
¹ Homer. ³ Bacon.
- Betwixt the slender shafts were blazoned fair
In diverse raiment strange;
- Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald,
blue,
Flushed in her temples and her eyes, 170
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,¹
drew
Rivers of melodies.
- No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echoed song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone; 176
- Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five; 180
- Communing with herself: "All these are
mine,
And Jet the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me." She — when young night
divine
Crowned dying day with stars,
- Making sweet close of his delicious toils — 185
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,²
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollowed moons of gems,
- To mimic heaven; and clapt her hands and
cried,
"I marvel if my still delight 190
In this great house so royal-rich and wide
Be flattered to the height.
- 'O all things fair to sate my various eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise, 195
My Gods, with whom I dwell f
- t'O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of
swine
That range on yonder plain. 200
- ¹ The statue near Thebes from which, it was said,
music issued at dawn.
² garlands.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."¹

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead, 206
As hers by right of full-accomplished Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl. 210
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flashed thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne. 216

And so she throve and prospered; so three
years
She prospered; on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.² 220

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turned
her sight 225
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote "Mene, mene,"³ and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born 230
Scorn of herself; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of strength,"
she said,
"My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were
laid 235
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of
blood,
And horrible nightmares, 240

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted¹ foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she
came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light 245
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal;

A still salt pool, locked in with bars of
sand,
Left on the shore, that hears all night 250
The plunging seas draw backward from the
land
Their moon-led waters white;

A star that with the choral starry darge
Joined not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance 255
Rolled round by one fixed law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curled.
"No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this
world;
One deep, deep silence all!" 260

She, moldcring with the dull earth's moldcr-
ing sod,
Inwrap tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally, 265
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time, 270
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime.

¹ worm-eaten.

¹ St. Mark v, 13.

² Acts xii, 21-23.

³ At Belshazzar's feast; see Daniel v, 25.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
 With blackness as a solid wall,
 Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound 275
 Of human footsteps fall:

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
 In doubt and great perplexity,
 A little before moon-rise hears the low 280
 Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
 Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
 Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I have
 found
 A new land, but I die."

She howled aloud, "I am on fire within. 285
 There comes no murmur of reply.
 What is it that will take away my sin,
 And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
 She threw her royal robes away. 290
 "Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
 "Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that
 are
 So lightly, beautifully built;
 Perchance I may return with others there 295
 When I have purged my guilt."
 Pub. 1832.

The Lotos-Eaters

This poem has been widely praised for the manner in which the sound of the lines echoes the sense. Compare the opening stanzas with *The Faerie Queene* and with *The Castle of Indolence* for Tennyson's use of the Spenserian stanza.

The story of the poem is from the *Odyssey*.

"Courage!" he¹ said, and pointed toward
 the land,
 "This mounting wave will roll us shoreward
 soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land,
 In which it seemed always afternoon.
 All round the coast the languid air did
 swoon, 5
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.

¹ Ulysses.

Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
 And like a downward smoke, the slender
 stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did
 seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward
 smoke, 10
 Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
 And some thro' wavering lights and shadows
 broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
 From the inner land; far off, three mountain-
 tops, 15
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with show-
 ery drops,
 Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven
 copse.

The charmed sunset lingered low adown
 In the red West; thro' mountain clefts the
 dale 20
 Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
 Bordered with palm, and many a winding
 vale
 And meadow, set with slender galingale;¹
 A land where all things always seemed the
 same!
 And round about the keel with faces pale, 25
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they
 gave
 To each, but whoso did receive of them 30
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
 Far, far away did seem to mourn and rave
 On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
 And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake, 35
 And music in his ears his beating heart did
 make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
 Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
 And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
 Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore 40
¹ aromatic sedge.

Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no
more;"

And all at once they sang, "Our island home"¹
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer
roam." 45

CHORIC SONG

1
There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass,
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies, 50
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the
blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep, 55
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs
in sleep.

2
Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil
alone, 60
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings, 65
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!" —
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown
of things?

3
Lo! in the middle of the wood, 70
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow 75

¹ Ithaca.

Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days 80
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

4
Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea. 85
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labor be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last? 90
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave? 95
All things have rest, and ripen toward the
grave
In silence — ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or
dreamful ease.

5
How sweet it were, hearing the downward
stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem 100
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the
height;
To hear each other's whispered speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day, 105
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy m
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn
of brass!

6
Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives 115

And their warm tears; but all hath suffered
change;
For surely now our household hearths are
cold,
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,
And we should come like ghosts to trouble
joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold 120
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel
sings
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain. 125
The Gods are hard to reconcile;
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labor unto aged breath, 130
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-
stars.

7

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing
lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still, 135
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly
His waters from the purple hill —
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
vine — 140
To watch the emerald-colored water falling
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out be-
neath the pine.

8

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak, 145
The Lotos blows by every winding creek;
All day the wind breathes low with mellower
tone;
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow
Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of mo-
tion we, 150

Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when
the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his
foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an
equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie re-
clined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of
mankind.¹ 155
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts
are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curled
Round their golden houses, girdled with the
gleaming world;
Where they smile in secret, looking over
wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,
roaring deeps and fiery sands, 160
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in
a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient
tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words
are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that
cleave the soil, 165
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with en-
during toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine
and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer — some, 'tis
whispered — down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian
valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of aspho-
del. 170
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than
toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and
wave and oar;
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more.
Pub. 1832.

¹ The idea of the Gods here expressed is that of the Epicurean philosophy — a philosophy that is highly appropriate for the ease-loving Lotos-eaters.

The Epic

This poem is the introduction to the *Marie d'Arthur* which follows.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas eve, —
The game of forfeits done — the girls all
kissed

Beneath the sacred bush and past away —
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl, 5
Then half-way ebb'd; and there we held a
talk,

How all the old honor from Christmas gone,
Or gone or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the
pond, 10

Where, three times slipping from the outer
edge,

I bumped the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commissioners,
Now hawking at geology and schism; 16
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith

Right thro' the world: "at home was little
left,

And none abroad; there was no anchor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt his
hand 21

On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold by him."
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the wassail-
bowl."

"Why yes," I said, "we knew your gift that
way

At college; but another which you had — 25
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
What came of that?" "You know," said
Frank, "he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books"—

And then to me demanding why: "O, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or
else 30

Something so said 'twas nothing — that a
truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day;
God knows; he has a mint of reasons; ask.
It pleased me well enough." "Nay, nay,"
said Hall,

"Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the mastodon, 36
Nor we those times; and why should any man
Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt."

"But I," 40

Said Francis, "picked the eleventh from this
hearth,

And have it; keep a thing, its use will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."

He laughed, and I, though sleepy, like a
horse

That hears the corn-bin open, pricked my
ears; 45

For I remembered Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen. Then at my request
He brought it, and the poet, little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result. 51
Pub. 1842.

Morte d'Arthur

This account of Arthur's death, incorporated twenty-five years later, with the omission of one line, into *The Passing of Arthur* (lines 170-440) of the *Idylls of the King*, is based on Malory *xxi*, 5; but Tennyson, as usual when he treats a classical or medieval subject, tinges the poem with modern, Christian thought and feeling. For the chapter of Malory, see Vol. I, p. 183.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonness about their lord,
King Arthur; then, because his wound was
deep, 5

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean and on one n
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a
sleep

They sleep — the men I loved. I think that
we

Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls 20
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made, —
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more — but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm 25
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride; for thou rememberest
how

In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, 30
Clothed in white samite,¹ mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword — and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known. 35
But now delay not; take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere;
Watch what thou seest, and lightly³ bring me
word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus, 40
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he
stept 45
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, step-
ping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran
forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt; ss
For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

¹ a heavy silk.

² quickly.

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw; but at the last it seemed 61
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded
king. 6c

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I
gave?"

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds, 70
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and
pale:

"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight; 75
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief¹ and dear, and do the thing 80
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt, 85
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many
men. 91

What good should follow this, if this were
done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king de-
mand 95

An act unprofitable, against himself?

¹ beloved.

The King is sick, and knows not what he docs.

What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings, ioi

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the lake;
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
deeps 105

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the after-
time

To all the people, winning reverence;
But now much honor and much fame were
lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,¹
And hid Excalibur the second time, m
And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag, no
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in
wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me! 120
Authority forgets a dying king,

Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all, 125
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duity twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thec
hence; 130

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutched the
sword, 135

¹ imagining.

And strongly wheeled and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled
in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles¹ of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea. 141

So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur;
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished
him 145

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker
breath-

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out; what is it thou hast heard, or
seen?" 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, 155
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling
him;

But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished
him 160

Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing
hard:

"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were
gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear 165
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not

words,

¹ i.e., icebergs.

Then took with care, and kneeling on one
knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs. 175
But, as he walked, King Arthur panted
hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the
King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick,
quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die." 180
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to
ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he
walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a
goad. 185
Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he
based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels — 190
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there hove a dusky
barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately
forms 196
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream —
by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold — and
from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony 200
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.
Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the
barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those
three queens 205

Put forth their hands, and took the king, and
wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed
his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining
loud, 210
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood; for all his face was
white
And colorless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with
drops 215
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne — were parched
with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed
his lips. 220
So like a shattered column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in
rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings. 225
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble
chance, 230
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that
led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless, 236
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."
And slowly answered Arthur from the
barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to
new, 240
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the
world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?

I have lived my life, and that which I have
 done
 May He within himself make pure! but
 thou, 245
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought
 by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let
 thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or
 goats 250
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
 prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them
 friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of
 God. 255
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest — if indeed I go —
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
 To the island-valley of Avilion;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard
 lawns
 And bowery hollows crowned with summer
 sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."
 So said he, and the barge with oar and
 sail 265
 Moved from the brink, like some full-
 breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the
 flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedi-
 vere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull 270
 Looked one black dot against the verge of
 dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that
 long
 Had winked and threatened darkness, flared
 and fell;
 At which the parson, sent to sleep with
 sound, 275

And waked with silence, grunted "Good!"
 but we
 Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he
 read —
 Perhaps some modern touches here and there
 Redeemed it from the charge of nothingness —
 Or else we loved the man, and prized his
 work; 280
 I know not; but we sitting, as I said,
 The cock crew loud, as at that time of year
 The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn.
 Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
 "There now — that's nothing!" drew a little
 back, 285
 And drove his heel into the smoldered log,
 That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue.
 And so to bed, where yet in sleep I seemed
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
 Point after point; till on to dawn, when
 dreams 290
 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
 To me, methought, who waited with a
 crowd,
 There came a bark that, blowing forward,
 bore
 King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
 Of stateliest port; and all the people cried, 295
 "Arthur is come again: he cannot die."
 Then those that stood upon the hills behind
 Repeated — "Come again, and thrice as
 fair;"
 And, further inland, voices echoed — "Come
 With all good things, and war shall be no
 more." 300
 At this a hundred bells began to peal,
 That with the sound I woke, and heard in-
 deed
 The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas
 morn.
 Pub. 1842.

Ulysses

Ulysses is, by common consent, one of Tennyson's greatest achievements. It is a counterpiece to *T/ie Lotos-Eaters*. Ulysses, after returning from his wanderings to his home and wife Penelope, soliloquizes on the glory of adventurous action. According to the poet's statement, it represents Tennyson's own feelings after the death of Hallam, and his decision to keep on going forward.

The story is from Homer's *Odysey*, but Tennyson's attitude is clearly that of Dante's in the *Inferno*, Canto xxvi.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren
crag,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know
not me. 5

I cannot rest from travel; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with
those

That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades¹ 10
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name,
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known, — cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, govern-
ments, 14

Myself not least, but honored of them all, —
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch where thro'
Gleams that untravelled world, whose mar-
gin fades 20

For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on
life

Were all too little, and of one to me 25
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard my-
self,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle, —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent-not to fail 40

¹ The constellation that was supposed to bring rain.

In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I
mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her
sail;

There gloom the dark, broad seas. My
mariners, 45

Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and
thought with me, —

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads, — you and I are
old;

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil. 50
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes, the slow moon climbs;
the deep 55

Moans round with many voices. Come,
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us' down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho' 65
We are not now that strength which in old
days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we are,
we are, —

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in
will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. 70
Pub. 1842.

Locksley Hall

Locksley Hall is a dramatic monologue. It was meant, said Tennyson, to represent youth — its good side, its deficiencies, and its yearnings. The hero, who is high-minded and impulsive, is disillusioned in love and doubtful about the ideals of the Victorian era. He looks forward to a new age which will bring back to him the eagerness of his youth.

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet
'tis early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me,
sound upon the bugle-horn.

Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the
curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying
over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks
the sandy tracts, 5
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into
cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement,
ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to
the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro'
the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a
silver braid. 10

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing
a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long
result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful
land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the
promise that it closed;¹

When I dipt into the future far as human eye
could see, 15
Saw the vision of the world, and all the
wonder that would be.——

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon
the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets him-
self another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the
burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly
turns to thoughts of love. 20

¹ enclosed.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than
should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute
observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy,¹ speak, and
speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being
sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a
color and a light, 25
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the
northern night.

And she turned — her bosom shaken with a
sudden storm of sighs —
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of
hazel eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they
should do me wrong;"
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weep-
ing, "I have loved thee long." 30

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned
it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in
golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on
all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,
passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we
hear the copses ring, 35
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the
fullness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch
the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touch-
ing of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy,
mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the bar-
ren, barren shore! 40

¹ Her parents had persuaded her to marry a man
who cared only for sport.

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all
songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a
shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? — having
known me — to decline¹
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower
heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level
day by day, 45
What is fine within thee growing coarse to
sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated
with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have
weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall
have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer
than his horse. 50

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think not
they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his
hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is
overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him
with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to
understand — 55
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew
thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the
heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a
last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against
the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from
the living truth! 60

¹ lower thyself.

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from
honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened
forehead of the fool!

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster! —
Hadst thou less unworthy proved —
Would to God — for I had¹ loved thee more
than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which
bears but bitter fruit? 65
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart
be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such
length of years should come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the
clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records
of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as
I knew her, kind? 70

I remember one that perished; sweetly did
she speak and move;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at
was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for
the love she bore?
No — she never loved me truly; love is love
for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorned- of devils! this is
truth the poet sings, 75
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering
happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest
thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the
rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art
staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the
shadows rise and fall. 80

¹ would have.

- Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing
to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage-pillows, to the
tears that thou wilt weep.
- Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whis-
pered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ring-
ing of thine ears;
- And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient
kindness on thy pain. 85
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee
to thy rest again.
- Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a
tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy
trouble dry.
- Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest
rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from
the mother's breast. 90
- O, the child too clothes the father with a
dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his; it will be worthy
of the two.
- O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy
petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down
a daughter's heart.
- "They were dangerous guides the feelings —
she herself was not exempt — 95
Truly, she herself had suffered" — Perish in
thy self-contempt!
- Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! where-
fore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither
by despair.
- What is that which I should turn to, lighting
upon days like these?
Every door is barred with gold, and opens
but to golden keys. 100
- Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the
markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that
which I should do?
- I had been content to perish, falling on the
foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the
winds are laid¹ with sound.
- But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt
that Honor feels, 105
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at
each other's heels.
- Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that
earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou won-
drous Mother-Age!
- Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt
before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the
tumult of my life; no
- Yearning for the large excitement that the
coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves
his father's field,
- And at night along the dusky highway near
and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring
like a dreary dawn;
- And his spirit leaps within him to be gone
before him then, us
Underneath the light he looks at, in among
the throngs of men;
- Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever
reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of
the things that they shall do.
- For I dipt into the future, far as human eye
could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the
wonder that would be; 120
¹ calmed.

- Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales;
-
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and
there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in
the central blue;
- Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south-wind rushing warm, 125
With the standards of the peoples plunging
thro' the thunder storm;
- Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and
the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of
the world.
- There the common sense of most shall hold
a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly¹ earth shall slumber, lapt²
in universal law. 130
- So I triumphed, ere my passion sweeping thro'
me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me
with the jaundiced eye;
- Eye, to which all order festers, all things here
are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping
on from point to point;
- Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,
creeping nigher, 135
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a
slowly-dying fire.
- Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing
purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with
the process of the suns.³
- What is that to him that reaps not harvest of
his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever
like a boy's? 140
- ¹ natural. ^a enclosed.
3 with the passing of time.
- Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I
linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is
more and more.
- Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and
he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the
stillness of his rest.
- Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding
on the bugle-horn, 145
They to whom my foolish passion were a
target for their scorn.
- Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a
moldered string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved
so slight a thing.
- Weakness to be wroth with weakness!
woman's pleasure, woman's pain —
Nature made them blinder motions¹ bounded
in a shallower brain. 150
- Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions,
matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water
unto wine —
- Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing.
Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life
began to beat,
- Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father
evil-starred; — 155
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish
uncle's ward.
- Or to burst all links of habit — there to
wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways
of the day.
- Larger constellations burning, mellow moons
and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster,
knots of Paradise. 160
- ¹ impulses.

Never comes the trader, never floats an
European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings
the trailer¹ from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs
the heavy-fruited tree —
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple
spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more
than in this march of mind, 165
In the steamship, in the railway, in the
thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramped no longer shall
have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear
my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive,
and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl
their lances in the sun; 170

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the
rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miser-
able books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know*
my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than
the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of
our glorious gains, 175
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast
with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me
were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files
of time —

I that rather held it better men should perish
one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like
Joshua's moon in AjalonP 180

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward,
forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the
ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into
the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of
Cathay.¹

Mother-Age, — for mine I knew not, — help
me as when life begun; 185
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the
lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit
hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all
my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell
to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for
me the roof-tree fall. 190

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening
over heath andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast
a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail,
or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward,
and I go.
Pub. 1842.

Sir Galahad

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, 5
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands, 10
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

¹ China.

¹ trailing vine.
³ Joshua x, 12.

- How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favors fall!
 For them I battle till the end, 15
 To save from shame and thrall;
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine. 20
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.
- When down the stormy crescent¹ goes, 25
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns.
 Then by some secret shrine I ride;
 I hear a voice, but none are there; 30
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings, 35
 And solemn chaunts resound between.
- Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark.
 I leap on board; no helmsman steers;
 I float till all is dark. 40
 A gentle sound, an awful light!
 Three angels bear the Holy Grail;
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision! blood of God! 45
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And starlike mingles with the stars.
- When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go, 50
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,²
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads, 55
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields;
¹ moon. ^a leaded roofs.
- But blessed forms in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields. 60
- A maiden knight — to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease, 65
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odors haunt my dreams;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armor that I wear, 70
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touched, are turned to finest air.
- The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony 75
 Swells up and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
 "O just and faithful knight of God!
 Ride on! the prize is near." 8c.
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the Holy Grail.
 1842.
- ### Break, Break, Break
- "It was made in a Lincolnshire lane at five
 o'clock in the morning between blossoming
 hedges." (Tennyson.)
- Break, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.
- O well for the fisherman's boy, 5
 That he shouts with his sister at play!
 O well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay!
- And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill; 10
 But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
 And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead 15
 Will never come back to me.
 Pub. 1842.

Songs from *The Princess*

These songs, added in later editions of *The Princess*, stand out among the great lyrics in the English language. *The Princess* is Tennyson's long narrative poem dealing with the position of woman in society and, especially, with the sanctity of the marriage relation.

1

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
 Wind of the western sea,
 Low, low, breathe and blow,
 Wind of the western sea!
 Over the rolling waters go, 5
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,
 Blow him again to me;
 While my little one, while my pretty one,
 sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
 Father will come to thee soon; 10
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon;
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,
 Silver sails all out of the west
 Under the silver moon; 15
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

2

The splendor falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story;
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory. 20
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
 dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going!
 O, sweet and far from cliff and scar 25
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
 dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river; 30
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
 And grow for ever and for ever.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
 dying.

3

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
 mean,¹ 35
 Tears from the depth of some divine despair
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
 In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
 And thinking of the days that are no more. 39

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
 That brings our friends up from the under-
 world,
 Sad as the last which reddens over one
 That sinks with all we love below the verge;
 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer
 dawns 45
 The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
 The casement slowly grows a glimmering
 square;
 So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death, 50
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
 On lips that are for others; deep as love,
 Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
 O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

4

Home they brought her warrior dead; 55
 She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
 All her maidens, watching, said,
 "She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Called him worthy to be loved, 60
 Truest friend and noblest foe;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,

¹ Note the absence of rhyme in this song.

Took the face-cloth from the face; 65
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
"Sweet my child, I live for thee." 70

5
Ask me no more: the moon may draw the
sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take
the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more. 75

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee
die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more. so

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed;
I strove against the stream and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main.
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more. 85

6
Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
white;¹
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font.
The fire-fly wakens; waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a
ghost, 90
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danae² to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me. 95

¹ This and the next lyric are truly great examples of lyric art. Again, the absence of rhyme is to be noticed.

² When Danae (mother of Perseus by Zeus) was imprisoned in a tower by her father, Zeus visited her in a shower of Gold.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake.
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

7
Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:¹ 100
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and
cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire; 105
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats, no
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the Silver
Horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white
ravine
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors. n6
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and
spill 120

Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air.
So waste not thou, but come; for all the
vales

Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I 125
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.² 130
Pub. 1847-50.

¹ The scenery in this poem is Swiss; the spirit of the piece, it has been pointed out, is Greek.

² The last two lines of the poem are a famous example of verse in which the sound is an echo of the sense.

FROM *In Memoriam* A. H. H.

This poem is Tennyson's great elegy on the death of Arthur Henry Hallam, the poet's close friend at Cambridge. Hallam, who was the son of the well-known historian, was engaged to Tennyson's sister Emily at the time of his death in Vienna in 1833. Between that time and 1850, the year in which *In Memoriam* was published, Tennyson wrote verses expressing the phases of his great grief as this grief was recalled to him. These verses, written in sections, were woven together for publication.

1*

I held it truth, with him² who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years 5
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss. 10
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with Death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved and lost, 15
But all he was is overworn."

2

Old yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones. 20

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom, 25
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom;

¹ These stanzas follow the general introduction.
• This reference was not clear even to the poet.

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood, 30
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thcc.

3

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath, 35
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;
A web is woven across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun; 40

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands —
With all her music in her tone,
A hollow echo of my own, —
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind, 45
Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?

4

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark; 50
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire, 55
"What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost! 60

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darkened eyes;
With morning wakes the will, and cries,
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

5

1 sometimes: hold it half a sin 65
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
 A use in measured language lies; 70
 The sad mechanic exercise,
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
 Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
 But that large grief which these enfold
 Is given in outline and no more. 76

6

One writes, that "other friends remain,"
 That "loss is common to the race" —
 And common is the commonplace,
 And vacant chaff well meant for gain. 80

That loss is common would not make
 My own less bitter, rather more.
 Too common! Never morning wore
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be, 85
 That pledgedst now thy gallant son,
 A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
 Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save 89
 Thy sailor, — while thy head is bowed,
 His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
 At that last hour to please him well;
 Who mused on all I had to tell, 95
 And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
 And ever met him on his way
 With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"
 Or, "here to-morrow will he come." 100

O, somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
 That sittest ranging golden hair;
 And glad to find thyself so fair,
 Poor child, that waitest for thy love I

For now her father's chimney glows 105
 In expectation of a guest;
 And thinking "this will please him
 best,"
 She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night; 109
 And with the thought her color burns;
 And, having left the glass, she turns
 Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turned, the curse
 Had fallen, and her future lord
 Was drowned in passing thro' the ford,
 Or killed in falling from his horse. 116

O, what to her shall be the end?
 And what to me remains of good?
 To her, perpetual maidenhood,
 And unto me, no second friend. xao

7

Dark house,¹ by which once more I stand
 Here in the long unlovely street,
 Doors, where my heart was used to beat
 So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasped no more — 15
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
 And like a guilty thing I creep
 At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
 The noise of life begins again, 130
 And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
 On the bald street breaks the blank day.

2-7

I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes 5
 His license in the field of time,
 Unfettered by the sense of crime,
 To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
 The heart that never pledged troth 10
 But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
 I feel it, when I sorrow most;
¹ Hallam's home in London, 67 Wimpole Street.

Tis better to have loved and lost 15
Than never to have loved at all.

18

The time draws near the birth of Christ.¹
The moon is hid, the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist. 20

Four voices of four hamlets² round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound;

Each voice four changes on the wind, 25
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wished no more to wake, 30
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they controlled me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touched with joy,
The merry, merry bells of Yule. 36

19

With such compelling cause to grieve
As daily vexes household peace,
And chains regret to his decease,
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve; 40

Which brings no more a welcome guest
To enrich the threshold of the night
With showered largess of delight
In dance and song and game and jest?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs 45
Entwine the cold baptismal font,
Make one wreath more for Use and Wont,
That guard the portals of the house;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
Gray nurses, loving nothing new — 50
Why should they miss their yearly due
Before their time? They too will die.

¹ This is the first Christmas after Hallam's death.

^a Near Somersby.

3°
With trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possessed the earth, 55
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gamboled, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all. 60

We paused: the winds were in the beech;
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang; 65
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet. 70
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is
sweet,"
And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: "They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy, 75
Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gathered power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil." 80

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.

.

50
Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves
prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of being slow.

- Be near me when the sensuous frame 5 "So fret not, like an idle girl, 45
 Is racked with pangs that conquer trust;
 And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
 And Life, a Fury slinging flame.
 When Time hath sundered shell from pearl."
- Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring, 10
 That lay their eggs, and sting and sing
 And weave their petty cells and die.
- Be near me when I fade away,
 To point the term¹ of human strife,
 And on the low dark verge of life 15
 The twilight of eternal day.
- 51
- Do we indeed desire the dead
 Should still be near us at our side?
 Is there no baseness we would hide?
 No inner vileness that we dread? 20
- Shall he for whose applause I strove,
 I had such reverence for his blame,
 See with clear eye some hidden shame
 And I be lessened in his love?
- I wrong the grave with fears untrue. 25
 Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
 There must be wisdom with great Death;
 The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.
- Be near us when we climb or fall;
 Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours 30
 With larger other eyes than ours,
 To make allowance for us all.
- 52
- I cannot love thee as I ought,
 For love reflects the thing beloved;
 My words are only words, and moved 35
 Upon the topmost froth of thought.
- "Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,"
 The Spirit of true love replied;
 "Thou canst not move me from thy side,
 Nor human frailty do me wrong. 40
- "What keeps a spirit wholly true
 To that ideal which he bears?
 What record? not the sinless years²
 That breathed beneath the Syrian blue;
- 53
- How many a father have I seen,
 A sober man, among his boys, 50
 Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
 Who wears his manhood hale and green;
 And dare we to this fancy give,¹
 That had the wild oat not been sown,
 The soil, left barren, scarce had grown 55
 The grain by which a man may live?
- Oh, if we held the doctrine sound
 For life outliving heats of youth,
 Yet who would preach it as a truth
 To those that eddy round and round? 60
- Hold thou the good, define it well;
 For fear divine Philosophy
 Should push beyond her mark, and be
 Procuress to the Lords of Hell.
- 54
- O, yet we trust that somehow good 65
 Will be the final goal of ill,
 To pangs of nature, sins of will,
 Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;
 That nothing walks with aimless feet;
 That not one life shall be destroyed, 70
 Or cast as rubbish to the void,
 When God hath made the pile complete,
 That not a worm is cloven in vain;
 That not a moth with vain desire
 Is shriveled in a fruitless fire, 75
 Or but subserves another's gain.
- Behold, we know not anything;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last — far off — at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring. 80
- So runs my dream; but what am I?
 An infant crying in the night;
 An infant crying for the light,
 And with no language but a cry.
- 55
- ¹ terminus or extent. ² Christ's. ¹ give in.

- 55
The wish, that of the living whole 85
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?
- Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams? 90
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life,
- That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds 95
She often brings but one to bear,
- I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God, 100
- I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.
- 56
"So careful of the type?" but no. 105
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone;
I care for nothing, all shall go.
- "Thou makest thine appeal to me.
I bring to life, I bring to death; no
The spirit does but mean the breath.
I know no more." And he, shall he,
- Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies, 115
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,
- Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law —
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine,¹ shrieked against his creed — 120
- Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
¹ rapacity.
- Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills?
- No more? A monster then, a dream, 125
A discord. Dragons of the prime,¹
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him.
- O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy² voice to soothe and bless! 130
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.
- 77
What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
Foreshortened in the tract of time?
- These mortal lullabies of pain 5
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane
- A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells 10
A grief, then changed to something else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.
- But what of that? My darkened ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame, 15
To utter love more sweet than praise.
- 78
Again at Christmas³ did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
The silent snow possessed the earth,
And calmly⁴ fell our Christmas-eve. 2(6
- The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.
- As in the winters left behind, 2';
Again our ancient games had place,
The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.
- ¹ primordial era. ^a Hallam's.
^s The second Christmas after Hallam's death.
« The first Christmas fell "sadly." »

Who showed a token of distress?
 No single tear, no type of pain — 30
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?
 O last regret, regret can die!
 No — mixt with all this mystic frame,
 Her deep relations are the same, 35
 But with long use her tears are dry.

96

You¹ say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.
 I know not: one² indeed I knew 5
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true;
 Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out. 10
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.
 He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
 He would not make his judgement blind,
 He faced the spectres of the mind 15
 And laid them; thus he came at length
 To find a stronger faith his own,
 And Power was with him in the night,
 Which makes the darkness and the light,
 And dwells not in the light alone, 20
 But in the darkness and the cloud,
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,
 While Israel made their gods of gold,
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

104

The time draws near the birth of Christ;³
 The moon is hid, the night is still;

¹ This may be Emily Sellwood, to whom Tennyson was engaged. They were married in 1850.

² Hallam.

³ The third Christmas after Hallam's death.

A single¹ church below the hill
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below, 5
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
 In lands where not a memory strays, 10
 Nor landmark breathes of other days,
 But all is new unhallowed ground.

105

To-night ungathered let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand:
 We live within the stranger's land, 15
 And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust² is left alone
 And silent under other snows:
 There in due time the woodbine blows,
 The violet comes, but we are gone. 20

No more shall wayward grief abuse
 The genial hour with mask and mime;
 For change of place, like growth of time,
 Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast, 25
 By which our lives are chiefly proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm; 30
 For who would keep an ancient form
 Through which the spirit breathes no more?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast,
 Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown;
 No dance, no motion, save alone 35
 What lightens in the lucid East

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
 Long sleeps the summer in the seed;
 Run out your measured arcs, and lead
 The closing cycle rich in good. 40

¹ i.e., they are no longer at Somersby.

² Tennyson's father died in March, 1833, at Somersby.

106

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new, 45
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no more; 50
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life, 55
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in. 60

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease; 65
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand; 70
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

.

116

Is it, then, regret for buried time
 That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
 And meets the year, and gives and takes
 The colors of the crescent prime?¹

Not all: the songs, the stirring air, 5
 The life re-orient out of dust,
¹ springtime.

Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
 Upon me, while I muse alone, 10
 And that dear voice, I once have known,
 Still speak to me of me and mine.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
 For days of happy commune dead,
 Less yearning for the friendship fled, 15
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

117

O days and hours, your work is this,
 To hold me from my proper place,
 A little while from his embrace,
 For fuller gain of after bliss; 20

That out of distance might ensue
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet;
 And unto meeting, when we meet,
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs, 25
 And every span of shade that steals,
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,¹
 And all the courses of the suns.

118'

Contemplate all this work of Time,
 The giant laboring in his youth; 30
 Nor dream of human love and truth,
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
 Are breathers of an ampler day
 For ever nobler ends. They say, 35
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
 And grew to seeming-random forms,
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
 Till at the last arose the man; 40

Who throve and branched from clime to clime,
 The herald of a higher race,

¹ The references in these three lines are to the hour-glass, sun-dial, and clock.

^a In this section Tennyson gives his view of cosmic evolution.

And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type¹ this work of time

Within himself, from more to more; 45
 Or, crowned with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and show
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears, 50
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
 And battered with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
 Move upward, working out the beast, 55
 And let the'ape and tiger die.

116

Love is and was my lord and king,
 And in his presence I attend
 To hear the tidings of my friend,
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord, 5
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep
 Within his court on earth, and sleep
 Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
 That moves about from place to place, 10
 And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

117

And all is well, tho' faith and form
 Be sundered in the night of fear;
 Well roars the storm to those that hear 15
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
 And justice, even tho' thrice again
 The red fool-fury of the Seine³
 Should pile her barricades with dead. 20

But ill for him that wears a crown,
 And him, the lazar, in his rags!

¹ typify.³ A complimentary reference to Paris and its revolutions.

They tremble, the sustaining crags;
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood; 25
 The fortress crashes from on high,
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,
 And the great 'Eon' sinks in blood,

And compassed by the fires of hell;
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star, 30
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

1833-50.

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington

This poem, in an earlier form, was first published as a pamphlet in September, 1852, on the day that Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo, was buried. It was written by Tennyson in his capacity as Poet Laureate.

I

Bury the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation;
 Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a mighty
 nation;
 Mourning when their leaders fall, 5
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

2

Where shall we lay the man whom we de-
 plore?
 Here, in streaming London's central roar.²
 Let the sound of those he wrought for, 10
 And the feet of those he fought for,
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

3

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
 As fits an universal woe,
 Let the long, long procession go, 15
 And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
 And let the mournful martial music blow;
 The last great Englishman is low.

¹ age. ² St. Paul's Cathedral.

4

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
 Remembering all his greatness in the past.
 No more in soldier fashion will he greet 21
 With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
 Whole in himself, a common good. 26
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest yet with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war, 30
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good gray head which all men knew, 35
 O voice from which their omens all men drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fallen at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that
 blew!
 Such was he whom we deplore. 40
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's¹ victor will be seen
 no more.

5

All is over and done.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son. 45
 Let the bell be tolled.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mold.
 Under the cross of gold²
 That shines over city and river, 50
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be tolled,
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds. 55
 Bright let it be with its blazoned deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be tolled,
 And a deeper knell in the heart be knolled;
 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem rolled
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross; 61
 And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;

¹ Napoleon.² Surmounting the dome of St. Paul's.

He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom 65
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
 When he with those deep voices wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from shame,
 With those deep voices our dead captain
 taught
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim 70
 In that dread sound to the great name
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-tempered frame.
 O civic muse, to such a name, 75
 To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-echoing avenues of song!

6

"Who is he that cometh, like an honored
 guest, so
 With banner and with music, with soldier and
 with priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking on my
 rest?" —
 Mighty Seaman,¹ this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 Thine island loves thee well, thou famous
 man, 85
 The greatest sailor since our world began.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea. 90
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;
 O give him welcome, this is he
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee;
 For this is England's greatest son, 95
 He that gained a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye'
 Clashed with his fiery few and won; 100
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon³ drew

¹ Lord Nelson, near whom Wellington was buried.^a In India.³ In the Peninsular campaign.

¹ The European revolutions of 1848 had taken place only four years before.

Who never spoke against a foe; 185
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right.
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke;
 Whatever record leap to light 190
 He never shall be shamed.

8

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Followed by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands 195
 Lavish Honor showered all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune¹ emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great
 But as he saves or serves the state. 200
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story
 The path of duty was the way to glory.
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes, 205
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story
 The path of duty was the way to glory. 210
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upward, and prevailed,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-lands 216
 To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he: his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his great example stand 220
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure;
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory.
 And let the land whose hearths he saved from
 shame 225
 For many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,

¹ In England a victorious commander is honored not only with orders and titles, but with large grants of money.

With honor, honor, honor, honor to him, 230
 Eternal honor to his name.

9

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet unmolded tongue
 Far on in summers that we shall not see.
 Peace, it is a day of pain 235
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung.
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one upon whose hand and heart and brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe hung. 240
 Ours the pain, be his the gain!
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere; 245
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane: 250
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so true 255
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
 And break the shore, and evermore 260
 Make and break, and work their will,
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul? 265
 On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's
 ears;
 The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs
 and tears;
 The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust; 270
 He is gone who seemed so great. —
 Gone, but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in state, 275
 And that he wears a truer crown

Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him, 280
 God accept him, Christ receive him!
 1852.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Written to commemorate the famous cavalry charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the Crimea, 1854.

1
 Half a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!" 5
 Charge for the guns!" he said.
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

2
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!"
 Was there a man dismayed?
 Not tho' the soldier knew 10
 Some one had blundered.
 Theirs not to make reply,
 Theirs not to reason why,
 Theirs but to do and die,
 Into the valley of Death 15
 Rode the six hundred.

3
 Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them 20
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell 25
 Rode the six hundred.

4
 Flashed all their sabres bare,
 Flashed as they turned in air

Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while 30
 All the world wondered.
 Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right thro' the line they broke;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reeled from the sabre-stroke 35
 Shattered and sundered.
 Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.

5
 Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them, 40
 Cannon behind them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well 45
 Came thro' the jaws of Death
 Back from the mouth of Hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

6
 When can their glory fade? 50
 O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wondered.
 Honor the charge they made!
 Honor the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred! 55
 December, 1854.

Lyrics from *Maud*

Tennyson called *Maud* a monodrama. It is a lyrical narrative in which the hero of the story tells the tale in a roundabout, emotional manner. In his narrating, he exemplifies what William James called "the stream of consciousness." The hero is a selfish, morbid man who is weighed down by dark thoughts concerning existence until he goes completely mad. He overcomes his hypersensitiveness and is restored to sanity through love of his fellow man. The poem is unequal in execution; but it contains some of the best lyrics that Tennyson wrote.

PART I

XXII

I
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,

Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad, 5
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

2

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she
 loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky, 10
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

3

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon;
 All night has the casement jessamine stirred
 To the dancers dancing in tune; 16
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

4

I said to the lily, "There is but one,
 With whom she has heart to be gay. 20
 When will the dancers leave her alone?
 She is weary of dance and play."
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone 25
 The last wheel echoes away.

5

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine? 30
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to the
 rose,
 "For ever and ever, mine."

6

And the soul of the rose went into my
 blood,
 As the music clashed in the hall;
 And long by the garden lake I stood, 35
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to the
 wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

7

From the meadow your walks have left so
 sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs 40
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

8

The slender acacia would not shake 45
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,
 Knowing your promise to me; 50
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sighed for the dawn and thec.

9

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls, 55
 Queen lily and rose in one;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

10

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate. 60
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;
 She is coming, my life, my fate.
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
 And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;" 65
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

11

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed; 70
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead,
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

The following lyric is the germ of the poem. The rest of Maud was written later to explain these lines.

PART II		She is walking in the meadow, And the woodland echo rings; In a moment we shall meet.		
IV				
I		She is singing in the meadow, And the rivulet at her feet Ripples on in light and shadow To the ballad that she sings.		40
O that 'twere possible After long grief and pain To find the arms of my true love Round me once again!				
2		7		
When I was wont to meet her	5	Do I hear her sing as of old, My bird with the shining head, My own dove with the tender eye? But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry, There is some one dying or dead, And a sullen thunder is rolled; For a tumult shakes the city, And I wake, my dream is fled.	45	
In the silent woody places By the home that gave me birth, We stood tranced in long embraces Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter Than any thing on earth.	10	In the shuddering dawn, behold, Without knowledge, without pity, By the curtains of my bed That abiding phantom cold!	50	
3		8		
A shadow flits before me, Not thou, but like to thee. Ah, Christ, that it were possible For one short hour to see The souls we loved, that they might tell us What and where they be!	15	Get thee hence, nor come again, Mix not memory with doubt, Pass, thou deathlike type of pain, Pass and cease to move about! 'Tis the blot upon the brain That will show itself without.	55	
4		9		
It leads me forth at evening, It lightly winds and steals In a cold white robe before me, When all my spirit reels At the shouts, the leagues of lights, And the roaring of the wheels.	20	Then I rise, the eavedrops fall, And the yellow vapors choke The great city sounding wide; The day comes, a dull red ball Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke On the misty river-tide.	60	
5		10		
Half the night I waste in sighs, Half in dreams I sorrow after The delight of early skies; In a wakeful doze I sorrow For the hand, the lips, the eyes, For the meeting of the morrow, The delight of happy laughter, The delight of low replies.	25	Thro' the hubbub of the market I steal, a wasted frame; It crosses here, it crosses there, Thro' all that crowd confused and loud, The shadow still the same; And on my heavy eyelids My anguish hangs like shame.	65	
6		11		
'Tis a morning pure and sweet, And a dewy splendor falls On the little flower that clings To the turrets and the walls; Tis a morning pure and sweet, And the light and shadow fleet.	30	Alas for her that met me, That heard me softly call, Came glimmering thro' the laurels At the quiet evenfall,	70	

In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall I 80

12

Would the happy spirit descend
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend 85
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest"?

13

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets 90
And will not let me be;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.
Always I long to creep 95
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

Pub. 1855.

The Brook

This popular song appeared in a narrative poem of the same name. ""-.

I come from haunts h_a«foot and hern,
I make a sudden safiy,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down, 5
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river, 10
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles. 15

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,

And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow. 20

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out, 25
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel 30
With many a silvery water-break
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go, 35
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers. 40

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars 45
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river, 50
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

1855-

The Voyage

Tennyson meant this poem to be an allegory of the search, in life, for a noble ideal.

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbor-mouth;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the south.

- How fresh was every sight and sound 5
 On open main or winding shore!
 We knew the merry world was round,
 And we might sail for evermore.
- Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail; 10
 The Lady's-head upon the prow
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheered the gale.
 The broad seas swelled to meet the keel,
 And swept behind; so quick the run,
 We felt the good ship shake and reel, 15
 We seemed to sail into the sun!
- How oft we saw the sun retire,*
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillared light! 20
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As through the slumber of the globe
Again we dashed into the dawn!
- New stars all night above the brim 25
 Of waters lightened into view;
 They climbed as quickly, for the rim
 Changed every moment as we flew.
 Far ran the naked moon across
 The houseless ocean's heaving field, 30
 Or flying shone, the silver boss
 Of her own halo's dusky shield.
- The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen;
 We passed long lines of Northern capes 35
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless East we drove,
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove. 40
- By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloomed the low coast and quivering brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine;
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods 45
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glowed for a moment as we passed.
- O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly streamed ye by the bark! 50
- At times the whole sea burned, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit, 55
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.
- For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
 And still we followed where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight. 60
 Her face was evermore unseen,
 And fixed upon the far sea-line;
 But each man murmured, "O my Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine."
- And now we lost her, now she gleamed 65
 Like Fancy made of golden air,
 Now nearer to the prow she seemed
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
 Now high on waves that idly burst
 Like Heavenly Hope she crowned the sea, 70
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,
 She bore the blade of Liberty.
- And only one among us — him
 We pleased not — he was seldom pleased;
 He saw not far, his eyes were dim, 75
 But ours he swore were all diseased.
 "A ship of fools," 'e shrieked in spite,
 "A ship of fool 'he sneered and wept.
 And overboard one's stormy night
 He cast his body, and on we swept. 80
- And never sail of ours was furled,
 Nor anchor dropped at eve or morn;
 We loved the glories of the world,
 But laws of nature were our scorn.
 For blasts would rise and rave and cease, 85
 But whence were those that drove the sail
 Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
 And to and through the counter gale?
- Again to colder climes we came,
 For still we followed where she led; 90
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead,
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
 We follow that which flies before;
 We know the merry world is round, 95
 And we may sail for evermore.
- 1864.

Milton

(ALCAICS)

Here Tennyson attempts to reproduce the effect of classical quantitative verse. The poem is composed of four unrhymed Alcaic strophes. This strophe or stanza was developed by the Greek poet Alcaeus (sixth century B.C.). Many later poets, especially Horace, used it.

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel, 5
Starred from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower, as the deep-doomed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset!
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring, 10
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palmwoods
Whisper in odorous heights of even. 16
Pub. 1863.

Northern Farmer, Old Style

In this poem Tennyson has tried to suggest by his spelling the dialect spoken by old-fashioned rustics in the north of England.

1

Wheer 'asta bean saw long and mea ligin'¹
'ere aloan?
Noorse?² thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy,
Doctor's abean an' agoan;
Says that I moant 'a naw moor aale, but I
beant a fool;
Git ma my aale, fur I bcant a-gawin' to break
my rule.

2

Doctors, they knows nowt, fur a³ says what's
nawways true; 5
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saay the things
that a do.

¹ lying.³ nurse.³ he.

I've 'ed my point o' aale ivry noight sin' I
bean 'ere.

An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for
foorty year.

3

Parson's a bean loikewoisc, an' a sittin 'ere
o' my bed.

"The Amoighty's a taakin o' you to 'issen,¹
my friend," a said, 10

An' a tow'd ma my sins, an' 's toithe² were
due, an' I gied it in hond;

I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy
the lond.

4

Larn'd a ma' bea. I reckons I 'annot sa
mooch to larn.

But a cast opp,³ thot a did, 'bout Bessy
Marris's barne.⁴

Thaw a knaws I hallus voated wi' Squoire an'
choorch an' staate, 15

An' i' the woost o' toimcs I wur niver agin
the raate.⁵

5

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor moy
Sally wur dead,

An' 'eard 'um a bummin' awaay loike a
buzzard-clock⁶ ower my 'ea'd,

An' I niver knaw'd whot a mean'd but I
thowt a 'ad summut to saay,

An' I thowt a said whot a ow't to 'a said, an'
I coom'd awaay. 20

6

Bessy Marris's barne! tha⁷ knaws she laaid it
to meä.

Mowt a bean, mayhap, for she wur a bad un,
shea.

'Siver, I kep 'um,⁸ I kep 'um, my lass, tha
mun understond;

I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy
the lond.

¹ himself.¹ tithe.³ he cast up against me.¹ child.⁶ June-bug. ¹ s poor-tax.¹ thou.¹ him.

7

But Parson a cooms an' a goas, an' a says it
 easy an' freea: 25
 "The Amoighty's a taakin o' you to 'issen,
 my friend," says 'ea.
 I weant saay men be loiars, thaw summun
 said it in 'aaste;
 But 'c reads wonn sarmin a week, an' I 'a
 stubb'd¹ Thurnaby waaste.

8

D' ya moind² the waaste, my lass? naw, naw,
 tha was not born then;
 Theer wur a boggle³ in it, I often 'card 'um,
 mysén; 30
 Moast loike a butter-bump,⁴ fur I 'card 'um
 about an' about,
 But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raaved⁵
 an' rembled⁶ 'um out.

9

Keapcr's⁷ it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer
 a-laaid of 'is faace
 Down i' the woild 'enemies⁸ afor I coom'd
 to the plaace.
 Noaks or Thimbleby — toaner⁹ 'ed shot 'um
 as dead as a naail. 35
 Noaks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize¹⁰ —
 but git ma my aale.

10

Dubbut" look at the waaste; theer warn't
 not feead for a cow;
 Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' look
 at it now —
 Warn't worth nowt a haacre, an' now theer's
 lots o' feead,
 Fourscoor yows¹² upon it, an' some on it
 down i' seed. 40

11

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I mean'd to 'a
 stubb'd it at fall,
 Done it ta-year¹⁴ I mean'd, an' runn'd plow
 thruff it an' all,

¹ cleared of stumps to prepare it for planting.

² remember. ³ spirit. ⁴ bittern.

⁵ tore up. ⁶ threw. ⁷ the game-keeper's.

⁸ anemones. ⁹ 'one or the other.

¹⁰ the assizes. ¹¹ do but.

¹² ewes. ¹³ clover.

¹⁴ this year.

If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let
 ma aloan, —
 Mea, wi' haate' hoonderd haacre o' Squoire's,
 an' lond o' my oan.

12

Do Godamoighty know what a 's doing a-
 taakin' o' mea? 45
 I beant wonn as saws 'ere a bean an' yonder
 a peā;
 An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear,
 a' dear!
 And I 'a managed for Squoire coom Michael-
 mas thutty year.

13

A mowt 'a taaen owd Joanes, as 'ant not a
 'aapoth o' sense,
 Or a mowt 'a taaen young Robins — a niver
 mended a fence; 50
 But Godamoighty a moost taake mea an'
 taake ma now,
 Wi' aaf the cows to cauve² an' Thurnaby
 hoalms³ to plow!

14

Look 'ow quoloty⁴ smoiles when they sees
 ma a passin' boy,
 Says to thessen,⁵ naw doubt, "What a man a
 bea sewer-loy!"⁶
 Fur they knows what I bean to Squoire sin'
 fust a coom'd to the 'All, 55
 I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy
 duty boy hall.

15

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons
 'ull 'a to wroite,
 For whoa's to howd⁷ the lond ater mea thot
 muddles ma quoit;
 Sartin-sewer I bea thot a weant niver give it
 to Joanes,
 Naw, nor a moant to Robins — a niver rem-
 bles the stoans. 60

¹ eight.

² calve.

³ holms.

⁴ the gentry.

⁵ themselves.

⁶ surely.

⁷ hold.

16

But summun 'ull come ater mea mayhap wi'
 'is kittle o' steam
 Huzzin'¹ an' maazin³ the blessed fealds wi'
 the divil's oan team.
 Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they
 says is sweet,
 But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn
 abear to see it.

17

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring
 ma the aale? 65
 Doctor's a 'toattler,³ lass, an a's hallus i' the
 owd taale;⁴
 I weant break rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw
 moor nor a floy;
 Git ma my aale, I tell tha, an' if I mun doy
 I mun doy.
 Pub. 1864.

Northern Farmer, New Style

"Likewise founded on a single sentence, 'When I canters my 'erse along the ramper [highway] I 'ears proputtty, proputtty, proputtty.' I had been told that a rich farmer in our neighborhood was in the habit of saying this. I never saw the man and know no more of him." (Tennyson.)

I

Doesn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they
 canters awaay?
 Proputtty, proputtty, proputtty — that's what
 I 'ears 'em saay.
 Proputtty, proputtty, proputtty — Sam, thou's
 an ass for thy pains;
 Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs, nor in all
 thy brains.

2

Woa — theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam:
 yon's parson's 'ouse — 5
 Doesn't thou know that a man mun be eather
 a man or a mouse?
 Time to think on it then; for thou'll be
 twenty to weeak.⁵
 Proputtty, proputtty — woa then, woa — let
 ma 'ear mysen speak.

¹ hissing.³ amazing.» teetotaler.
« this week.

3

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean a-talkin'
 o' thee;
 Thou's bean talkin' to muther, an' she bean
 a-tellin' it me. 10
 Thou'll not marry for munny — thou's sweet
 upo' parson's lass —
 Noa — thou'll marry for luvv — an' we
 boath on us thinks tha an ass.

4

Seead her to-daay goa by — Saaint's daay —
 they was ringing the bells.
 She's a beauty, thou thinks — an' soa is
 scoors o' gells,
 Them as 'as munny an' all — wot's a beauty?
 — the flower as blows. 15
 But proputtty, proputtty sticks, an' proputtty,
 proputtty graws.

5

Do'ant be stunt;¹ taa'ke time. I knaws what
 maakes tha sa mad.
 Warn't I craazed fur the lasses mysen when I
 wur a lad?
 But I knaw'd a Quaaker feller as often 'as
 tow'd ma this:
 "Doant thou marry for munny, but goa wheer
 munny is!" 20

I

An' I went wheer munny war; an' thy muther
 coom to 'and,
 Wi' lots o' munny laai'd by, an' a nicetish bit
 o' land.
 Maaybe she warn't a beauty — I never giv it
 a thowt —
 But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a
 lass as 'ant nowt?

7

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weant a
 nowt when e's dead, 25
 Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle'
 her bread.
 Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weant niver
 get hiss6n clear,
 An' 'e maade the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e
 coomed to the shere

¹ obstinate.
³ earn.

8

An' thin 'e coomed to the parish wi' lots o'
 Varsity debt,
 Stock to his taail they did, an' 'e 'ant got
 shut on 'em yet. 30
 An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noan
 to lend 'im a shuvv,
 Woorse nor a far-weltered¹ yowe; fur, Sammy,
 'e married fur luvv.

9

Luvv? what s luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an'
 'er munny too,
 Maakin' 'em goa together, as they've good
 right to do.
 Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er
 munny laaid by? 35
 Naay — fur I luvved 'er a vast sight moor fur
 it: reason why.

10

Ay' an' thy muther says thou wants to marry
 the lass,
 Cooms of a gentleman burn: an' we boath
 on us thinks tha an ass.
 Woa then, proputtu, wiltha? — an ass as
 near as mays nowt!² —
 Woa then, wiltha? dangtha! — the bees is as
 fell as owt. 3 40

11

Break me a bit o' the esh for his 'ead, lad,
 out o' the fence!
 Gentleman burn! what's gentleman burn? is
 it shillins an' pence?
 Proputtu, proputtu's ivrything 'ere, an',
 Sammy, I'm blest
 If it is n't the saame oop yonder, fur them as
 'as it's the best.

12

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breaks into 'ouses
 an' steals, 45
 Them as 'as coats to their backs an' taakes
 their regular meals.
 Noa, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a
 meal's to be 'ad.
 Taake my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a
 loomp is bad.

¹ fbw-weltercd — said of a sheep lying on its back in
 a ditch. ² makes nothing.

» The flies are as fierce as anything.

13

Them or thir feythurs, tha sees, mun 'a bean
 a laazy lot,
 Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver
 munny was got. 50
 Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leastways 'is
 munny was 'id.
 But 'e tued an' moiled issen dead, an' 'e died
 a good un, 'e did.

14

Look thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck
 cooms out by the 'ill!
 Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs oop
 to the mill,
 An' I'll run oop to the brig, an' that thou'll
 live to see, 55
 An' if thou marries a good un I'll leave the
 land to thee.

15

Thim's my noations, Sammy, wheerby I
 means to stick;
 But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave the
 land to Dick. —
 Coom oop, proputtu, proputtu — that's what
 I 'ears 'im saay —
 Proputtu, proputtu, proputtu — canter an'
 canter awaay. 60
 1864.

In the Valley of Cauteretz¹

All along the valley, stream that flasbest white,
 Deepening thy voice with the deepening of
 the night,
 All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
 I walked with one I loved two and thirty
 years ago.
 All along the valley, while I walked today, 5
 The two and thirty years were a mist that
 rolls away;
 For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
 Thy living voice to me was as the voice of
 the dead,
 And all along the valley, by rock and cave
 and tree, 9
 The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.
 1861. 1864.

¹ In the French Pyrenees, which Tennyson visited
 in 1830 with Hallam.

The Flower

Once in a golden hour
 I cast to earth a seed.
 Up there came a flower,
 The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
 Thro' my garden-bower,
 And muttering discontent
 Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
 It wore a crown of light,
 But thieves from o'er the wall
 Stole the seed by night.

Sowed it far and wide
 By every town and tower,
 Till all the people cried
 "Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
 He that runs may read.
 Most can raise the flowers now,
 For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
 And some are poor indeed;
 And now again the people
 Call it but a weed.

1864.

Wages

Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of
 song,

Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on
 an endless sea —

Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right
 the wrong —

Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover
 of glory she; 4
 Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of
 Virtue be dust,

Would she have heart to endure for the life
 of the worm and the fly?

She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet
 seats of the just,

To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a
 summer sky;
 Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.
 1864. 9

The Higher Pantheism

5 The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the
 hills and the plains, —
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who
 reigns?

10 Is not the Vision He, though He be not that
 which He seems?
 Dreams are true while they last, and do we
 not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body
 and limb, 5
 15 Are they not sign and symbol of thy division
 from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the
 reason why,
 For is He not all but thou, that hast power
 to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou
 fulfill'st thy doom,
 Making Him broken gleams and a stifled
 splendor and gloom. 10

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit
 with Spirit can meet —
 Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than
 hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us
 rejoice,
 For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet
 His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all, says
 the fool, 15
 For all we have power to see is a straight
 staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye
 of man cannot see;
 But if we could see and hear, this Vision —
 were it not He?
 Pub. 1869.

The Revenge

A Ballad of the Fleet

Tennyson took the story from Sir Walter Raleigh's contemporaneous account, which tells how Sir Richard Grenville in 1591 in his ship *Revenge* fought an overpowering number of Spanish ships off the Azores, and fell mortally wounded. With Lord Howard he had been commissioned to capture the Spanish vessels returning, presumably with gold, from the West Indies.

1

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came
flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted
fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "Fort
God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships
are out of gear, s
And the half my men are sick. I must fly,
but follow quick •
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with
fifty-three?"

2

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know
you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with
them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying
sick ashore. 10
I should count myself the coward if I left
them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms
of Spain."

3

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships
of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men
from the land 15
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down
below;

For we brought them all aboard,
And they blessed him in their pain, that they
were not left to Spain, 20
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the
glory of the Lord.

4

He had only a hundred seamen to work the
ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the
Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the
weather¹ bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly? 25
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this
sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good
English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children
of the devil, 30
For I never turned my back upon Don or
devil yet."

5

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we
roared a hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart
of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her
ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to
the left were seen, 35
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the
long sea-lane between.

6

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from
their decks and laughed,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the
mad little craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like *San Philip* that, of
fifteen hundred tons, 40
And up-shadowing high above us with her
yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

¹ windward.

7

And while now the great *San Philp* hung
 above us like a cloud
 Whence the thunderbolt will fall
 Long and loud, 45
 Four galleons drew away
 From the Spanish fleet that day,
 And two upon the larboard and two upon the
 starboard lay,
 And the battle-thunder broke from them
 all.

8

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought
 herself and went, so
 Having that within her womb that had left
 her ill content;
 And the rest they came aboard us, and they
 fought us hand to hand,
 For a dozen times they came with their pikes
 and musketeers,
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog
 that shakes his ears
 When he leaps from the water to the land, ss

9

And the sun went down, and the stars came
 out far over the summer sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of the
 one and the fifty-three.
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, their
 high-built galleons came,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with
 her battle-thunder and flame;
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew
 back with her dead and her shame. 60
 For some were sunk and many were shattered,
 and so could fight us no more —
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this in
 the world before?

10

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
 Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
 And it chanced that, when half of the short
 summer night was gone, 65
 With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left
 the deck,
 But a bullet struck him that was dressing it
 suddenly dead,

And himself he was wounded again in the side
 and the head,
 And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

ii

And the night went down, and the sun smiled
 out far over the summer sea, 70
 And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay
 round us all in a ring;
 But they dared not touch us again, for they
 feared that we still could sting,
 So they watched what the end would be.
 And we had not fought them in vain,
 But in perilous plight were we, 75
 Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
 And half of the rest of us maimed for life
 In the crash of the cannonades and the
 desperate strife;
 And the sick men down in the hold were most
 of them stark and cold,
 And the pikes were all broken or bent, and
 the powder was all of it spent; 80
 And the masts and the rigging were lying
 over the side;
 But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:
 "We have fought such a fight for a day and a
 night
 As may never be fought again!
 We have won great glory, my men! 85
 And a day less or more
 At sea or ashore,
 We die — does it matter when?
 Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her,
 split her in twain!
 Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands
 of Spam!" 90

12

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the sea-
 men made reply:
 "We have children, we have wives,
 And the Lord hath spared our lives.
 We will make the Spaniard promise, if we
 yield, to let us go;
 We shall live to fight again and to strike
 another blow." 95
 And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded
 to the foe.

13

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship
 bore him then,

Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir
 Richard caught at last,
 And they praised him to his face with their
 courtly foreign grace;
 But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
 "I have fought for Queen and Faith like a
 valiant man and true; 101
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound
 to do.
 With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville
 die!"
 And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

14

And they stared at the dead that had been
 so valiant and true, 105
 And had holden the power and glory of Spain
 so cheap
 That he dared her with one little ship and
 his English few;
 Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught
 they knew,
 But they sank his body with honor down into
 the deep,
 And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarth-
 ier alien crew, no
 And away she sailed with her loss and longed
 for her own;
 When a wind from the lands they had ruined
 awoke from sleep,
 And the water began to heave and the weather
 to moan,
 And or ever that evening ended a great gale
 blew,
 And a wave like the wave that is raised by an
 earthquake grew, 115
 Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and
 their masts and their flags,
 And the whole sea plunged and fell on the
 shot-shattered navy of Spain,
 And the little *Revenge* herself went down by
 the island crags
 To be lost evermore in the main.
 Pub. 1878.

Rizpah

This is a dramatic monologue, based upon a story that Tennyson found in a penny magazine. For the Biblical story of Rizpah, whose son was hanged, see a Samuel xxi, 1-14.

17—

1

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land
 and sea —
 And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother,
 come out to me!"
 Why should he call me to-night, when he
 knows that I cannot go?
 For the downs are as bright as day, and the
 full moon stares at the snow.

2

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy
 us out of the town. 3
 The loud black nights for us, and the storm
 rushing over the down,
 When I cannot see my own hand, but am led
 by the creak of the chain,
 And grovel and grope for my son till I find
 myself drenched with the rain

3

Anything fallen again? nay — what was
 there left to fall?
 I have taken them home, I have numbered
 the bones, I have hidden them all. 10
 What am I saying? and what are *you!* do you
 come as a spy?
 Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree
 falls so must it lie.

4

Who let her in? how long has she been? you
 — what have you heard?
 Why did you sit so quiet? you never have
 spoken a word.
 O — to pray with me — yes — a lady —
 none of their spies — 15
 But the night has crept into my heart, and
 begun to darken my eyes.

5

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what
 should *you* know of the night,
 The blast and the burning shame and the
 bitter frost and the fright?
 I have done it, while you were asleep — you
 were only made for the day.
 I have gathered my baby together — and
 now you may go your way. ao

6

Nay — for it's kind of you, madam, to sit
by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only
an hour of life.

I kissed my boy in the prison, before he went
out to die.

⁴⁴They dared me to do it," he said, and he
never has told me a lie.

I whipped him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child — 25

"The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he
was always so wild —

And idle — and couldn't be idle — my Willy
— he never could rest.

The King should have made him a soldier, he
uld have been one of his best.

7

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and
they never would let him be good;

They swore that he dare not rob the mail,
and he swore that he would; 30

And he took no life, but he took one purse,
and when all was done

He flung it among his fellows — "I'll none
of it," said my son.

8

I came into court to the judge and the lawyers.

I told them my tale,

God's own truth — but they killed him, they
killed him for robbing the mail.

They hanged him in chains for a show — we
had always borne a good name — 35

To be hanged for a thief — and then put
away — isn't that enough shame?

Dust to dust — low down — let us hide! but
they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could stare
at him, passing by.

God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who
killed him and hanged him there. 40

9

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid
him my last good-bye;

They had fastened the door of his cell. "O
mother!" I heard him cry.

I couldn't get back though I tried, he had
something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer
forced me away.

10

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my
boy that was dead, 45

They seized me and shut me up: they fastened
me down on my bed.

"Mother, O mother!" — he called in the
dark to me year after year —

They beat me for that, they beat me — you
know that I couldn't but hear;

And then at the last they found I had grown
so stupid and still

They let me abroad again — but the creatures
had worked their will. 50

11

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my
bone was left —

I stole them all from the lawyers — and you,
will you call it a theft? —

My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the
bones that had laughed and had cried —

Theirs? O, no! they are mine — not theirs
— they had moved in my side.

12

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kissed 'em, I buried 'em all — 55

I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night by
the churchyard wall.

My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet
of judgment 'ill sound,

But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

13

They would scratch him up — they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.

Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know — let all
that be, 60

And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good-
will toward men —

"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"
— let me hear it again;

"Full of compassion and mercy — long-
suffering." Yes, O, yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder — the
 Savior lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap¹ except for
 the worst of the worst, 65
 And the first may be last — I have heard it
 in church — and the last may be first.
 Suffering — O, long-suffering — yes, as the
 Lord must know,
 Year after year in the mist and the wind and
 the shower and the snow.

14

Heard, have you? what? they have told you
 he never repented his sin.
 How do they know it? are *they* his mother?
 are *you* of his kin? 70
 Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm
 on the downs began,
 The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the
 sea that 'ill moan like a man?

15

Election, Election, and Reprobation² — it's
 all very well.
 But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not
 find him in hell.
 For I cared so much for my boy that the
 Lord has looked into my care, 75
 And He means me I'm sure to be happy with
 Willy, I know not where.

16

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul, that
 is all your desire —
 Do you think I care for *my* soul if my boy be
 gone to the fire?
 I have been with God in the dark — go, go,
 you may leave me alone —
 You have never borne a child — you are just
 as hard as a stone. 80

17

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that
 you mean to be kind,
 But I cannot hear what you say for my
 Willy's voice in the wind —

¹ Worn by an English judge when pronouncing a death-sentence.

² In Calvinistic theology, election was foreordained salvation, and reprobation, foreordained damnation, of certain souls.

The snow and the sky so bright — he used
 but to call in the dark,
 And he calls to me now from the church and
 not from the gibbet — for hark!
 Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is com-
 ing — shaking the walls — 85
 Willy — the moon's in a cloud — Good-
 night. I am going. He calls.
 Pub. 1880.

Locksley Hall Sixty Years After

Like the earlier *Locksley Hall*, this is a dramatic lyric. The speaker is an imaginary figure. Tennyson hoped that the two poems would express to later generations two contrasting moods of the period in which he lived.

Late, my grandson! half the morning have I
 paced these sandy tracts,
 Watched again the hollow ridges roaring
 into cataracts,

Wandered back to living boyhood while I
 heard the curlews call,
 I myself so close on death, and death itself in
 Locksley Hall.

So — your happy suit was blasted — she the
 faultless, the divine; 5
 And you liken — boyish babble — this boy-
 love of yours with mine.

I myself have often babbled doubtless of a
 foolish past;
 Babble, babble; our old England may go down
 in babble at last.

"Curse him!" curse your fellow-victim? call
 him dotard in your rage?
 Eyes that lured a doting boyhood well might
 fool a dotard's age. 10

Jilted for a wealthier! wealthier? yet perhaps
 she was not wise;
 I remember how you kissed the miniature
 with those sweet eyes.

In the hall there hangs a painting — Amy's
 arms about my neck —
 Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the
 ribs of wreck.

- In my life there was a picture, she that clasped
my neck had flown; 15
I was left within the shadow sitting on the
wreck alone.
- Yours has been a slighter ailment, will you
sicken for her sake?
You, not you! your modern amorist is of
easier, earthlier make.
- Amy loved me, Amy failed me, Amy was a
timid child;
But your Judith — but your worldling — *she*
had never driven me wild. 20
- She that holds the diamond necklace dearer
than the golden ring,
She that finds a winter sunset fairer than a
morn of spring.
- She that in her heart is brooding on his briefer
lease of life,
While she vows "till death shall part us,"
she the would-be-widow wife.
- She the worldling born of worldlings —
father, mother — be content, 25
Even the homely farm can teach us there is
something in descent.
- Yonder in that chapel, slowly sinking now
into the ground,
Lies the warrior, my forefather, with his feet
upon the hound.
- Crossed! for once he sailed the sea to crush
the Moslem in his pride;
Dead the warrior, dead his glory, dead the
cause in which he died. 30
- Yet how often I and Amy in the moldering
aisle have stood,
Gazing for one pensive moment on that
founder of our blood.
- There again I stood to-day, and where of old
we knelt in prayer,
Close beneath the casement crimson with the
shield of Locksley — there,
- All in white Italian marble, looking still as
if she smiled, 35
Lies my Amy dead in childbirth, dead the
mother, dead the child.
- Dead — and sixty years ago, and dead her
aged husband now —
I, this old white-headed dreamer, stooped and
kissed her marble brow.
- Gone the fires of youth, the follies, furies,
curses, passionate tears,
Gone like fires and floods and earthquakes of
the planet's dawning years. 40
- Fires that shook me once, but now to silent
ashes fallen away.
Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam
of dying day.
- Gone the tyrant of my youth, and mute below
the chancel stones,
All his virtues — I forgive them — black in
white above his bones.
- Gone the comrades of my bivouac, some in
fight against the foe, 45
Some thro' age and slow diseases, gone as all
on earth will go.
- Gone with whom for forty years my life in
golden sequence ran,
She with all the charm of woman, she with
all the breadth of man,
- Strong in will and rich in wisdom, Edith, yet
so lowly-sweet,
Woman to her inmost heart, and woman to
her tender feet, 50
- Very woman of very woman, nurse of ailing
body and mind,
She that linked again the broken chain that
bound me to my kind.
- Here to-day was Amy with me, while I
wandered down the coast,
Near us Edith's holy shadow, smiling at the
slighter ghost.

Gone our sailor son thy father, Leonard early
lost at sea; 55

Thou alone, my boy, of Amy's kin and mine
art left to me.

Gone thy tender-natured mother, wearying
to be left alone,

Pining for the stronger heart that once had
beat beside her own.

Truth, for truth is truth, he worshiped, being
true as he was brave;

Good, for good is good, he followed, yet he
looked beyond the grave, 60

Wiser there than you, that crowning barren
Death as lord of all,

Deem this over-tragic drama's closing curtain
is the pall!

Beautiful was death in him, who saw the
death, but kept the deck,

Saving women and their babes, and sinking
with the sinking wreck,

Gone forever! Ever? no — for since our dying
race began, 65

Ever, ever, and forever was the leading light
of man.

Those that in barbarian burials killed the
slave, and slew the wife

Felt within themselves the sacred passion of
the second life.

Indian warriors dream of ampler hunting
grounds beyond the night;

Even the black Australian dying hopes he
shall return, a white. 70

Truth for truth, and good for good! The
good, the true, the pure, the just —

Take the charm "Forever" from them, and
they crumble into dust.

Gone the cry of "Forward, Forward," lost
within a growing gloom;

Lost, or only heard in silence from the silence
of a tomb.

Half the marvels of my morning, triumphs
over time and space, 75

Staled by frequency, shrunk by usage into
commonest commonplace!

"Forward" rang the voices then, and of the
many mine was one.

Let us hush this cry of "Forward" till ten
thousand years have gone.

Far among the vanished races, old Assyrian
kings would flay

Captives whom they caught in battle — iron-
hearted victors they. 80

Ages after, while in Asia, he that led the wild
Moguls,

Timur¹ built his ghastly tower of eighty
thousand human skulls;

Then, and here in Edward's time, an age of
noblest English names,

Christian conquerors took and flung the con-
quered Christian into flames.²

Love your enemy, bless your haters, said the
Greatest of the great; 85

Christian love among the Churches looked
the twin of heathen hate.

From the golden alms of Blessing man had
coined himself a curse:

Rome of Caesar, Rome of Peter, which was
crueler? which was worse?

France had shown a light to all men, preached
a Gospel, all men's good;

Celtic Demos rose a Demon, shrieked and
slaked the light with blood. 90

Hope was ever on her mountain, watching
till the day begun —

Crowned with sunlight — over darkness —
from the still unrisen sun.

Have we grown at last beyond the passions
of the primal clan?

"Kill your enemy, for you hate him," still,
"your enemy" was a man.

¹ Timur the Lame, or Tamerlane (1333-1405), the
conqueror of the Mogul empire in Central Asia.

² In the struggle over the Reformation.

Have we sunk below them? peasants maim
the helpless horse, and drive 95
Innocent cattle under thatch, and burn the
kindlier brutes alive.

Brutes, the brutes are not your wrongers —
burned at midnight, found at morn,
Twisted hard in mortal agony with their off-
spring, born-unborn,

Clinging to the silent mother! Are we
devils? are we men?
Sweet Saint Francis of Assisi, would that
he were here again, 100

He that in his Catholic wholeness used to
call the very flowers
Sisters, brothers — and the beasts — whose
pains are hardly less than ours!

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! who can
tell how all will end?
Read the wide world's annals, you, and take
their wisdom for your friend.

Hope the best, but hold the Present fatal
daughter of the Past, 105
Shape your heart to front the hour, but dream
not that the hour will last.

Ay, if dynamite and revolver leave you cour-
age to be wise —
When was age so crammed with menace?
madness? written, spoken lies?

Envy wears the mask of Love, and, laughing
sober fact to scorn,
Cries to weakest as to strongest, "Ye are
equals, equal born." no

Equal-born? O, yes, if yonder hill be level
with the flat.
Charm us, orator, till the lion look no larger
than the cat,

Till the cat thro' that mirage of overheated
language loom
Larger than the lion, — Demos end in work-
ing its own doom.

Russia bursts our Indian barrier, shall we
fight her? shall we yield? 115
Pause! before you sound the trumpet, hear the
voices from the field.

Those three hundred millions under one Im-
perial sceptre now,
Shall we hold them? shall we loose them?
take the suffrage of the plow.

Nay, but these would feel and follow Truth
if only you and you,
Rivals of realm-ruining party, when you
speak were wholly true. 120

Plowmen, shepherds, have I found, and more
than once, and still could find,
Sons of God, and kings of men in utter noble-
ness of mind,

Truthful, trustful, looking upward to the prac-
ticed hustings-liar;
So the higher wields the lower, while the
lower is the higher.

Here and there a cotter's babe is royal-born
by right divine; 125
Here and there my lord is lower than his oxen
or his swine.

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! once again
the sickening game;
Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying while
they shout her name.

Step by step we gained a freedom known to
Europe, known to all;
Step by step we rose to greatness, — thro' the
tonguesters we may fall. 130

You that woo the Voices — tell them "old
experience is a fool,"
Teach your flattered kings that only those
who cannot read can rule.

Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set no
meek ones in their place;
Pillory Wisdom in your markets, pelt your
offal at her face.

- Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yelling
with the yelling street, 135
Set the feet above the brain and swear the
brain is in the feet.
- Bring the old dark ages back without the
faith, without the hope,
Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and
roll their ruins down the slope.
- Authors — essayist, atheist, novelist, realist,
rhymester, play your part,
Paint the mortal shame of nature with the
living hues of art. 140
- Rip your brothers' vices open, strip your own
foul passions bare;
Down with Reticence, down with Reverence
— forward — naked — let them stare.
- Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the
drainage of your sewer;
Send the drain into the fountain, lest the
stream should issue pure.
- Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the
troughs of Zolaism, — 145
Forward, forward, ay, and backward, down-
ward too into the abyss!
- Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the
rising race of men;
Have we risen from out the beast, then back
into the beast again?
- Only "dust to dust" for me that sicken at
your lawless din,
Dust in wholesome old-world dust before the
newer world begins. 150
- Heated am I? you — you wonder — well, it
scarce becomes mine age —
Patience! let the dying actor mouth his last
upon the stage.
- Cries of unprogressive dotage ere the dotard
fall asleep?
Noises of a current narrowing, not the music
of a deep?
- Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think gray
thoughts, for I am gray; 155
After all the stormy changes shall we find a
changeless May?
- After madness, after massacre, Jacobinism¹ and
Jacquerie,²
Some diviner force to guide us thro' the days
I shall not see?
- When the schemes and all the systems, king-
doms and republics fall,
Something kindlier, higher, holier — all for
each and each for all? 160
- All the fall-brain, half-brain races, led by
Justice, Love, and Truth;
All the millions one at length with all the
visions of my youth?
- All diseases quenched by Science, no man halt,
or deaf, or blind;
Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body,
larger mind? .
- Earth at last a warless world, a single race,
a single tongue — 165
I have seen her far away — for is not Earth
as yet so young? —
- Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent
passion killed,
Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing
desert tilled,
- Robed in universal harvest up to either pole
she smiles,
Universal ocean softly washing all her warless
isles. 170
- Warless? when her tens are thousands, and
her thousands millions, then —
All her harvest all too narrow — who can
fancy warless men?

¹The Jacobin Club was the most radical of the forces in the French Revolution.

²Jacquerie was the name given to the peasants' revolt in France in 1358, from Jacques, a common name.

Warless? war will die out late then. Will it
 ever? late or soon?
 Can it, till this outworn earth be dead as *yon*
 dead world the moon?

Dead the new astronomy calls her. — On this
 day and at this hour, 175
 In this gap between the sandhills, whence you
 see the Locksley tower,

Here we met, our latest meeting — Amy —
 sixty years ago —
 She and I — the moon was falling greenish
 thro' a rosy glow,

Just above the gateway tower, and even
 where you see her now —
 Here we stood and clasped each other, swore
 the seeming-deathless vow. — 180

Dead, but how her living glory lights the
 hall, the dune, the grass!
 Yet the moonlight is the sunlight, and the
 sun himself will pass.

Venus near her! smiling downward at this
 earthlier earth of ours,
 Closer on the sun, perhaps a world of never
 fading flowers.

Hesper, whom the poet called the Bringer
 home of all good things — 185
 All good things may move in Hesper, perfect
 peoples, perfect kings.

Hesper — Venus — were we native to that
 splendor or in Mars,
 We should see the globe we groan in, fairest
 of their evening stars.

Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft
 and madness, lust and spite,
 Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point
 of peaceful light? 190

Might we not in glancing heavenward on a
 star so silver-fair,
 Yearn, and clasp the hands and murmur,
 "Would to God that we were there?"

Forward, backward, backward, forward, in
 the immeasurable sea,
 Swayed by vaster ebbs and flows than can be
 known to you or me.

All the suns — arc these but symbols of in-
 numerable man, 195
 Man or Mind that sees a shadow of the plan-
 ner or the plan?

Is there evil but on earth? or pain in every
 peopled sphere?
 Well, be grateful for the sounding watch-
 word "Evolution" here,

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal
 good,
 And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in
 the mud. 200

What are men that He should heed us? cried
 the king of sacred song;¹
 Insects of an hour, that hourly work their
 brother insect wrong,

While the silent heavens roll, and suns along
 their fiery way,
 All their planets whirling round them, flash
 a million miles a day.

Many an *xon* molded earth before her high-
 est, man, was born, 205
 Many an *xon* too may pass when earth is
 manless and forlorn,

Earth so huge, and yet so bounded — pools
 of salt, and plots of land —
 Shallow skin of green and azure — chains of
 mountain, grains of sand!

Only That which made us meant us to be
 mightier by and by,
 Set the sphere of all the boundless heavens
 within the human eye, 210

Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless,
 thro' the human soul;
 Boundless inward in the atom, boundless out-
 ward in the Whole.

¹ See *Psalms*, viii, 5.

Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the
 lion-guarded gate.
 Not to-night in Locksley Hall — to-morrow
 — you, you come so late.

Wrecked — your train — or all but wrecked?
 a shattered wheel? a vicious boy! 215
 Good, this forward, you that preach it, is it
 well to wish you joy?

Is it well that while we range with Science,
 glorying in the Time,
 City children soak and blacken soul and sense
 in city slime?

There among the glooming alleys Progress
 halts on palsied feet,
 Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the
 thousand on the street. 220

There the master scrimps his haggard semp-
 stress of her daily bread,
 There a single sordid attic holds the living
 and the dead.

There the smouldering fire of fever creeps
 across the rotted floor,
 And the crowded couch of incest in the
 warrens of the poor.

Nay, your pardon, cry your "Forward,"
 yours are hope and youth, but I — 225
 Eighty winters leave the dog too lame to
 follow with the cry,

Lame and old, and past his time, and passing
 now into the night;
 Yet I would the rising race were half as eager
 for the light.

Light the fading gleam of even? light the
 glimmer of the dawn?
 Aged eyes may take the growing glimmer for
 the gleam withdrawn. 230

Far away beyond her myriad coming changes
 earth will be
 Something other than the wildest modern
 guess of you and me.

Earth may reach her earthly-worst, or if she
 gain her earthly-best,
 Would she find her human offspring this ideal
 man at rest?

Forward then, but still remember how the
 course of Time will swerve, 235
 Crook and turn upon itself in many a back-
 ward streaming curve.

Not the Hall to-night, my grandson! Death
 and Silence hold their own.
 Leave the master in the first dark hour of his
 last sleep alone.

Worthier soul was he than I am, sound and
 honest, rustic Squire,
 Kindly landlord, boon companion — youth-
 ful jealousy is a liar. 240

Cast the poison from your bosom, oust the
 madness from your brain.
 Let the trampled serpent show you that you
 have not lived in vain.

Youthful! youth and age are scholars yet
 but in the lower school,
 Nor is he the wisest man who never proved
 himself a fool.

Yonder lies our young sea-village — Art and
 Grace are less and less: 245
 Science grows and Beauty dwindles — roofs
 of slated hideousness!

There is one old hostel left us where they
 swing the Locksley shield,
 Till the peasant cow shall butt the "lion
 passant" from his field.

Poor old Heraldry, poor old History, poor
 old Poetry, passing hence,
 In the common deluge drowning old political
 common-sense! 250

Poor old voice of eighty crying after voices
 that have fled!
 All I loved arc vanished voices, all my steps
 arc on the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the
phantom disappears,
Forward far and far from here is all the hope
of eighty years.

In this hostel — I remember — I repent it
o'er his grave — 255
Like a clown — by chance he met me — I
refused the hand he gave.

From that casement where the trailer mantles
all the moldering bricks —
I was then in early boyhood, Edith but a
child of six —

While I sheltered in this archway from a day
of driving showers —
Peeped the winsome face of Edith like a flower
among the flowers. 260

Here to-night! the Hall to-morrow, when
they toll the chapel bell!
Shall I hear in one dark room a wailing, "I
have loved thee well"?

Then a peal that shakes the portal — one
has come to claim his bride,
Her that shrank, and put me from her,
shrieked, and started from my side —

Silent echoes! You, my Leonard, use and
not abuse your day, 265
Move among your people, know them, follow
him who led the way,

Strove for sixty widowed years to help his
homelier brother men,
Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised
the school, and drained the fen.

Hears he now the voice that wronged him?
who shall swear it cannot be?
Earth would never touch her worst, were one
in fifty such as he. 270

Ere she gain her heavenly-best, a God must
mingle with the game.
Nay, there may be those about us whom we
neither see nor name,

Felt within us as ourselves, the Powers of
Good, the Powers of Ill,
Strowing balm, or shedding poison in the
fountains of the will.

Follow you the star that lights a desert path-
way, yours or mine. 275
Forward, till you see the Highest Human
Nature is divine.

Follow Light, and do the Right — for man
can half-control his doom —
Till you find the deathless Angel seated in
the vacant tomb.

Forward, let the stormy moment fly and
mingle with the past.
I that loathed have come to love him. Love
will conquer at the last. 280

Gone at eighty, mine own age, and I and you
will bear the pall;
Then I leave thee lord and master, latest lord
of Locksley Hall.
1886.

Merlin and the Gleam

This poem is more or less autobiographical.
Merlin, of course, is the great magician and seer
in the Arthurian legends.

I

O young Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea-cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician 5
With eyes of wonder,
/ am Merlin,
And / am dying,
/ am Merlin
Who follow the Gleam. 10

2

Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learned me Magic 1
Great the Master, 15
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,

In early summers, Over the mountain, On human faces, And all around me, Moving to melody, Floated the Gleam.		6	
	20	Then, with a melody Stronger and statelier, Led me at length To the city and palace Of Arthur the King; Touched at the golden Cross of the churches, Flashed on the tournament, Flickered and bickered From helmet to helmet, And last on the forehead Of Arthur the blameless Rested the Gleam.	65
3			
Once at the croak of a Raven who crossed it, A barbarous people, Blind to the magic And deaf to the melody, Snarled at and cursed me. A demon vexed me, The light retreated, The landskip darkened, The melody deadened, The Master whispered, "Follow the Gleam."	25		70
4		7	
Then to the melody, Over a wilderness Gliding, and glancing at Elf of the woodland, Gnome of the cavern, Griffin and Giant, And dancing of Fairies In desolate hollows, And wraiths of the mountain, And rolling of dragons By warble of water, Or cataract music Of falling torrents, Flitted the Gleam.	30 35 40 45	Clouds and darkness Closed upon Camelot; Arthur had vanished I knew not whither, The king who loved me, And cannot die; For out of the darkness Silent and slowly The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry glimmer On icy fallow And faded forest, Drew to the valley Named of the shadow, And slowly brightening Out of the glimmer, And slowly moving again to a melody Yearningly tender, Fell on the shadow, No longer a shadow, But clothed with the Gleam.	75 80 85 91
5		8	
Down from the mountain And over the level, And streaming and shining on Silent river, Silvery willow, Pasture and plowland, Innocent maidens, Garrulous children, Homestead and harvest, Reaper and gleaner, And rough-ruddy faces Of lowly labor, Slidcd the Gleam —	50 55 60	And broader and brighter The Gleam flying onward, Wed to the melody, Sang through the world; And slower and fainter, Old and weary, But eager to follow, I saw, whenever In passing it glanced upon Hamlet or city, That under the Crosses The dead man's garden	95 100 105

The mortal hillock,
 Would break into blossom;
 And so to the land's
 Last limit I came —
 And can no longer,
 But die rejoicing,
 For through the Magic
 Of Him the Mighty,
 Who taught me in childhood,
 There on the border
 Of boundless Ocean,
 And all but in Heaven
 Hovers the Gleam.

9

Not of the sunlight,
 Not of the moonlight,
 Not of the starlight!
 O young Mariner,
 Down to the haven,
 Call your companions,
 Launch your vessel
 And crowd your canvas,
 And, ere it vanishes
 Over the margin,
 After it, follow it,
 Follow the Gleam.

1889.

Crossing the Bar

This lyric, written towards the end of Tennyson's life, is, at the poet's request, always placed at the end of every edition of his poems.

Sunset and evening star,
 And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
 Too full for sound and foam,
 When that which drew from out the bound-
 less deep
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark!
 And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and
 Place

The flood may bear me far,
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face
 When I have crost the bar.
 Pub. 1889.

Robert Browning • 1811-1889

Among the major poets of the nineteenth century, Robert Browning, after he had outgrown his youthful posing, was in his way of living least "the poet." He was practical, was fond of people, liked dining out, and faced the world with the sense of assurance that his father, who had been engaged in banking, might have shown. Yet he was a genuine poet, with a creative imagination and a keen ear for music. He shares with Tennyson the first place among English poets of the Victorian period.

He was born in Camberwell, then a suburb, now a part, of London, May 7, 1811. Through tutors he received a thorough education. Besides Latin, Greek, French, and other studies, in which he was remarkably proficient, he had instruction in riding, dancing, boxing, sculpture, and music. His formal education was concluded with two years at the University of London.

Browning early decided to be a poet, largely under the influence of his first gods, Keats and above all Shelley. In 1832, when he was twenty, he published, privately and anonymously, *Pauline*, followed in 1835 by *Paracelsus*. He soon became acquainted with prominent literary men in London, especially Leigh Hunt, Talfourd, Landor, and the leading

actor-manager, Macready. For the latter he wrote a play, *Strafford*, produced at Covent Garden, in May, 1837, with Macready in the leading part. Browning then spent a year abroad, mainly in Italy, which was to become his second country.

In 1840 he published *Sordello*, a long, involved poem, which is largely responsible for the idea that Browning's poetry is hard to understand; and from 1841 to 1846, his eight series of *Bells and Pomegranates*, so called, as he explained, "to indicate an endeavor towards something like an alternation, or mixture, of music with discursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought." Of these, No. I contained *Pippa Passes*, III and VII, many of his dramatic lyrics, and V, *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, which was produced by Macready in the same year that it was published (1843).

In 1846, he carried off from her home in Wimpole Street, London, the invalid Elizabeth Barrett, a lady six years older than Browning who had already published some significant poems of her own. They married without her father's consent, and made their residence in Florence, Italy. There they lived in great happiness until her death fifteen years later, after which Browning returned to England. While in Italy, his chief production was *Men and Women*, in two volumes (1855), in which appeared many of his well-known poems. Of the many volumes that he published thereafter the most important are *Dramatis Personae* (1864); *The Ring and the Book* (1868-69), his greatest achievement; and *Asolando* (1890), his last book of poems. Browning died at his son's home, in Venice, December 12, 1889. He was buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Browning never sought popularity. In his day he was overshadowed by his contemporary, Tennyson, who acted and looked like a poet, and whose poems were easily understandable. Since then his vogue has grown greatly, and he has ceased to be regarded as a "difficult" poet. Most of the difficulties in Browning are owing to the fact that he does not pretend to be logical in his poems; he follows the association of ideas as one idea suggests another. In his dramatic lyrics (in which he is supreme), it must be remembered, too, that the hero is speaking, not the poet, whose purpose is merely to reproduce an intricate, psychological process, not to analyze it. Like Meredith, he resorts to extreme concentration and abrupt transitions. Often, too, Browning attempts through the connotation of sounds to be suggestive, as in music, rather than to be informative. When he packs his poems with strange allusions and obscure references, then Browning presupposes too much in the reader, and may justly be criticized adversely.

If the test of a great poet is his ability to create — in addition to shorter pieces — a work on a large, grand scale, Browning qualifies easily with his powerful dramatic poem, *The Ring and the Book*. In it he tells, from different points of view, the various versions of the tragic story of Franceschini, his wife Pompilia, and her devoted knight-errant, the Canon Caponsacchi. It is written in a blank verse, which, in sustained quality and dramatic power, is superb.

Browning was intellectual, but he uses his vast store of knowledge not as scholar but as a poet. Most of his poems illustrate this fact. His philosophy, which one feels in his poems, stresses the value of developing one's personality or soul. In this, the will to effort, supplemented by courage and faith, is one powerful force. The great sins to Browning are "sluggishness, indifference, sloth of living." The other great force in life is love, which to Browning means human love or insight, and human energy or achievement. Both these forces demand immortality for their fulfilment, for love has "never found its earthly close," and an ideal, to Browning as to Ibsen, was a goal beyond human power to achieve. The very imperfection of experience on earth was to Browning an assurance

of a world beyond, a belief that he held with resolute confidence in contrast with Tennyson's groping faith.

An excellent one-volume edition of Browning's poems is the Cambridge Edition. For his life, see G. K. Chesterton's in the English Men of Letters series, and Mrs. Sutherland Orr's. For guides to the poems, see the latter's handbook, also those by E. Berdoe and G. W. Cooke. A helpful book is W. C. De Vane, *Brownings Parleying': The Autobiography of a Mind* (1917). Dean De Vane has also written an admirable *Browning Handbook* (1936).

Pippa's Song

The song of the heroine in *Pippa Passes*.

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

Pub. 1841.

Cavalier Tunes

These three lyrics express superbly the gallant devotion of the Cavaliers to Charles I and the drsdain in which they held the Puritans. The songs first appeared in the third number of *Bells and Pomegranates*.

Note the drum-beat throughout *Marching Along*.

I. MARCHING ALONG

Kentish Sir Byng¹ stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament² swing:
And, pressing³ a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk
droop,

Marched them along, fifty-score strong, 5
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym⁴ and such carles⁵
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treason-
ous paries!⁶

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,

¹ One of the Byngs, a prominent Kentish family.

² The so-called Long Parliament, 1640-60, dominated by the Puritan roundheads.

³ impressing, enlisting.

⁴ Pym, Hampden, and Cromwell were the leaders among the Puritans.

⁵ churls. ⁶ discussions.

Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor
^{sup} 10
Till you're —

Cho. — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song.

5 Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry¹
as well!

England, good cheer! Rupert² is near! 15
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

Cho. — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his
snarls

To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent
carles! 20

Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham,³ fresh for the
figh,

Cho. — March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song!

1. GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

Who gave me⁴ the goods that went since? 5
Who raised me the house that sank once?

¹ All Puritans. "Harry" is Sir Henry Vane, the younger, who later went to Massachusetts, where he was governor, 1636-37. He returned to England subsequently.

³ The King's nephew.

³ Here in 1642 the King gathered the loyalists, raised his standard, and proclaimed civil war.

« The speaker here, as in the next poem, is an imaginary Cavalier.

Who helped me to gold I spent since?
 Who found¹ me in wine you drank once?

Cho. — King Charles, and who'll do him
 right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for
 fight now? 10

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's
 despite now,

King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
 By the old fool's side that begot him?
 For whom did he cheer and laugh else, 15
 While Noll's² damned troopers shot him?

Cho. — King Charles, and who'll do him
 right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for
 fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's
 despite now

King Charles! 20

3. BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
 Rescue my castle before the hot day
 Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.
Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say; 5
 Many's the friend there, will listen and
 pray
 "God's luck to gallants that strike up the
 lay —

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
 Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads'
 array: 10
 Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my
 fay,

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and
 gay,
 Laughs when you talk of surrendering," Nay!
 I've better counsellors; what counsel they? 15

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Pub. 1842.

¹ kept, supplied with.
² Oliver Cromwell's.

"How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix"

[16]

"There is no sort of historical foundation for the poem about 'Good News from Ghent.' I wrote it under the bulwark of a vessel, off the African coast, after I had been at sea long enough to appreciate even the fancy of a gallop on the back of a certain good horse 'York,' then in my stable at home. It was written in pencil on the fly-leaf of Bartoli's *Simboli*, I remember." (Browning.)

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all
 three;

"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-
 bolts undrew;

"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping
 through;

Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to
 rest, 5

And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great
 pace

Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing
 our place;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths
 tight,

Then shortened each stirrup, and set the
 pique right, 10

Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker
 the bit,

Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew
 near

Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned
 clear;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
 At Duffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could
 be; 16

And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard
 the half-chime,

So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is
 time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
 And against him the cattle stood black every
 one, 20

To stare through the mist at us galloping past,

And I saw my stout galloper Roland at
last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its
spray;

And his low head and crest, just one sharp
ear bent back 25
For my voice, and the other pricked out on
his track;
And one eye's black intelligence — ever that
glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master,
askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye
and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping
on. 30

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris,
"Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not
in her,
We'll remember at Aix" — for one heard the
quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and
staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the
flank, 35
As down on her haunches she shuddered and
sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the
sky,
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright
stubble like chaff; 40
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang
white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in
sight!"

"How they'll greet us!" — and all in a mo-
ment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a
stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole
weight 45
Of the news which alone could save Aix from
her fate,

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to
the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets'
rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let
fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and
all, 50
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse
without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any
noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and
stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on
the ground; 56
And no voice but was praising this Roland of
mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure
of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common
consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good
news from Ghent. 60
Pub. 1842.

My Last Duchess

Ferrara

The Duke shows the portrait of his late wife to
the envoy from his fiancée's father. His mono-
logue subtly reveals his own character as well as
that of his "last duchess."

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: *Fra Pandolf's*
hand
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"*Fra Pandolf*" by design, for never read 6
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10

¹ An imaginary painter-monk.

And seemed as they would ask me, if they
durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the
first

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps 15
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle
laps

Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such
stuff

Was courtesy, she thought, and cause
enough 20

• For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made

!! **glad,**

jj Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er

She looked on, and her looks went every-
where.

Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast, 25
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace — all and
each

Would draw from her alike the approving
speech, 30

Or blush, at least. She thanked men, —
good! but thanked

Somehow — I know not how — as if she
ranked

My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35
In speech — (which I have not) — to make
your will

Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark" — and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
— E'en then would be some stooping; and I
choose

Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no
doubt,

Whene'er I passed her; but who passed with-
out

Much the same smile? This grew; I gave
commands; 45

Then all smiles stopped together.¹ There she
stands

As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll
meet

The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence 50
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune,
though,

Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, ss
Which Glaus of Innsbruck² cast in bronze
for me!

Pub. 1842.

Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister

This soliloquy of a nameless Spanish friar is
a brilliant study of petty jealousy and vindictive
meanness. The speaker reveals his own char-
acter, and also that of his "heart's abhorrence,"
Brother Lawrence.

Gr-r-r — there go, my heart's abhorrence I

Water your damned flower-pots, do!

If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,

God's blood, would not mine kill you!

What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming? 5

Oh, that rose has prior claims —

Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?

Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together:

Salve tibi! I must hear 10

Wise talk of the kind of weather,

Sort of season, time of year:

Not a plenteous cork-crop: scarcely

Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:

What's the Latin name for "parsley"? 15

What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,

Laid with care on our own shelf!

¹ He had the Duchess put to death.

² Innsbruck in the Tyrol is famous for the well-known
bronze statues of King Arthur, Theodoric, and others.
Glaus, however, is an imaginary sculptor.

³ How are you?

With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
And a goblet for ourself, 20
Rinsed like something sacrificial
Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps —
Marked with L for our initial!
(He-he! There his lily snaps!)

Saint, forsooth! While brown Dolores 25
Squats outside the Convent bank
With Sanchicha, telling stories,
Steeping tresses in the tank,
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
— Can't I see his dead eye glow, 30
Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?
(That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,¹
 Knife and fork he never lays
 Cross-wise, to my recollection, 35
 As do I, in Jesu's praise.
 I the Trinity illustrate,
 Drinking watered orange-pulp —
 In three sips the Arian² frustrate;
 While he drains his at one gulp. 40

Oh, those melons! If he's able
We're to have a feast! so nice!
One goes to the Abbot's table,
All of us get each a slice.
How go on your flowers? None double? 45
Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
Strange! — And I, too, at such trouble
Keep them close-nipped on the slv!

There's a great text in Galatians, ³	
Once you trip on it, entails	50
Twenty-nine distinct damnations,	
One sure, if another fails:	
If I trip him just a-dying,	
Sure of heaven as sure can be,	
Spin him round and send him flying	55
Off to hell, a Manichee? ⁴	

Or, my scrofulous French novel
On gray paper with blunt type!

Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Belial's¹ gripe: 60
 If I double down² its pages
 At the woeful sixteenth print,
 When he gathers his greengages,³
 Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

Or, there's Satan! — one might venture 65
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
 Such a flaw in the indenture⁴
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
 Blasted lay that rose-acacia
 We're so proud of! *Hy, Zjy, Hint...* 70
 'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratia* '
*Ave, Virgo!*⁵ Gr-r — you swine 1
 Pub. 1843.

The Lost Leader

The best explanation of the poem is contained in the following letter of Browning, written in reply to the question whether, in composing the piece, he had in mind Wordsworth after his defection from liberalism:

19 Warwick-Crescent, W., Feb. 24, '75

DEAR MR. GROSART, — I have been asked the question you now address me with, and as duly answered it, I can't remember how many times; there is no sort of objection to one more assurance or rather confession, on my part, that I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about "handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon." These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore. But just as in the tapestry on my wall I can recognize figures which have *struck out* a fancy, on occasion, that though truly enough thus derived, yet would be preposterous as a copy, so, though I dare not deny the original of my little poem, I altogether refuse to have it considered as the "very effigies" of such a moral and intellectual superiority.

Faithfully yours,
ROBERT BROWNING

³ The particular text that Browning may have had in mind has not been identified.
⁴ Member of an early Christian sect that embraced some heretical Eastern beliefs.

¹ the devil's. ' bend over.
³ greenish plums. « contract, bond.
s Hail, Mary, full of grace.

Just for the handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat —
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft
 us,

Lost all the others she lets us devote;
 They, with the gold to give, doled him out
 silver, 5

So much was theirs who so little allowed:
 How all our copper had gone for his service!
 Rags — were they purple, his heart had
 been proud!

We that had loved him so, followed him,
 honored him,

Lived in his mild and magnificent eye, 10
 Learned his great language, caught his clear
 accents,

Made our pattern to live and to die!
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
 Burns, Shelley, were with us, — they
 watch from their graves!

He alone breaks from the van and the free-
 men, — 15

He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

We shall march prospering, — not through
 his presence;

Songs may inspirit us, — not from his lyre;
 Deeds will be done, — while he boasts his
 quiescence,

Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade
 aspire: 20

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul
 more,

One task more declined, one more footpath
 untrod,

One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for
 angels,

One wrong more to man, one more insult
 to God!

Life's night begins: let him never come back
 to us! 25

There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
 Forced praise on our part — the -glimmer of
 twilight,

Never glad confident morning again!
 Best¹ fight on well, for we taught him —
 strike gallantly,

Menace our heart ere we master his
 own;² 30

¹ i.e., for him.

² i.e., almost defeat us before we conquer him.

Then let him receive the new knowledge and
 wait us,

Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!
 Pub. 1845.

Meeting at Night

This and the next poem are companion pieces,
 originally published under the title *Night and
 Morning*. The speaker in both poems is a man.

The gray sea and the long black land;
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;
 And the startled little waves that leap
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow, 5
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears,
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
 And blue spurt of a lighted match, 10
 And a voice less loud, through its joys and
 fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!
 Pub. 1845.

Parting at Morning

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
 And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
 And straight was a path of gold for him,¹
 And the need of a world of men for me.
 Pub. 1845.

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad

Oh, to be in England
 Now that April's there,
 And whoever wakes in England
 Sees, some morning, unaware,
 That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood
 sheaf 5

Round the elm-tree bole² are in tiny leaf,
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard
 bough

In England — now!

¹ the sun.

² trunk.

And after April, when May follows,
 And the whitethroat builds, and all the
 swallows! 10
 Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the
 hedge
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
 Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent spray's
 edge —
 That's the wise thrush; he sings each song
 twice over,
 Lest you should think he never could recapture
 The first fine careless rapture! 16
 And though the fields look rough with hoary
 dew,
 All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
 The buttercups, the little children's dower
 — Far brighter than this gaudy melon-
 flower! 20
 Pub. 1845.

Pictor Ignotus¹

Florence, 15—

I could have painted pictures like that youth's
 Ye praise so. How my soul springs up!
 No bar
 Stayed me — ah, thought which saddens
 while it soothes!
 — Never did fate forbid me, star by star,
 To outburst on your night with all my gift 5
 Of fires from God: nor would my flesh have
 shrunk
 From seconding my soul, with eyes uplift
 And wide to heaven, or, straight like
 thunder, sunk
 To the center, of an instant; or around
 Turned calmly and inquisitive, to scan 10
 The license and the limit, space and bound,
 Allowed to Truth made visible in Man.
 And, like that youth ye praise so, all I saw,
 Over the canvas could my hand have flung,
 Each face obedient to its passion's law, 15
 Each passion clear proclaimed without a
 tongue;
 Whether Hope rose at once in all the blood.
 A-tiptoe for the blessing of embrace,
 Or Rapture drooped the eyes, as when her
 brood

¹ "The unknown painter."

Pull down the nesting dove's heart to its
 place; 20
 Or Confidence lit swift the forehead up,
 And locked the mouth fast, like a castle
 braved,—
 O human faces, hath it spilt, my cup?
 What did ye give me that I have not saved?
 Nor will I say I have not dreamed (how well!)
 Of going — I, in each new picture, —
 forth, 26
 As, making new hearts beat and bosoms swell,
 To Pope or Kaiser, East, West, South or
 North,
 Bound for the calmly satisfied great State,
 Or glad aspiring little burgh, it went, 30
 Flowers cast upon the car which bore the
 freight,
 Through old streets named afresh from its
 event,¹
 Till it reached home, where learned Age
 should greet
 My face, and Youth, the star not yet
 distinct
 Above his hair, lie learning at my feet! — 35
 Oh, thus to live, I and my picture, linked
 With love about, and praise, till life should
 end,
 And then not go to heaven, but linger here,
 Here on my earth, earth's every man my
 friend, —
 The thought grew frightful, 'twas so
 wildly dear! 40
 But a voice² changed it! Glimpses of such
 sights
 Have scared me, like the revels through a
 door
 Of some strange House of Idols at its rites;
 This world seemed not the world it was
 before:
 Mixed with my loving trusting ones there
 trooped 45
 ... Who summoned those cold faces that
 began
 To press on me and judge me? Though I
 stooped
 Shrinking, as from the soldiery a nun,
 They drew me forth, and spite of me...
 enough!

¹ These lines recall the reception of Cimabue's
 Madonna by the people of Florence.

² his conscience.

These buy and sell our pictures, take and
give, 50
Count them for garniture and household-stuff,
And where they live our pictures needs
must live
And see their faces, listen to their prate,
Partakers of their daily pettiness,
Discussed of — "This I love, or this I hate, 55
This likes me more, and this affects me
less!"
Wherefore I chose my portion. If at whiles
My heart sinks, as monotonous I paint
These endless cloisters and eternal aisles
With the same series, Virgin, Babe and
Saint, 60
With the same cold, calm, beautiful regard,
At least no merchant traffics in my heart;
The sanctuary's gloom at least shall ward
Vain tongues from where my pictures stand
apart:
Only prayer breaks the silence of the shrine 65
While, blackening in the daily candle-
smoke,
They molder on the damp wall's travertine,¹
'Mid echoes the light footstep never woke.
So die, my pictures; surely, gently die!
Oh, youth, men praise so, — holds their
praise its worth? 70
Blown harshly, keeps the trump its golden
cry?
Tastes sweet the water with such specks
of earth?
1845-

The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church

Rome, 15—

Students of the Renaissance have praised this dramatic lyric highly for the manner in which it re-creates the temper of the age. Ruskin's estimate is often cited:

"I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit, — its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's being

¹ soft Italian marble.

also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal."

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?
Nephews — sons mine... ah God, I know
not! Well —

She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was! 5
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a
dream.

Life, how and what is it? As here I lie 10
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems
all.

Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought 15
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye
know:

— Old Gandolf cozened¹ me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner
South
He graced his carrion with, God curse the
same!

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but
thence 20

One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,²
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the airy dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there, 25
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and
two,

The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse. 30
— Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,³

¹ cheated, fooled.

² The side of the altar from which the Epistles of the New Testament are read. In the liturgy, this reading occurs between the collect and the Gospel.

³ a poorer marble.

Put me where I may look at him! True
peach,

Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
Draw close: that conflagration of my church
— What then? So much was saved if aught
were missed! 35

My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press
stood,

Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find ... Ah God, I know not, I!...
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft, 40

And corded up in a tight olive-frail,¹
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast...
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all, 45
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his
hands

Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and
burst! 50

Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black —
'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How
else

Shall ye contrast my frieze to come be-
neath? 55

The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and per-
chance

Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Savior at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan 60
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment
off,

And Moses with the tables... but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper
thee,

Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp 65
Bricked o'er with beggar's moldy travertine²
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles
at!

Nay, boys, ye love me — all of jasper, then!
Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve

¹ A rush basket for holding olives.

² Ordinary marble from Tivoli.

My bath must needs be left behind, alas! 70
One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the
world —

And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown¹ Greek manu-
scripts,

And mistresses with great smooth marbly
limbs? 75

— That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, TullyV every
word,

No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line —
Tully, my masters? Ulpian³ serves his need!
And then how I shall lie through centuries, 80
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
And see God made and eaten all day long,
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night, 85
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone
can point,

And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange
thoughts 91

Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount, 95
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
— Aha, ELUCESCEBAT⁴ quoth our friend?

No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best! 100
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.

All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick, 104
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase

¹ The color of old vellum.

³ Cicero's. Renaissance scholars believed that the
only good Latin style was that of Cicero.

⁴ A late Latin writer who died about 228 A.D. For
Browning's bishop the only model of good Latin was
Cicero.

⁵ "began to shine." The word is a late Latin word
not found in Cicero.

Sixteen years old when she died!
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name; 10
 It was not her time to love; beside,
 Her life had many a hope and aim,
 Duties enough and little cares,
 And now was quiet, now astir,
 Till God's hand beckoned unawares, — 15
 And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?

What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew — 20
And, just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so
wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above 25
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love;
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few;
Much is to learn, much to forget 31
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come — at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall
say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still, 35
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's
red —
And what you would do with me, in fine, 39
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gams of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope, 45
Either I missed or itself missed me:
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
My heart seemed full as it could hold; 50
There was place and to spare for the frank
young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's
young gold.
So, hush — I will give you this leaf to keep;
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!
There, that is our secret, go to sleep! 55
You will wake, and remember, and under-
stand.

1855.

Love Among the Ruins

The setting of the poem is the Roman Campagna, the countryside surrounding Rome.

Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,
Miles and miles,
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray
or stop 5
As they crop —
Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since 10
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding
far
Peace or war.

Now, — the country does not even boast a
tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills 16
Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
Into one.)
Where the domed and daring palace shot its
spires
Up like fires 20
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor
be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was! 26
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-
spreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone — 30
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and
woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread
of shame
Struck them tame;

And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold. 36

Now, — the single little turret that remains
 On the plains,
 By the caper¹ overrooted, by the gourd
 Overscored, 40
 While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
 Through the chinks —
 Marks the basement whence a tower in
 ancient time
 Sprang sublime,
 And a burning ring, all round, the chariots
 traced 45
 As they raced,
 And the monarch and his minions and his
 dames
 Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
 Smiles to leave 50
 To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
 In such peace,
 And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
 Melt away —
 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair 55
 Waits me there
 In the turret whence the charioteers caught
 soul
 For the goal,
 When the king looked, where she looks now,
 breathless, dumb
 Till I come. 60

But he looked upon the city, every side,
 Far and wide,
 All the mountains topped with temples, all
 the glades'
 Colonnades,
 'All the causeys,² bridges, aqueducts, — and
 then, 65
 All the men!
 When I do come, she will speak not, she will
 stand,
 Either hand
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
 Of my face, 70
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and
 speech
 Each on each.

¹ A plant, the buds of which are used for seasoning
 in cooking.
² highways.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
 South and North,
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
 As the sky, 76
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full
 force—
 Gold, of course.
 Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that
 burns!
 Earth's returns 80
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and the
 rest!
 Love is best.
 Pub. 1855.

Up at a Villa — Down in the City

*As Distinguished by an Italian Person
 of Quality*

Had I but plenty of money, money enough
 and to spare,
 The house for me, no doubt, were a house in
 the city-square;
 Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the
 window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to
 hear, at least!
 There, the whole day long, one's life is a
 perfect feast; 5
 While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it,
 no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the
 horn of a bull
 Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the
 creature's skull,
 Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf
 to pull!
 — I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the
 hair's turned wool. 10

But the city, oh the city — the square with
 the nouses! Why?
 They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's
 something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single
front awry;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who
saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw
when the sun gets high; 15
And the shops with fanciful signs which are
painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in
March by rights,
Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have
withered well off the heights:
You've the brown ploughed land before,
where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the
faint gray olive-trees. 20

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've
summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong
Aprilsuns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce
risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out
its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the
children to pick and sell. 25

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a foun-
tain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine
such foambows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that
prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in her conch — fifty
gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds
round her waist in a sort of sash. 30

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see
though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like death's
lean lifted forefinger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i'
the corn and mingle,
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks of
it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning
cicala is shrill, 35

And the bees keep their tiresome whine
round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons, — I spare you the
months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed
church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off than the dili-
gence rattles in:
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you
never a pin. 40
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives
pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet¹ breaks up the
market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture — the
new play, piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three
liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most
fatherly of rebukes, 45
And beneath, with his crown and his lion,
some little new law of the Duke's!
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the
Reverend Don So-and-so,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint
Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,)
"the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures
more unctuous than ever he preached."
Noon strikes, — here sweeps the procession!
our Lady borne smiling and smart 51
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and
seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-tc-
tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the
greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear — it's dear! fowls,
wine, at double the rate. 55
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and
what oil pays passing the gate
It's horror to think of. And so, the villa for
me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still,
ah, the pity, the pity!

¹ The bugle-call announcing the beginning of the
Punch-and-Judy show.

Look, two and two go the priests, then the
 monks with cowls and sandals,
 And the penitents dressed in white shirts,
 a-holding the yellow candles; 60
 One, he carries a flag up straight, and another
 a cross with handles,
 And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for
 the better prevention of scandals:
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-*
tootle the fife.
 Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such
 pleasure in life!
 Pub. 1855.

A Toccata of Galuppi's

Baldassare Galuppi (1706-85) was an Italian composer of spirited music, chiefly operas. A toccata is a light musical composition depending mainly, as the name implies, upon touch.

Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!
 I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and blind;
 But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy mind!

Here you come with your old music, and here's all the good it brings.
 What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants were the kings, 5
 Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the sea with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and 'tis arched by... what you call
 ... Shylock's bridge¹ with houses on it, where they kept the carnival:
 I was never out of England — it's as if I saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was warm in May? 10
 Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to mid-day,
 When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and lips so red, —

¹ The Rialto.

On her neck the small face buoyant, like a bell-flower on its bed,
 O'er the breast's superb abundance where a man might base his head? 15

Well, and it was graceful of them — they'd break talk off and afford
 — She, to bite her mask's black velvet — he, to finger on his sword,
 While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavichord?

What? Those lesser¹ thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
 Told them something? Those suspensions,² those solutions³ — "Must we die?" 20
 Those commiserating sevenths⁴ — "Life might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?" — "Yes." — "And are you still as happy?" — "Yes. And you?"

— ".Then, more kisses!" — "Did / stop them, when a million seemed so few?"
 Hark, the dominant's persistence⁵ till it must be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I dare say! 25
 "Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave and gay!
 I can always leave off talking when I hear a master play!"

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one by one,
 Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,
 Death stepped tacitly and took them where they never see the sun. 30

¹ Thirds and sixths in music are intervals embracing three and six tones, respectively, of the ordinary scale. These intervals are called major. If the interval is reduced a half-tone, it is called lesser or minor. If reduced still another half-tone, it is said to be diminished. Minor and diminished intervals usually sound plaintive or sad.

² A suspension is a special kind of dissonance.

³ A solution or resolution is the concord following a dissonance.

⁴ Intervals of seven tones. "Commiserating" suggests that they were minor, or less a half tone.

The dominant is a chord based upon the fifth note of the scale. It is called "persistent" because it usually requires a tonic (a chord based on the first note of the scale) to follow.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take
 my stand nor swerve,
 While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from
 nature's close reserve,
 In you come with your cold music till I creep
 through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking
 where a house was burned:
 'Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice
 spent what Venice earned. 35
 The soul, doubtless, is immortal — where a
 soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics,
 something of geology,
 Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall
 rise in their degree;
 Butterflies may dread extinction, — you'll
 not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born
 to bloom and drop, 40
 Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth
 and folly were the crop:
 What of soul was left, I wonder, when the
 kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I
 want the heart to scold.
 Dear»dead women, with such hair, too —
 what's become of all the gold
 Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel
 chilly and grown old. 45
 Pub. 1855.

"De Gustibus—"

Your ghost will walk, you lover of trees,
 (If our loves remain)
 In an English lane,
 By a cornfield-side a-flutter with poppies.
 Hark, those two in the hazel coppice — 5
 A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,
 Making love, say, —
 The happier they!
 Draw yourself up from the light of the moon,
 And let them pass, as they will too soon, 10

¹ "Concerning tastes,"

With the beanflow'ers' boon,
 And the blackbird's tune,
 And May, and June!

What I love best in all the world
 Is a castle, precipice-encurled, 15
 In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.
 Or look for me, old fellow mine,
 (It I get my head from out the mouth
 O' the grave, and loose my spirit's bands,
 And come again to the land of lands) — 20
 In a sea-side house to the farther South,
 Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,
 And one sharp tree — 'tis a cypress — stands,
 By the many hundred years red-dusted,
 Rough iron-spiked, ripe fruit-o'ercrusted, 25
 My sentinel to guard the sands
 To the water's edge. For, what expands
 Before the house, but the great opaque
 Blue breadth of sea without a break?
 While, in the house, forever crumbles 30
 Some fragment of the frescoed walls,
 From blisters where a scorpion sprawls.
 A girl bare-footed brings, and tumbles
 Down on the pavement, green-flesh melons,
 And says there's news to-day — the king 35
 Was shot at, touched in the liver-wing,
 Goes with his Bourbon arm in a sling:
 — She hopes they have not caught the felons.
 Italy, my Italy!
 Queen Mary's saying serves for me — 40
 (When fortune's malice
 Lost her, Calais)¹
 Open my heart and you will see
 Graved inside of it, "Italy."
 Such lovers old are I and she: 45
 So it always was, so shall ever be!
 1855-

My Star

The "star" is generally thought to be Mrs.
 Browning.

All that I know
 Of a certain star
 Is, it can throw
 (Like the angled spar)

¹ Queen Mary of England lost Calais in 1558. Before her death, late in the same year, she said that "Calais" would be found engraved upon her heart.

Now a dart of red, s Such primal naked forms of flowers,
 Now a dart of blue; Such letting nature have her way
 Till *my* friends have said While heaven looks from its towers! 30
 They would fain see, too,
 My star that dartles the red and the blue I
 Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs
 furled: 10
 They must solace themselves with the
 Saturn above it.
 What matter to me if their star is a world?
 Mine has opened its soul to me; therefore
 I love it.
 Pub. 1855.

Two in the Campagna¹

I wonder do you feel today
 As I have felt since, hand in hand,
 We sat down on the grass, to stray
 In spirit better through the land,
 This morn of Rome and May? 5

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
 Has tantalized me many times,
 (Like turns of thread the spiders throw
 Mocking across our path) for rhymes
 To catch at and let go. 10

Help me to hold it! First it left
 The yellowing fennel, run to seed
 There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
 Some old tomb's ruin; yonder weed
 Took up the floating weight, 15

Where one small orange cup amassed
 Five beetles — blind and green they grope
 Among the honey-meal; and last,
 Everywhere on the grassy slope
 I traced it. Hold it fast! 20

The champaign with its endless fleece
 Of feathery grasses everywhere!
 Silence and passion, joy and peace,
 An everlasting wash of air —
 Rome's ghost since her decease. 25

Such life here, through such lengths of hours,
 Such miracles performed in play,

¹ The countryside surrounding Rome. Cf. *Love Among the Ruins*, page 573.

How say you? Let us, O my dove,
 Let us be unashamed of soul,
 As earth lies bare to heaven above!
 How is it under our control
 To love or not to love? 35

I would that you were all to me,
 You that are just so much, no more.
 Nor yours nor mine, nor slave nor free!
 Where does the fault lie? What the core
 O' the wound, since wound must be? 40

I would I could adopt your will,
 See with your eyes, and set my heart
 Beating by yours, and drink my fill
 At your soul's springs — your part my part
 In life, for good and ill. 45

No. I yearn upward, touch you close,
 Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,
 Catch your soul's warmth — I pluck the rose
 And love it more than tongue can speak —
 Then the good minute goes. 50

Already how am I so far
 Out of that minute? Must I go
 Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,
 Onward, whenever light winds blow,
 Fixed by no friendly star? 55

Just when I seemed about to learn!
 Where is the thread now? Off again!
 The old trick! Only I discern —
 Infinite passion, and the pain
 Of finite hearts that yearn. 60
 Pub. 1855.

One Way of Love

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.
 Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
 And strew them where Pauline may pass.
 She will not turn aside? Alas!
 Let them lie. Suppose they die? 5
 The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
 These stubborn fingers to the lute!
 To-day I venture all I know.
 She will not hear my music? So! 10
 Break the string; fold music's wing;
 Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
 This hour my utmost art I prove
 And speak my passion — heaven or hell? 15
 She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
 Lose who may — I still can say,
 Those who win heaven, blest are they!
 Pub. 1855.

Respectability

The lovers in this poem are supposed to be George Sand, the famous French woman novelist, and Jules Sandeau, strolling at night in Paris.

Dear, had the world in its caprice
 Deigned to proclaim "I know you both
 Have recognized your plighted troth,
 Am sponsor for you: live in peace!" —
 How many precious months and years 5
 Of youth had passed, that speed so fast,
 Before we found it out at last,
 The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent
 With men that every virtue decks, 10
 And women models of their sex,
 Society's true ornament, —
 Ere we dared wander, nights like this,
 Through wind and rain, and watch the
 Seine,
 And feel the Boulevard break again 15
 To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;
 Allows my finger to caress
 Your lips' contour and downiness,
 Provided it supply a glove. 20
 The world's good word! — the Institute!¹
 Guizot receives Montalembert!²

¹ The Institute of France, composed of five academies, election to which depends upon achievement in art, science, or literature.

² i.e., Guizot, the French historian, welcomes the newly elected member, Montalembert, the French statesman.

Eh? Down the court three lampions¹ flare--
 Put forward your best foot I
 Pub. 1855.

The Guardian-Angel

The picture of the angel and child that Brown¹ describes in the following poem is in the church of St. Augustine at Fano.

A Picture at Fano

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only
 leave
 That child, when thou hast done with him,
 for me!
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 And time come for departure, thou, suspending,
 Thy flight, may'st see another child for tend-
 ing, 6
 Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
 From where thou standest now, to where I
 gaze,
 — And suddenly my head is covered o'er 10
 With those wings, white above the child
 who prays
 Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee
 guarding
 Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes
 its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head 15
 Because the door opes, like that child, I
 know,
 For I should have thy gracious face instead,
 Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend
 me low
 Like him, and lay, like his, my hands to-
 gether,
 And lift them up to pray, and gently tether 20
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's
 spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing
 hands

¹ i.e., a highly respectable party is being given.

Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
 Pressing the brain, which too much thought
 expands, 25
 Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
 Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
 And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be re-
 paired!

I think how I should view the earth and
 skies 30
 And sea, when once again my brow was bared
 After thy healing, with such different eyes.
 O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
 And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
 What further may be sought for or de-
 clared? 35

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
 (Alfred,¹ dear friend!) — that little child
 to pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each
 Pressed gently, — with his own head
 turned away
 Over the earth where so much lay before
 him 40
 Of work to do, though heaven was opening
 o'er him,
 And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
 To sit and sec him in his chapel there,
 And drink his beauty to our soul's content 45
 — My angel² with me too: and since I care
 For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,
 Fraught with a pathos so magnificent) —

And since he did not work thus earnestly 50
 At all times, and has else endured some
 wrong —

I took one thought his picture struck from
 me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.
 My love is here. Where are you, dear old
 friend?

¹ Alfred Domett, a close friend of Browning's in their younger days in London, at this time a government official in New Zealand. Browning describes him in *Waring*, which he wrote after Domett's departure from England.

² Mrs. Browning.

3 Alfred Domett.

How rolls the Wairoa¹ at your world's far
 end? ss
 This is Ancona,² yonder is the sea
 Pub. 1855.

Memorabilia

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
 And did he stop and speak to you,
 And did you speak to him again?
 How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that, 5
 And also you are living after;
 And the memory I started at —
 My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
 And a certain use in the world no doubt, 10
 Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
 'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather,
 And there I put inside my breast,
 A molted feather, an eagle feather! 15
 Well, I forget the rest.
 Pub. 1855.

The Last Ride Together

I said — Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
 Since now at length my fate I know,
 Since nothing all my love avails,
 Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
 Since this was written and needs must
 be- s

My whole heart rises up to bless
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!
 Take back the hope you gave, — I claim
 Only a memory of the same,
 — And this beside, if you will not blame, 10
 Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
 When pity would be softening through,
 Fixed me a breathing-while or two 15
 With life or death in the balance: right!

¹ A river in New Zealand.

² A seaside city in Italy.

The blood replenished me again;
 My last thought was at least not vain:
 I and my mistress, side by side
 Shall be together, breathe and ride, 20
 So, one day more am I deified.

Who knows but the world may end to-
 night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
 All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
 By many benedictions — sun's 25
 And moon's and evening-star's at once —

And so, you, looking and loving best,
 Conscious grew, your passion drew
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
 Down on you, near and yet more near, 30
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —
 Thus leant she and lingered — joy and fear!

Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll 35
 Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
 Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?
 Had I said that, had I done this,
 So might I gain, so might I miss. 40
 Might she have loved me? just as well
 She might have hated, who can tell!

Where had I been now if the worst befell?

And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds? 45
 Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
 We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
 Saw other regions, cities new,

As the world rushed by on either side.
 I thought, — All labor, yet no less 50
 Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
 Look at the end of work, contrast
 The petty done, the undone vast,
 This present of theirs with the hopeful past!

I hoped she would love me, here we ride. 55

What hand and brain went ever paired?
 What heart alike conceived and dared?
 What act proved all its thought had been?
 What will but felt the fleshly screen?

We ride and I see her bosom heave. 60
 There's many a crown for who can reach.
 Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!

The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
 A soldier's doing! what atones?
 They scratch his name on the Abbey¹ stones,
 My riding is better, by their leave. 66

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
 Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
 What we felt only you expressed ""
 You hold things beautiful the best, 70

And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
 'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
 Have you yourself what's best for men?
 Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —
 Nearer one whit your own sublime 75
 Than we who never have turned a rhyme?

Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave
 A score of years to Art, her slave,
 And that's your Venus, whence we turn 80
 To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
 What, man of music, you grown gray
 With notes and nothing else to say,
 Is this your sole praise from a friend, 85
 "Greatly his opera's strains intend,
 But in music we know how fashions end!"
 I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
 / Proposed bliss here should sublimate 90
 My being — had I signed the bond —

Still one must lead some life beyond,
 Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.
 This foot once planted on the goal,
 This glory-garland round my soul, 95
 Could I descry such? Try and test!
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
 Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet — she has not spoke so long! 100
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned
 Whither life's flower is first discerned,
 We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
 What if we still ride on, we two, 105
 With life forever old yet new,
 Changed not in kind but in degree,
 The instant made eternity, —

¹ Westminster Abbey.

And heaven just proved that I and she
 Ride, ride together, forever ride? **x10**
 Pub. 1855.

A Grammarian's Funeral

*Shortly after the Revival of Learning
 in Europe*

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
 Singing together.
 Leave we the common crofts,¹ the vulgar
 thorpes²
 Each in its tether
 Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain, **5**
 Cared-for till cock-crow:
 Look out if yonder be not day again
 Rimming the rock-row!
 That's the appropriate country; there, man's
 thought,
 Rarer, intenser, **10**
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
 Chafes in the censer.
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and
 crop;
 Seek we sepulture
 On a tall mountain, citted to the top, **15**
 Crowded with culture!
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
 Clouds overcome it;
 No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit. **20**
 Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;
 Wait ye the warning?
 Our low life was the level's and the night's;
 He's for the morning.
 Step to a tune, square chests, erect each
 head, **25**
 'Ware the beholders!
 This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe
 and croft,
 Safe from the weather! **30**
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,
 He was a man born with thy face and throat,
 Lyric Apollo!

¹ small farms. ^a villages.

Long he lived nameless: how should Spring
 take note **35**
 Winter would follow?
 Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!
 Cramped and diminished,
 Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!
 My dance is finished"? **40**
 No, that's the world's way: (keep the moun-
 tain-side,
 Make for the city!)
 He knew the signal, and stepped on with
 pride
 Over men's pity;
 Left play for work, and grappled with the
 world **45**
 Bent on escaping:
 "What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou
 keepest furled?
 Show me their shaping,
 Theirs who most studied man, the bard and
 sage, —
 Give!" — So, he gowned him, **50**
 Straight got by heart that book to its last
 page:
 Learned, we found him.
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like
 lead,
 Accents uncertain:
 "Time to taste life," another would have
 said, **55**
 "Up with the curtain!"
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes
 next?
 Patience a moment!
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed
 text,
 Still there's the comment. **60**
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or
 least,
 Painful or easy!
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
 Ay, nor feel queasy."
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live, **65**
 When he had learned it,
 When he had gathered all books had to give!
 Sooner, he spurned it.
 Image the whole, then execute the parts —
 Fancy the fabric **70**
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from
 quartz,
 Ere mortar dab brick I

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the
market-place
Gaping before us.)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace 75
(Hearten our chorus!)
That before living he'd learn how to live —
No end to learning:
Earn the means first — God surely will contrive
Use for our earning. 80
Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:
Live now or never!"
He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs
and apes!
Man has Forever."
Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head:
*Calculus*¹ racked him: 86
Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:
*Tussis*² attacked him.
"Now, master, take a little rest!" — not he!
(Caution redoubled, 90
Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)
Not a whit troubled,
Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon
He (soul-hydroptic³ with a sacred thirst) 95
Sucked at the flagon.
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
Heedless of far gain,
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
Bad is our bargain! 100
Was it not great? did he not throw on God,
(He loves the burthen) —
God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen?
Did he not magnify the mind, show clear 105
Just what it all meant?
He would not discount life, as fools do here,
Paid by instalment.
He ventured neck or nothing — heaven's
success
Found, or earth's failure: no
"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He an-
swered "Yes!
Hence with life's pale lure!"
That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it. 116

That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit. 120
That, has the world here — should he need
the next.
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unper-
plexed
Seeking shall find him.
So, with the throttling hands of death at
strife, 125
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were
rife:
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business — let it be! —
Properly based *Oun* — 130
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,¹
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper
place:
Hail to your purlieus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race, 135
Swallows and curlews!
Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live but Know —
Bury this man there? 140
Here — here's his place, where meteors shoot,
clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go! Let joy break with the
storm,
Peace let the dew send!
Lofty designs must close in like effects: 145
Loftily lying,
Leave him — still loftier than the world sus-
pects,
Living and dying.
Pub. 1855.

The Statue and the Bust

Browning gave the following answers to questions put to him regarding the poem: "i. 'This story the townsmen tell,' 'when, how, and where,' constitutes the subject of the poem. 2. The lady was the wife of Riccardi; and the duke, Ferdinand,

¹ The three words are particles or enclitics in Greek which indicate fine shades of meaning. Browning's Grammarian was able to fix these nice discriminations.

¹ Stones in the bladder or kidney. ^a coughing.

³ Thirsty with a thirst that becomes more intense as he drinks.

just as the poem says. 3. As it was built by, and inhabited by, the Medici till sold, long after, to the Riccardi, it was not from the duke's palace, but a window in that of the Riccardi, that the lady gazed at her lover riding by. The statue is still in its place, looking at the window under which 'now is the empty shrine.' Can anything be clearer?"

Note the use of the *terza rima* of Dante: *aba, bcb, cdc*, etc.

There's a palace in Florence, the world knows
well,

And a statue watches it from the square,
And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Agès ago, a lady there,
At the farthest window facing the East 5
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air?"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased;
She leaned forth, one on either hand;
They saw how the blush of the bride in-
creased —

They felt by its beats her heart expand — 10
As one at each ear and both in a breath
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,
The Duke rode past in his idle way,
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath. 15

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,
Till he threw his head back — "Who is she?"
— "A bride the Riccardi brings home today."

Hair in heaps lay heavily
Over a pale brow spirit-pure — 20
Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war-steed's encolure¹ —
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise 25
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man, —
The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her, as a lover can;
She looked at him, as one who awakes:
The past was a sleep, and her life began. 30
¹ mane.

Now, love so ordered for both their sakes,
A feast was held that selfsame night
In the pile which the mighty shadow makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,
But the palace overshadows one, 35
Because of a crime, which may God requite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,
Through the first republic's murder there
By Cosimo¹ and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the
square) 40
Turned in the midst of his multitude
At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood
A single minute and no more,
While the bridegroom bent as a man sub-
dued — 45

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor —
For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,
As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?
If a word did pass, which I do not think, 50
Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink
He and his bride were alone at last
In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast, 55
That the door she had passed was shut on
her
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,
Through a certain window facing the East 59
She could watch like a convent's chronicler.

Since passing the door might lead to a feast,
And a feast might lead to so much beside,
He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride —
"Your window and its world suffice," 65
Replied the tongue, while the heart replied —

¹ Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464), head of the Floren-
tine Republic. He abolished some of its liberties.

"If I spend the night with that devil twice,
May his window serve as my loop of hell
Whence a damned soul looks on paradise!

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well, 70
Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow
Ere I count another ave-bell.

"Tis only the coat of a page to borrow,
And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim,
And I save my soul — but not to-morrow" —

(She checked herself and her eye grew dim) 76
"My father tarries to bless my state:
I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait?
Moreover the Duke rides past, I know; so
We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just so!
So we resolve on a thing and sleep:
So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or cheap 85
As the cost of this cup of bliss may prove
To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,
He beckoned the bridegroom (close on call,
As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove) 90

And smiled " 'Twas a very funeral,
Your lady will think, this feast of ours, —
A shame to efface, whate'er befall!

"What if we break from the Arno bowers,
And try if Petraja, cool and green, 95
Cure last night's fault with this morning's
flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be seen
On his steady brow and quiet mouth,
Said, "Too much favor for me so mean!

"But, alas! my lady leaves¹ the South; 100
Each wind that comes from the Apennine
Is a menace to her tender youth:

¹ i.e., is from.

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,
If she quits her palace twice this year,
To avert the flower of life's decline." 105

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly fear.
Moreover Petraja is cold this spring:
Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself— "Which night shall
bring
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool — no
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor
cool —
For to-night the Envoy arrives from France
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my tool.

"I need thee still and might miss per-
chance. ns
To-day is not wholly lost, beside,
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride — what should I do but ride?
And passing her palace, if I list,
May glance at its window — well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed 121
One ray that broke from the ardent brow,
Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,
No morrow's sun should arise and set 125
And leave them then as it left them now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,
With still fresh cause to wait one day more
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore, 130
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,
But not in despite of heaven and earth:
The rose would blow when the storm passed
by. 135

Meantime they could profit in winter's dearth
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:
The world and its ways have a certain worth:

And to press a point while these oppose
 Were simple policy; better wait: 140
 We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's fate,
 Who daily may ride and pass and look
 Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she — she watched the square like a
 book 145
 Holding one picture and only one,
 Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book was
 done,
 And she turned from the picture at night to
 scheme
 Of tearing it out for herself next sun. 150
 So weeks grew months, years; gleam by
 gleam
 The glory dropped from their youth and love,
 And both perceived they had dreamed a
 dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still above:
 But who can take a dream for a truth? 155
 Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth
 Depart, and the silver thread that streaked
 Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so peaked, —
 And wondered who the woman was, 161
 Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass —
 "Summon here," she suddenly said,
 "Before the rest of my old self pass, 165

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,
 Who fashions the clay no love will change,
 And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let RobbiaV craft so apt and strange
 Arrest the remains of young and fair, 170
 And rivet them while the seasons range.

¹ Andrea della Robbia (1437-1528) and his two sons, Giovanni and Girolamo, were famous workers in terra cotta.

"Make me a face on the window there,
 Waiting as ever, mute the while,
 My love to pass below in the square!

"And let me think that it may beguile 175
 Dreary days which the dead must spend
 Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end?
 I did no more while my heart was warm
 Than does that image, my pale-faced friend.'

"Where is the use of lip's red charm, 181
 The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,
 And the blood that blues the inside arm —

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
 The earthly gift to an end divine? 185
 A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,
 With flowers and fruits which leaves enlase,
 Was set where now is the empty shrine —

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space, 190
 As a ghost might lean from a chink of sky,
 The passionate pale lady's face —

Eying ever, with earnest eye
 And quick-turned neck at its breathless
 stretch,
 Some one who ever is passing by —) 195

The Duke had sighed like the simplest wretch
 In Florence, "Youth — my dream escapes!
 Will its record stay?" And he bade them
 fetch

Some subtle molder of brazen shapes —
 "Can the soul, the will, die out of a man
 Ere his body find the grave that gapes? 201

"John of Douay¹ shall effect my plan,
 Set me on horseback here aloft,
 Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

¹ In the very square I have crossed so oft: 205
 That men may admire, when future suns
 Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

¹ A sculptor from Bologna, who made the statue in 1608.

"While the mouth and the brow stay brave
in bronze —

Admire and say, 'When he was alive
How he would take his pleasure once!' 210

⁴⁴ And it shall go hard but I contrive
To listen the while, and laugh in my tomb
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So! While these wait the trump of doom,
How do their spirits pass, I wonder, 215
Nights and days in the narrow room?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder
What a gift life was, ages ago,
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know, 220
Nor all that chivalry of his,
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss —
Since, the end of life being manifest,
He had burned his way through the world to
this. 225

I hear you reproach, "But delay was best,
For their end was a crime." — Oh, a crime
will do

As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,
Sufficient to vindicate itself 230
And prove its worth at a moment's view!

Must a game be played for the sake of pelf?
Where a button goes, 'twere an epigram
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.¹

The true has no value beyond the sham: 235
As well the counter as coin, I submit,
When your table's a hat, and your prize, a dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,
Venture as warily, use the same skill, 239
Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you choose to play! — is my principle.
Let a man contend to the uttermost
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

¹ To risk coins in a game for buttons would be foolish ostentation.

The counter our lovers staked was lost
As surely as if it were lawful coin: 245
And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost

Is — the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.
You of the virtue (we issue join)
How strive you? *De te, fabula.*¹¹ 250
Pub. 1855.

"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came"

Childe Roland, a knight on a journey to a strange dark tower, which other knights have failed to reach, recounts the difficulties of his quest. The poem takes up the story after Childe Roland has received suspicious directions from a hoary cripple.

Browning said several times that *Childe Roland* was not an allegory, but simply an imaginative poem based upon a line in Shakespeare. Numerous interpretations of the underlying meaning of the poem have been suggested. Browning himself admitted once that the theme of the poem might be, "Follow an ideal; endure to the end."

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and
scored 5
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his
staff

What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travellers who might find him posted
there,

And ask the road? I guessed what skull-
like laugh 10

Would break, what crutch 'gin write my
epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside
Into that ominous tract which, all agree,
Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiesc-
ingly 15

I did turn as he pointed: neither pride

¹ This is your story.

Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
 So much as gladness that some end might
 be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wander-
 ing,

What with my search drawn out through
 years, my hope 20

Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
 With that obstreperous joy success would
 bring, —

I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
 My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

As when a sick man very near to death 25
 Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
 The tears, and takes the farewell of each
 friend,

And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
 Freelier outside, ("since all is o'er," he saith,
 "And the blow fallen no grieving can
 amend;") 30

While some discuss if near the other graves
 Be room enough for this, and when a day
 Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
 With care about the banners, scarves and
 staves:

And still the man hears all, and only craves 35
 He may not shame such tender love and
 stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
 Heard failure prophesied so oft, been writ
 So many times among "The Band" — to
 wit,

The knights who to the Dark Tower's search
 addressed 40

Their steps — that just to fail as they, seemed
 best,

And all the doubt was now — should I be
 fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
 That hateful cripple, out of his highway
 Into the path he pointed. All the day 45
 Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
 Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
 Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.¹

¹ wanderer.

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found
 Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two, 50
 Than, pausing to throw backward a last
 view

O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all
 round:

Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
 I might go on; naught else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw 55
 Such starved ignoble nature; nothing
 throve:

For flowers — as well expect a cedar grove!
 But cockle, spurge,¹ according to their law
 Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
 You'd think: a burr had been a treasure
 trove. 60

No! penury, inertness and grimace,
 In some strange sort, were the land's por-
 tion. "See

Or shut your eyes," said Nature peevishly,
 "It nothing skills: I cannot help my case:

'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this
 place, 65
 Calcine² its clods and set my prisoners free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
 Above its mates, the head was chopped;
 the bents'

Were jealous else. What made those holes
 and rents

In the dock's⁴ harsh swarth leaves, bruised as
 to balk 70

All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must walk
 Fashing⁵ their life out, with a brute's in-
 tents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
 In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud
 Which underneath looked kneaded up with
 blood. 75

One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
 Stood stupefied, however he came there:
 Thrust out past service from the devil's
 stud!

¹ Cockle and spurge are common wild shrubs.

² pulverize by heat.

³ tough grasses.

⁴ A generic term for a certain group of weeds.

⁵ crushing.

Alive? he might be dead for aught I know,
 With that red gaunt and coloped¹ neck a-
 strain, 80
 And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
 Seldom went such grotesqueness with such
 woe;
 I never saw a brute I hated so;
 He must be wicked to deserye such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my
 heart. 85
 As a man calls for wine before he fights,
 I asked one draught of earlier, happier
 sights,
 Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
 Think first, fight afterwards — the soldier's
 art:
 One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face 91
 Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
 Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
 An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
 That way he used. Alas, one night's dis-
 grace! 95
 Out went my heart's new fire and let it
 cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor — there he
 stands
 Frank as ten years ago when knighted
 first.
 What honest man should dare (he said) he
 durst.
 Good — but the scene shifts — faugh! what
 hangman hands 100
 Pin to his breast a parchment? His own
 bands
 Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and
 curstJ

Better this present than a past like that;
 Back therefore to my darkening path again!
 Ne sound, no sight as far as eye could
 strain. 105

Will the night send a howlet or a bat?
 I asked: when something on the dismal flat
 Came to arrest my thoughts and change
 their train.

¹ having ridges of flesh.

A sudden little river crossed my path
 As unexpected as a serpent comes. no
 No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms;
 This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
 For the fiend's glowing hoof — to see the
 wrath
 Of its black eddy bespate¹ with flakes and
 spumes.

So petty yet so spiteful! All along, 115
 Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
 Drenched willows flung them headlong in
 a fit
 Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:
 The river which had done them all the wrong,
 Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no
 whit. 120

Which, while I forded, — good saints, how I
 feared
 To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
 Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
 For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
 — It may have been a water-rat I speared, 125
 But, ugh! it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
 Now for a better country. Vain presage!
 Who were the strugglers, what war did
 they wage,
 Whose savage trample thus could pad the
 dank 130
 Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned tank,
 Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage —

The fight must so have seemed in that fell
 cirque.
 What penned them there, with all the
 plain to choose? 134
 No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
 None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
 Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the
 Turk
 Pits for his pastime, Christians against
 Jews.

And more than that — a furlong on — why,
 there!
 What bad use was that engine for, that
 wheel, 140

¹ spattered.

Or brake, not wheel — that harrow fit to
 reel
 Men's bodies out like silk? with all the air
 Of Tophet^V tool, on earth left unaware,
 Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of
 steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a
 wood, 145
 Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere
 earth
 Desperate and done with: (so a fool finds
 mirth,
 Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood
 Changes and off he goes!) within a rood —
 Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark black
 dearth. 150

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and grim,
 Now patches where some leanness of the
 soil's
 Broke into moss or substances like boils;
 Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him
 Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim 155
 Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!
 Naught in the distance but the evening,
 naught
 To point my footstep further! At the
 thought, 159
 A great black bird, Apollyon's² bosom-friend,
 Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing dragon-
 penned³
 That brushed my cap — perchance the
 guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
 All round to mountains — with such name
 to grace 165
 Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in
 view.
 How thus they had surprised me, — solve it,
 you!
 How to get from them was no clearer case.

¹ In the Old Testament, a valley where children
 were sacrificed by fire.
² The angel of the bottomless pit. (Rev. ix, 11).
³ dragon-winged.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
 Of mischief happened to me, God knows
 when — 170
 In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, then,
 Progress this way. When, in the very nick
 Of giving up, one time more, came a click
 As when a trap shuts — you're inside the
 den! .

Burningly it came on me all at once, 175
 This was the place! those two hills on the
 right,
 Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn
 in fight;
 While to the left, a tall scalped mountain...
 Dunce,
 Dotard, a-doing at the very nonce,¹
 After a life spent training for the sight! 180

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
 The round squat turret, blind as the fool's
 heart,
 Built of brown stone, without a counter-
 part
 In the whole world. The tempest's mocking
 elf 184
 Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
 He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

Not see? because of night perhaps?—why, day
 Came back again for that! before it left,
 The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
 The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay, 190
 Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay, —
 "Now stab and end the creature — to the
 heft!"

Not hear? when noise was everywhere! it
 tolled
 Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears,
 Of all the lost adventurers my peers, —
 How such a one was strong, and such was
 bold, 196
 And such was fortunate, yet each of old
 Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of
 years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides,
 met
 To view the last of me, a living frame 200
¹ moment.

For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
 I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
 Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
 And blew. "*Childe Roland to the Dark
 Tower came.*"
 Pub. 1855.

Fra Lippo Lippi

Fra Lippo, a painter-monk, relates the story of his life and his philosophy to the watchmen who have just arrested him as he was stealing back, after a night of roistering, to his room in the Medici Palace.

Browning's source for this poem, as for most of his poems about painters, is Vasari's *Lives of the Painters* (1550).

I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave!
 You need not clap your torches to my face.
 Zooks, what's to blame? you think you see a
 monk!

What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the
 rounds,

And here you catch me at an alley's end 5
 Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?

The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up,

Do, — harry out, if you must show your zeal,

Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong hole,

And nip each softling of a wee white mouse,

Weke, weke, that's crept to keep him company!

Aha, you know your betters! Then, you'll
 take 12

Your hand away that's fiddling on my throat,

And please to know me likewise. Who am I?

Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a friend 15

Three streets off — he's a certain ... how
 d'ye call?

Master — a ... Cosimo of the Medici,¹

I' the house that caps the corner. Boh! you
 were best!

Remember and tell me, the day you're hanged,

How you affected such a gullet's-gripe! 20

But you, sir, it concerns you that your
 knaves

Pick up a manner nor discredit you:

Zooks, are we pilchards,² that they sweep the
 streets

And count fair prize what comes into their
 net?

He's Judas to a tittle, that man is! 25
 Just such a face! Why, sir, you make amends.
 Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your hangdogs

go
 Drink out this quarter-florin to the health
 Of the munificent House that harbors me
 (And many more beside, lads! more beside!)
 And all's come square again. I'd like his
 face — 31

His, elbowing on his comrade in the door
 With the pike and lantern, — for the slave
 that holds

John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair!¹
 With one hand ("Look you, now," as who
 should say) 35

And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped!

It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,

A wood-coal or the like? or you should see!

Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.

What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down,

You know them and they take you? like
 enough! 41

I saw the proper twinkle in your eye —

'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.

Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to
 haunch.

Here's spring come, and the nights one makes
 up bands 45

To roam the town and sing out carnival,

And I've been three weeks shut within my
 mew,

A-painting for the great man, saints and
 saints

And saints again. I could not paint all
 night —

Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh air. 50

There came a hurry of feet and little feet,

A sweep of lute-strings, laughs, and whiffs of
 song,—

Flower o' the broom,

Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!

Flower o' the quince, 55

/ let Lisa go, and what good in life since?

Flower o' the thyme — and so on. Round they
 went.

Scarce had they turned the corner when a
 titter

Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight, —
 three slim shapes,

¹ Cosimo de' Medici. See *The Statue and the Bust*.

² A pilchard is an English fish resembling a herring.

¹ Lippi is describing a picture on the subject of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist.

And a face that looked up... zooks, sir,
 flesh and blood, 60
 That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it went,
 Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,
 All the bed-furniture — a dozen knots,
 There was a ladder! Down I let myself,
 Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and
 so dropped, 65
 And after them. I came up with the fun
 Hard by Saint Laurence,¹ hail fellow, well
 met, —

Flower <? the rose,

If I've been merry, what matter who knows?
 And so, as I was stealing back again, 70
 To get to bed and have a bit of sleep
 Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work
 On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast
 With his great round stone to subdue the flesh,
 You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see! 75
 Though your eye twinkles still, you shake
 your head —

Mine's shaved — a monk, you say — the
 sting's in that!

If Master Cosimo announced himself,
 Mum's the word naturally; but a monk!
 Come, what am I a beast for? tell us, now! 80
 I was a baby when my mother died
 And father died and left me in the street.
 I starved there, God knows how, a year or
 two

On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,
 Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day, 85
 My stomach being empty as your hat,
 The wind doubled me up, and down I went.
 Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me² with one hand,
 (Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)
 And so along the wall, over the bridge, 90
 By the straight cut to the convent. Six words
 there,

While I stood munching my first bread that
 month:

"So boy, you're minded," quoth the good fat
 father,

Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refection-
 time, —

"To quit this very miserable world? 95
 Will you renounce"... "the mouthful of
 bread?" thought I;

By no means! Brief, they made a monk of
 me;

¹ The church of San Lorenzo. ² tied me up.

I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,
 Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-house,
 Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici 100
 Have given their hearts to — all at eight
 years old.

Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,
 'Twas not for nothing — the good bellyful,
 The warm serge and the rope that goes all
 round,

And day-long blessed idleness beside! 105
 "Let's see what the urchin's fit for" — that
 came next.

Not overmuch their way, I must confess.
 Such a to-do! They tried me with their
 books;

Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pure
 waste!

Flower o' the clove' no

All the Latin I construe is "amo," I love!

But, mind you, when a boy starves in the
 streets

Eight years together, as my fortune was,
 Watching folk's faces to know who will fling
 The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he des-
 sires, 115

And who will curse or kick him for his
 pains, —

Which gentleman processional and fine,
 Holding a candle to the Sacrament,
 Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch
 The droppings of the wax to sell again, 120
 Or holla for the Eight¹ and have him
 whipped, —

How say I? — nay, which dog bites, which
 lets drop

His bone from the heap of offal in the street,—
 Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,
 He learns the look of things, and none the
 less 125

For admonition from the hunger-pinch.

I had a store of such remarks, be sure,
 Which, after I found leisure, turned to use.

I drew men's faces on my copy-books,
 Scrawled them within the antiphonary's²
 marge, 130

Joined legs and arms to the long music-notes,
 Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and B's,
 And made a string of pictures of the world
 Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,

¹ The city magistrates of Florence.

² hymn-book.

On the wall, the bench, the door. The
monks looked black. 135

"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'ye
say?"

In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark. 1

What if at last we get our man of parts,
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese
And Preaching Friars,¹ to do our church up
fine 140

And put the front on it that ought to be!"
And hereupon he bade me daub away.

Thank you! my head being crammed, the
walls a blank, v

Never was such prompt disemburdening.
First, every sort of monk, the black and
white, 145

I drew them, fat and lean: then, folk at church,
From good old gossips waiting to confess
Their cribs² of barrel-droppings, candle-
ends, —

To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot, 149
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there
With the little children round him in a row
Of admiration, half for his beard and half
For that white anger of his victim's son
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,
Signing himself with the other because of
Christ 155

(Whose sad face on the cross sees only this
After the passion of a thousand years)
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head,
(Which the intense eyes looked through)
came at eve

On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf, 160
Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers
(The brute took growling), prayed, and so
was gone.

I painted all, then cried " 'Tis ask and have;
Choose, for more's ready!" — laid the ladder
flat,

And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall.
The monks closed in a circle and praised loud
Till checked, taught what to see and not to
see, 167

Being simple bodies, — "That's the very
man!

Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog!
That woman's like the Prior's niece who
comes 170

To care about his asthma: it's the life!"

¹ The Dominicans. ³ hoardings.

But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and
funked;

Their betters took their turn to see and say:
The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. "How?
what's here? 175

Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all!
Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true
As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-game!

Your business is not to catch men with show,
With homage to the perishable clay, 180

But lift them over it, ignore it all,
Make them forget there's such a thing as
flesh.

(Your business is to paint the souls of men —
1 Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke... no, it's
not...

It's vapor done up like a new-born babe —
(In that shape when you die it leaves your
mouth) 186

It's ... well, what matters talking, it's the
soul!

Give us no more of body than shows soul!
Here's Giotto,¹ with his Saint a-praising God,
That sets us praising, — why not stop with
him? 190

Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head
With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!
Rub all out, try at it a second time.

Oh, that white smallish female with the
breasts, 195

She's just my niece... Herodias,² I would
say, —

Who went and danced and got men's heads
cut off!

Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I ask?
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go
further 200

And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for
white

When what you put for yellow's simply
black,

And any sort of meaning looks intense
When all beside itself means and looks
naught. 204

¹ Giotto di Bondone (1266-1337), the famous Italian painter and architect.

² For dancing before Herod, she was given John the Baptist's head. See St. Matthew xiv, 3-12.

Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,
The Prior's niece... patron-saint — is it so pretty 209

You can't discover if it means hope, fear,
Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,
And then add soul and heighten them three-fold?

Or say there's beauty with no soul at all — 215
(I never saw it — put the case the same —)
If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God invents:
That's somewhat: and you'll find the soul you have missed,

Within yourself, when you return him thanks.
"Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life,
in short, 221

And so the thing has gone on ever since.
I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken bounds:

You should not take a fellow eight years old
And make him swear to never kiss the girls.
I'm my own master, paint now as I please —
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-house!
Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front —
Those great rings serve more purposes than just

To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse! 230
And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave eyes

Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,
The heads shake still — "It's art's decline,
my son!

You're not of the true painters, great and old;

Brother Angehco^V the man, you'll find; 235
Brother Lorenzo² stands his single peer:

Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"
Flower o' the pint,
You keep your mistr... manners, and I'll stick to mine!

I'm not the third, then: bless us, they must know! 240

Don't you think they're the likeliest to know,

¹ Fra Angelico (1387-1455), a deeply religious, spiritual painter.

² Fra Lorenzo, another painter-monk.

They with their Latin? So, I swallow my rage,

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and paint

To please them — sometimes do and sometimes don't; 243

For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come
A turn, some warm eve finds me at my saints—
A laugh, a cry, the business of the world —
(*Flower o' the peach,*
Death for us all, and his own life for each!)

And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs over, 250

The world and life's too big to pass for a dream,

And I do these wild things in sheer despite,
And play the fooleries you catch me at,
In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out at grass 254

After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so,
Although the miller does not preach to him
The only good of grass is to make chaff.

What would men have? Do they like grass or no —

May they or mayn't they? all I want's the thing

Settled for ever one way. As it is, 260

You tell too many lies and hurt yourself:
You don't like what you only like too much,
You do like what, if given you at your word,
You find abundantly detestable.

For me, I think I speak as I was taught; 265
I always see the garden and God there
A-making man's wife: and, my lesson learned,
The value and significance of flesh,
I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I know.
But see, now — why, I see as certainly 271
As that the morning-star's about to shine,
What will hap some day. We've a youngster here

Comes to our convent, studies what I do,
Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop:
His name is Guidi¹ — he'll not mind the monks — 276

They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them talk —

He picks my practice up — he'll paint apace,

¹ Tommaso Guidi, painter and monk, more likely the teacher of Lippi, and not, as here, the pupil.

I hope so — though I never live so long,
I know what's sure to follow. You be judge!
You speak no Latin more than I, belike; 281
However, you're my man, you've seen the
world

— The beauty and the wonder and the power,
The shapes of things, their colors, lights and
shades, 284

Changes, surprises, — and God made it all!
— For what? Do you feel thankful, ay or no,
For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,
The mountain round it and the sky above,
Much more the figures of man, woman, child,
These are the frame to? What's it all about?
To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,
Wondered at? oh, this last of course! — you
say.

But why not do as well as say, — paint these
Just as they are, careless what comes of it?
God's works — paint any one, and count it
crime 295

To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His works
Are here already; nature is complete:
Suppose you reproduce her — (which you
can't)

There's no advantage! you must beat her,
then."

For, don't you mark? we're made so that we
love 300

First when we see them painted, things we
have passed

Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted — better to
us,

Which is the same thing. Art was given for
that;

God uses us to help each other so, 305
Lending our minds out. Have you noticed,
now,

Your cullion's¹ hanging face? A bit of chalk,
And trust me but you should, though! How
much more,

If I drew higher things with the same truth!
That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place,
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh, 311

It makes me mad to see what men shall do
And we in our graves! This world's no blot
for us_

Nor blank; it means intensely and means good.

good: 314

¹ base fellow's.

To find its meaning is my meat and drink.,
"Ay, but you don't so instigate to prayer!"
Strikes in the Prior: "when your meaning's
plain

It does not say to folk — remember matins,
Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why, for
this

What need of art at all? A skull and bones,
Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or, what's
best, 321

A bell to chime the hour with, does as well.
I painted a Saint Laurence six months since
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style:
"How looks my painting, now the scaffold's
down?" 325

I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns —
"Already not one phiz of your three slaves
Who turn the Deacon¹ off his toasted side,
But's scratched and prodded to our heart's
content, 329

The pious people have so eased their own
With coming to say prayers there in a rage:
We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.
Expect another job this time next year,
For pity and religion grow i' the crowd —
Your painting serves its purpose!" Hang the
fools! 335

— That is — you'll not mistake an idle
word

Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,
Tasting the air this spicy night which turns
The unaccustomed head like Chianti wine!
Oh, the church knows! don't misreport me,
now! 340

It's natural a poor monk out of bounds
Should have his apt word to excuse himself:
And hearken how I plot to make amends.
I have bethought me: I shall paint a piece
... There's for you! Give me six months,
then go, see 345
Something in Sant' Ambrogio's/2 Bless the
nuns!

They want a cast o' my office.³ I shall paint
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,
Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet
As puff on puff of grated orris-root 351

¹ St. Lawrence was roasted to death on a gridiron.

² St. Ambrose's, a Florentine convent.

³ A bit of my art.

When ladies crowd to Church at midsummer.
And then i' the front, of course a saint or
two —

Saint John, because he saves the Florentines,
Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and
white 355

The convent's friends and gives them a long
day,

And Job, I must have him there past mistake,
The man of Uz¹ (and Us without the z,
Painters who need his patience). Well, all
these

Secured at their devotion, up shall come 360
Out of a corner when you least expect,
As one by a dark stair into a great light,
Music and talking, who but Lippo! I! —
Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck — I'm
the man!

Back I shrink — what is this I see and hear?
I, caught up with my monk's-things by mis-
take, 366

My old serge gown and rope that goes all
round,

I, in this presence, this pure company!
Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?
Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing 370
Forward, puts out a soft palm — "Not so
fast!"

— Addresses the celestial presence, "nay —
He made you and devised you, after all,
Though he's none of you! Could Saint John
there draw —

His camel-hair make up a painting-brush?
We come to brother Lippo for all that, 376
*Iste perfect' opus!*² So, all smile —

I shuffle sideways with my blushing face
Under the cover of a hundred wings
Thrown like a spread of kirtles when you're
gay 380

And play hot cockles, all the doors being shut,
Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops
The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle off
To some safe bench behind, not letting go
The palm of her, the little lily thing 385
That spoke the good word for me in the nick,
Like the Prior's niece... Saint Lucy, I would
say.

And so all's saved for me, and for the church

¹ "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name
was Job."—Job i, i.

² He painted the picture.

A pretty picture gained. Go, six months
hence!

Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights, no
lights! 390

The street's hushed, and I know my own way
back,

Don't fear me! There's the gray beginning.
Zooks!

Pub. 1855.

Andrea Del Sarto

Called "The Faultless Painter"

Andrea, the painter with flawless technique
(1486-1531), addresses his wife, Lucrezia.

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your
heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend, never
fear, 5

Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow,
Love! 10

I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole, 15
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.

To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself, 21
And mine the man's bared breast she curls
inside.

Don't count the time lost, neither; you must
serve

For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! keep looking so — 25
My serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds!
— How could you ever prick those perfect
ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh,~so sweet —

My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his, 30
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, no
less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready
made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers everything, — 35
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know), — but I, at every
point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned
down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole. 40
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days de-
crease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape 46
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's
hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes us
lead; 50
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your
head —
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art, 55
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door
— It is the thing, Love! so such things should
be —
Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know, 60
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —
Do easily, too — when I say, perfectly,
I do riot boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
Who listened to the Legate's¹ talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it! 67
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
— Delegate of the Pope.

— Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do, 70
AncTFAfl in doing. T could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this
town,
Who strive — you don't know how the others
strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, —
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone
says, 76
(I know his name, no matter) — so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up
brain, 80
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to
prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand
of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but them-
selves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that'? shut to
me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the
world. 86
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word —
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils
too.
I, painting from myself and to myself, 90
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's
blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's¹ outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of
that? 95
Speak as they please, what does the mountain
care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what a heavenFor? All is silver-gray!
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might
gain, 100
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!"
No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
¹ One of the peaks of the Apennines.

The Urbinate¹ who died five years ago. 105
(Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)

Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish
him,

Above and through his art — for it gives
way;

That arm is wrongly put — and there again —
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right — that, a child may under-
stand.

Still, what an arm! and I could alter it: 115
But all the play, the insight and the stretch —
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think —
More than I merit, yes, by many times. 121
But had you — oh, with the same perfect
brow,

And perfect eyes, and more than perfect
mouth,

And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
Had you, with these the same, but brought a
mind! 126

Some women do so. Had the mouth there
urged

"God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!"² 130
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"

I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Besides, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you? 135
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?

In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too,
the power —

And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes. 141
Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the
truth.

I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords. 146
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis,¹ that
first time,

And that long festal year at Fontainebleau
I surely then could sometimes leave the
ground, 151

Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden
look, —

One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the
smile, 155

One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of
souls 160

Profuse, my hand kept plying by those
hearts, —

And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!

A good time, was it not, my kingly days? 165
And had you not grown restless... but I
know —

'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct
said;

Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should
tempt

Out of the grange whose four walls make his
world. 170

How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your
heart.

The triumph was — to reach and stay there;
since

I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's
gold, 175

You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,

¹ King Francis I of France. In 1518 Andrea lived
in France as painter to the king. He returned to Italy,
at the wish of his wife and, according to one story, built
a house for himself with money entrusted to him by
the king for the buying of pictures.

¹ The painter Raphael (1483-1520), born in Urbino.

² Michael Angelo (1475-1564).

No doubt, there's something strikes a balance.

Yes, 257

You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one
have?

In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more
chance — 260

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard,¹ Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover — the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So — still they over-
come 265

Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love

Pub. 1855.

One Word More

To E. B. B.

i

There they are, my fifty men and women
Naming me the fifty poems finished!²
Take them, Love, the book and me together:
Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

2

Rafael made a century of sonnets, 5
Made and wrote them in a certain volume
Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
Else he only used to draw Madonnas:
These, the world might view — but one,
the volume.

Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs
you. 10

Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving — 15
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,
Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

3

You and I would rather read that volume,
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)

¹ Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519).

³ The volume of poems called *Men and Women*.

Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael, 20
Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas —
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre —
Seen by us and all the world in circle. 25

4

You and I will never read that volume.
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple
Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the
treasure!" 30
Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

5

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
While he mused and traced it and retraced it,
(Peradventure with a pen corroded 35
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
Loosed him, laughed to see the writing
rattle, 40
Let the wretch go festering through Flor-
ence) —

Dante, who loved well because he hated,
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
Dante standing, studying his angel, —
In there broke the folk of his Inferno. 45
Says he — "Certain people of importance"
(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the
poet."
Says the poet — "Then I stopped my paint-
ing."

6

You and I would rather see that angel, 50
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
Would we not? — than read a fresh Inferno.

7

You and I will never see that picture.
While he mused on love and Beatrice,
While he softened o'er his outlined angel, 55
In they broke, those "people of importance";
We and Bice bear the loss forever.

8

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
 This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not
 Once, and only once, and for one only, 60
 (Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
 Fit and fair and simple and sufficient —
 Using nature that's an art to others,
 Not, this one time, art that's turned his
 nature.
 Ay, of all the artists living, loving, 65
 None but would forego his proper dowry, —
 Does he paint? he fain would write a poem, —
 Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,
 Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
 Once, and only once, and for one only, 70
 So to be the man and leave the artist,
 Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

9

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abate-
 ment!
 He who smites the rock and spreads the
 water,
 Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,
 Even he, the minute makes immortal, 76
 Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute,
 Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
 While he smites, how can he but remember,
 So he smote before, in such a peril, 80
 When they stood and mocked—"Shall
 smiting help us?"
 When they drank and sneered — "A stroke
 is easy!"
 When they wiped their mouths and went their
 journey,
 Throwing him for thanks — "But drought
 was pleasant."
 Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
 Thus the doing savors of disrelish; 86
 Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
 O'cr-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
 Carelessness or consciousness — the gesture.
 For he bears an ancient wrong about him, 90
 Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,
 Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed
 prelude —
 "How shouldst thou, of all men, smite, and
 save us?"
 Guesses what is like to prove the sequel —
 "Egypt's flesh-pots — nay, the drought was
 better." 95

10

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!
 Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,
 Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial
 fiat.
 Never dares the man put off the prophet.

11

Did he love one face from out the thousands,
 (Were she Jethro's daughter, white and
 wifely, ioi
 Were she but the Ethiopian bondslave,)
 He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
 Keeping a reserve of scanty water
 Meant to save his own life in the desert; 105
 Ready in the desert to deliver
 (Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)
 Hoard and life together for his mistress.

12

I shall never, in the years remaining, 109
 Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,
 Make you music that should all-express me;
 So it seems: I stand on my attainment.
 This of verse alone, one life allows me;
 Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
 Other heights in other lives, God willing: 115
 All the gifts from all the heights, your own,
 Love!

13

Yet a semblance of resource avails us —
 Shade so finely touched, love's sense must
 seize it.
 Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,
 Lines I write the first time and the last
 time. 120
 He who works in fresco, steals a hair-brush,
 Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,
 Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,
 Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
 Fills his lady's missal-marge¹ with flowerets.
 He who blows through bronze, may breathe
 through silver, 126
 Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
 He who writes, may write for once as I do.

14

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
 Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy, 130
¹ margin of the prayer-book.

Enter each and all, and use their service,
Speak from every mouth, — the speech, a
poem.

Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving:
I am mine and yours — the rest be all men's,
Karshish, Cleon, Norbert,¹ and the fifty. 136
Let me speak this once in my true person,
Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
Though the fruit of speech be just this sen-
tence:

Pray you, look on these my men and women,
Take and keep my fifty poems finished; 141
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also I
Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

15

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's
self!

Here in London, yonder late in Florence, 145
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
Curving on a sky imbrued with color,
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-
breadth.

Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,² 150
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver, 155
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

16

What, there's nothing in the moon note-
worthy?

Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
All her magic ('tis the old sweet mythos),
She would turn a new side to her mortal, 161
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steers-
man —

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
Blind to Galileo on his turret,
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats — him,
even! 165
Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mor-
tal —

When she turns round, comes again in heaven,

¹ The hero of the drama, *In a Balcony*.

² A church on a height above Florence, opposite Fiesole.

Opens out anew for worse or better!
Proves she like some portent of an iceberg
Swimming full upon the ship it founders, 170
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?
Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire
Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?
Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu¹
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,
Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire. 176
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness
Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved
work,
When they ate and drank and saw God also!

17

What were seen? None knows, none ever
shall know. 180
Only this is sure — the sight were other,
Not the moon's same side, born late in
Florence,
Dying now impoverished here in London.
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world
with, 185
One to show a woman when he loves her!

18

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
This to you — yourself my moon of poets!
Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the
wonder,
Thus they see you, praise you, think they
know you! 190
There, in turn I stand with them and praise
you —
Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
But the best is when I glide from out them,
Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
Come out on the other side, the novel 195
Silent silver lights and dark undreamed of,
Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

19

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song — and in my brain I sing
it, 200
Drew one angel — borne, see, on my bosom!
September, 1855. R. B.

¹ See Exodus xxiv, 9.

Abt Vogler

After He has been Extemporising upon the Musical Instrument of His Invention

Abbe Vogler (1749-1814) was a German priest and musician who was good at extemporizing. He invented a new kind of organ.

Would that the structure brave, the manifold
music I build,

Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to
their work,

Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch,
as when Solomon willed

Armies of angels that soar, legions of de-
mons that lurk,

Man, brute, reptile, fly — alien of end and of
aim, 5

Adverse, each from the other heaven-high,
hell-deep removed —

Should rush into sight at once as he named
the ineffable Name,¹

And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure
the princess he loved!

Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful
building of mine,

This which my keys in a crowd pressed and
importuned to raise! 10

Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dis-
part now and now combine,

Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their
master his praise!

And one would bury his brow with a blind
plunge down to hell,

Burrow awhile and build, broad on the
roots of things,

Then up again swim into sight, having based
me my palace well, 15

Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the
nether springs.

And another would mount and march, like
the excellent minion he was,

Ay, another and yet another, one crowd
but with many a crest,

Raising my rampired² walls of gold as trans-
parent as glass,

Eager to do and die, yield each his place to
the rest; 20

¹ God. ^a fitted with ramparts.

For higher still and higher (as a runner tips
with fire,

When a great illumination surprises a festal
night —

Outlined round and round Rome's dome¹ from
space to spire)

Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the
pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was
certain, to match man's birth, 25

Nature in turn conceived, obeying an im-
pulse as I;

And the emulous heaven yearned down, made
effort to reach the earth,

As the earth had done her best, in my
passion, to scale the sky;

Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar
and dwelt with mine;

Not a point nor peak but found and fixed
its wandering star — 30

Meteor-moons, balls of blaze; and they did
not pale nor pine,

For earth had attained to heaven — there
was no more near nor far.

Nay, more; for there wanted not who walked
in the glare and glow,

Presences plain in the place; or, fresh from
the Protoplast,³

Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier
wind should blow, 35

Lured now to begin and live, in a house to
their liking at last;

Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed
through the body and gone,

But were back once more to breathe in an
old world worth their new.

What never had been, was now; what was,
as it shall be anon;

And what is — shall I say, matched both?
for I was irade perfect, too. 40

All through my keys that gave their sounds to
a wish of my soul,

All through my soul that praised as its wish
flowed visibly forth,

All through music and me! For think, had I
painted the whole,

Why, there it had stood, to sec, nor the
process so wonder-worth;

¹ St. Peter's. ['] original source.

Had I written the same, made verse — still,
 effect proceeds from cause, 45
 Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear
 how the tale is told,
 It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience
 to laws,
 Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list
 enrolled: —

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the
 will that can,
 Existent behind all laws, that made them
 and, lo, they are! 50
 And I know not if, save in this, such gift be
 allowed to man,
 That out of three sounds he frame, not a
 fourth sound, but a star.
 Consider it well: each tone of our scale in
 itself is naught;
 It is everywhere in the world — loud, soft,
 and all is said —
 Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my
 thought — 55
 And there! Ye have heard and seen; con-
 sider, and bow the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I
 reared;
 Gone! and the good tears start, the praises
 that come too slow;
 For one is assured at first, one scarce can say
 that he feared,
 That he even gave it a thought, the gone
 thing was to go. 60
 Never to be again! But many more of the kind
 As good, nay, better perchance; is this your
 comfort to me?
 To me, who must be saved because I cling with
 my mind
 To the same, same self, same love, same
 God; ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the
 ineffable Name? 65
 Builder and maker, thou, of houses not
 made with hands!
 What, have fear of change from thee who art
 ever the same?
 Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that
 thy power expands?

There shall never be one lost good! What
 was, shall live as before;
 The evil is null, is naught, is silence imply-
 ing sound; 70
 What was good shall be good, with, for evil,
 so much good more;
 On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven
 a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of
 good shall exist;
 Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty,
 nor good, nor power
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives
 for the melodist 75
 When eternity affirms the conception of an
 hour.
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for
 earth too hard,
 The passion that left the ground to lose it-
 self in the sky,
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and the
 bard.
 Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear
 it by and by. 80

And what is our failure here but a triumph's
 evidence
 For the fullness of the days? Have we
 withered or agonized?
 Why else was the pause prolonged but that
 singing might issue thence?
 Why rushed the discords in, but that har-
 mony should be prized?
 Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to
 clear, 85
 Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the
 weal and woe:
 But God has a few of us whom he whispers in
 the ear;
 The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we
 musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her
 reign:
 I will be patient and proud, and soberly
 acquiesce. 90
 Give me the keys. I feel for the common
 chord again,
 Sliding by semitones till I sink to the
 minor, — yes,

And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on
 alien ground,
 Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from
 hitherto the deep;
 Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my
 resting-place is found, 95
 The C Major of this life: so, now I will
 try to sleep.
 1864.

Rabbi Ben Ezra

Abenezra was a Jewish scholar of the twelfth
 century who believed firmly in the immortality
 of the soul.

Grow old along with me!
 The best is yet to be,
 The last of life, for which the first was made:
 Our times are in His hand
 Who saith "A whole I planned, 5
 Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor
 be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,
 Youth sighed "Which rose make ours,
 Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
 Not that, admiring stars, 10
 It yearned "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
 Mine be some figured flame which blends,
 transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
 Annulling youth's brief years,
 Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark! 15
 Rather I prize the doubt
 Low kinds exist without,
 Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a
 spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
 Were man but formed to feed 20
 On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:
 Such feasting ended, then
 As sure an end to men;
 Irks care the crop-full bird? Frees doubt the
 maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied 25
 To That which doth provide
 And not partake, effect and not receive!

A spark disturbs our clod;
 Nearer we hold of God
 Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I
 must believe. 30

Then, welcome each rebuff
 That turns earth's smoothness rough,
 Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
 Be our joys three-parts pain!
 Strive, and hold cheap the strain; 35
 Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
 grudge the throe!

For thence, — a paradox
 Which comforts while it mocks, —
 Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
 What I aspired to be, 40
 And was not, comforts me:
 A brute I might have been, but would not
 sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute
 Whose flesh hath soul to suit,
 Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want
 play? 45
 To man, propose this test —
 Thy body at its best,
 How far can that project thy soul on its lone
 way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:
 I own the Past profuse 50
 Of power each side, perfection every turn:
 Eyes, ears took in their dole,
 Brain treasured up the whole;
 Should not the heart beat once "How good
 to live and learn?"

Not once beat "Praise be Thine! 55
 I see the whole design,
 I, who saw Power, see now Love perfect too:
 Perfect I call Thy plan:
 Thanks that I was a man!
 Maker, remake, complete, — I trust what
 Thou shalt do!" 60

For pleasant is this flesh;
 Our soul, in its rose-mesh
 Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest.
 Would we some prize might hold

To match those manifold 65
Possessions of the brute — gain most, as we
did best!

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the
whole!"

As the bird wings and sings, 70
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than
flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage, 74
Life's struggle having so far reached its term.
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute — a god, though
in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone 80
Once more on my adventure brave and new;
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try 85
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold.
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame.
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being
old. 90

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray;
A whisper from the west
Shoots — "Add this to the rest, 95
Take it and try its worth. Here dies another
day."

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main, 100
That acquiescence vain;
The Future I may face, now I have proved
the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day; 105
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's
true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth, no
Toward making, than repose on aught found
made;
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age; wait death nor
be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right 115
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand
thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee
feel alone. 120

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained, 125
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us
peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes 130
Match me. We all surmise,
They this thing, and I that; whom shall my
soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass —
Things done, that took the eye and had the
price; 135
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value
in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
 And finger failed to plumb, 140
 So passed in making up the main account;
 All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
 That weighed not as his work, yet swelled
 the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed 145
 Into a narrow act,
 Fancies that broke through language and
 escaped;
 All I could never be,
 All, men ignored in me,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the
 pitcher shaped. 150

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
 That metaphor! and feel
 Why time spins fast, why passive lies our
 clay —
 Thou, to whom fools propound,
 When the wine makes its round, 155
 "Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone,
 seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
 Lasts ever, past recall;
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand
 sure.
 What entered into thee, 160
 That was, is, and shall be.
 Time's wheel runs back or stops; Potter and
 clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
 Of plastic circumstance,
 This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain ar-
 rest — 165
 Machinery just meant
 To give thy soul its bent,
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently im-
 pressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
 Which ran the laughing loves 170
 Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
 What though, about thy rim,
 Skull-things in order grim
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner
 stress?

Look not thou down but upf 175
 To uses of a cup,
 The festal board, lamp's flash, and trumpet's
 peal,
 The new wine's foaming flow,
 The Master's lips aglow!
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst
 thou with earth's wheel? 180

But I need, now as then,
 Thee, God, who moldest men;
 And since, not even while the whirl was
 worst,
 Did I — to the wheel of life
 With shapes and colors rife, 185
 Bound dizzily — mistake my end, to slake
 Thy thirst.

So, take and use Thy work;
 Amend what flaws may lurk,
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past
 the aim!
 My times be in Thy hand! 190
 Perfect the cup as planned!
 Let age approve of youth, and death com-
 plete the same!
 Pub. 1864.

Prospice¹

This poem was written a few months after Mrs. Browning's death. The concluding lines refer to her.

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
 The mist in my face,
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
 I am nearing the place,
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,
 The post of the foe; 6
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible
 form,
 Yet the strong man must go:
 For the journey is done and the summit at-
 tained,
 And the barriers fall, 10
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be
 gained,
 The reward of it all.
 I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
 The best and the last!

¹ "Look forward."

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes,
 and forbore, 15
 And bade me creep past.
 No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my
 peers
 The heroes of old,
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay life's glad
 arrears
 Of pain, darkness and cold. 20
 For sudden the worst turns the best to the
 brave,
 The black minute's at end,
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that
 rave,
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,
 Shall change, shall become first a peace out
 of pain, 25
 Then a light, then thy breast,
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee
 again,
 And with God be the rest!
 1861.

Epilogue

This is the last poem in Browning's last volume, a collection of disconnected verses brought together under the title *Asolando*. The book appeared on the day that Browning died. (It is dated, however, 1890.)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-
 time,
 When you set your fancies free,

Will they pass to where — by death, fools
 think, imprisoned —
 Low he lies who once so loved you, whom
 you loved so,
 — Pity me? 5

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
 What had I on earth to do
 With the slothful, with the mawkish, the
 unmanly?
 Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I
 drivel
 — Being — who? 10

One who never turned his back but marched
 breast forward,
 Never doubted clouds would break,
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
 wrong would triumph,
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
 Sleep to wake. 15

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-
 time
 Greet the unseen¹ with a cheer!
 Bid him¹ forward, breast and back as either
 should be,
 "Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed, — fight on,
 fare ever
 There as here!" 20

1889.

¹ the poet.

John Ruskin • 1819-1900

John Ruskin was the close follower and disciple of Carlyle. He began his career as a critic of the fine arts, as Carlyle began his own career as a critic of literature. It was Carlyle's *Past and Present* which brought to Ruskin a deep sense of social injustice, and inspired him to seek more definite remedies than his master had offered. He explains his own conversion in a highly characteristic passage in *Fors Clavigera* — a series of letters which he wrote to arouse his countrymen to a sense of the wrongs which society permits. "For my own part," he wrote in his first letter, January, 1871, "I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer.... I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky, when there is any — which is seldom, nowadays, near London — has become hateful to me,

because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly." In this temper he became a critic of society.

Ruskin was born in London, February 8, 1819, the son of a Scotsman who had built up a prosperous wine business in London. As an only child, John Ruskin was given a strictly private education, the best part of which consisted of journeys by carriage about England and Scotland and on the Continent. When he was fourteen, he had his first glimpse of the Alps from the terrace at Schaffhausen whence he came down with "my destiny fixed in all of it that was to be sacred and useful." He attended Christ Church College, Oxford, and in an interval of ill health spent two years in the study of the pre-Raphaelite painters of Italy. He took his degree in 1841, and one year later published the first volume of *Modern Painters*. This work was continued to five volumes, the last published in 1860, and won for him the first place among English art critics. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), and *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) extended his authority in this field.

He insisted from the first upon the close connection between art and morals. An artist should choose noble subjects in order to arouse noble emotions. In the spirit of the nineteenth century this concern with morality tended to become social. In *The Stones of Venice* Ruskin argued his thesis that great art could only arise in a worthy society, and that decay in social morality resulted in a degradation of art. In his chapter on *The Nature of Gothic* he made explicit his view of the dependence of architecture upon the condition of the worker. This doctrine appealed strongly to Carlyle, and the two men came together in a relation to which Ruskin loved to refer as that of master and disciple. One of Carlyle's demands for the worker was education. In 1854 Ruskin became associated with Maurice, Kingsley, and Thomas Hughes in the Workingman's College in London. In 1858 he gave a series of lectures at Manchester on *The Political Economy of Art*. In 1860-61 he⁴ published four papers on political economy in *The Cornhill Magazine*, and in 1862. he began a similar series in *Eraser's Magazine*. Both contained such violent attacks on capitalistic society that the editors called a halt. Ruskin then published them as *Unto This Last*, and *M.unera Puheris*. Other lectures were published as *Sesame and Lilies* (1865) and *A Crown of Wild Olive* (1866). In 1869 he was elected Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, where in his lectures he dealt with a great variety of social topics, following his theory that the first duty of a teacher of art was to make a society in which real art is possible. Finally he established St. George's Guild, to be a model society in the midst of England, and gave to this object, and to better housing, art-education, etc., the fortune inherited from his father. His series of letters to his followers under the fantastic title *Fors Clavigera* (1871-84), and his delightful autobiography *Praterita* (1889), occupied his last years of literary activity. It may be said that his failure to stir his fellow countrymen out of their complacent indifference toward intolerable conditions of social injustice contributed to the mental darkness in which Ruskin spent his last years. In 1884 he retired to Brantwood on Lake Coniston, in Wordsworth's country, where he died in 1900.

Ruskin's work falls into two sections: criticism of art, and criticism of life. The first is of historical interest as evidence of the Victorian morality of art; but its limitations, and the dogmatism with which it was set forth led to increasing protest against the dictatorship of a critic who insisted that there is an absolute right and wrong, good and bad, in art. Ruskin's social criticism, however, scorned at the time by political economists, has come to be received, in many particulars, as a valid indictment of present society, though his specific suggestions for reform are hardly practicable. Carlyle had attacked the mechanical conception of industrial society, in which the only relation between master and

man was the "cash nexus." Ruskin began *Unto This Last* by declaring that the notion that a code of social action could be written without reference to social affection was one of the least creditable delusions of the human mind. Carlyle labored to bring back some of the virtues of feudal society, in which responsibility on the part of the lord inspired loyalty on the part of the vassal or serf. Ruskin insisted on a code of honor, as necessary for the merchant or industrialist as for the physician or soldier, according to which the employer will fulfill his obligations to society and to his own employees at any sacrifice to himself. Carlyle demanded instead of democracy a government of leaders, of heroes. Ruskin called for government of the weak and foolish by the wise and kind. In St. George's Guild there was to be no liberty and no equality. Wealth, which the economists defined in absolute material terms, Ruskin held to be dependent upon the ability of the possessor to use it. "It may be discovered," he says, "that the true veins of wealth are purple — and not in Rock but in Flesh — perhaps that the final outcome and consummation of all wealth is the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures."

Ruskin's championship of Carlyle led him to support some of the extravagances of his master. Emphasis on the permanence of relation between employer and worker culminated in a defense of human slavery. Acceptance of the theory of hero worship led Ruskin to assert that the soldier, in whose role the hero frequently appeared, was above all men fitted to be king, and into a qualified defense of war. A difference between his doctrine and Carlyle's was his plea for happiness in work. But the chief value of Ruskin to his own generation was the example he set, like Tolstoy and William Morris, of social compunction, of renunciation of privilege in aid of the underprivileged.

The complete works of Ruskin are published in the Library Edition (thirty volumes, 1911), and in the Brantwood Edition. Selections have been edited by Chauncey Tinker and Vida Scudder. The authoritative life is that by Sir E. T. Cook (1911). Other biographies are *The Exquisite Tragedy* by Mrs. Williams-Ellis (1919) and a short life by Frederic Harrison in the English Men of Letters series (1906). Critical studies are: *The Victorian Morality of Art* by Henry Ladd (1931), *John Ruskin: A Study in Personality* by A. C. Benson (1911), *John Ruskin: Social Reformer* by J. A. Hobson (1898), and essays by W. C. Brownell in *Victorian Prose Masters*, and George Saintsbury in *Corrected Impressions*. A recent work on Ruskin is that by R. H. Wilenski (1933).

The Grand Style

1856

Ruskin's first appearance in English literature dates from the publication of the first volume of *Modern Painters*, "by a graduate of Oxford," in 1843. The work was subsequently extended to five volumes, the last published in 1860, after which Ruskin definitely turned to deal with the social interests which were implicit in his earlier work. *Modern Painters* is a vast miscellany, in which Ruskin sets forth his philosophy that aesthetics and morality are closely related, with a multitude of illustrations drawn from the fine arts, including poetry.

The passages selected are famous pronouncements in the criticism of the nineteenth century.

From *Modern Painters*, vol. in, chap, i

... It seems to me, and may seem to the reader, strange that we should need to ask the question, "What is poetry?" Here is a word we have been using all our lives, and, I suppose, with a very distinct idea attached to it; and when I am now called upon to give a definition of this idea, I find myself at a pause. What is more singular, I do not at present recollect hearing the question often

asked, though surely it is a very natural one; and I never recollect hearing it answered, or even attempted to be answered. In general, people shelter themselves under metaphors, and while we hear poetry described as an utterance of the soul, an effusion of Divinity, or voice of nature, or in other terms equally elevated and obscure, we never attain anything like a definite explanation of the character which actually distinguishes it from prose.

I come, after some embarrassment, to the conclusion, that poetry is "the suggestion, by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions." I mean, by the noble emotions, those four principal sacred passions — Love, Veneration, Admiration, and Joy (this latter especially, if unselfish), and their opposites — Hatred, Indignation (or Scorn), Horror, and Grief, — this last when unselfish, becoming Compassion. These passions in their various combinations constitute what is called "poetical feeling" when they are felt on noble grounds, that is, on great and true grounds. Indignation, for instance, is a poetical feeling, if excited by serious injury; but it is not a poetical feeling if entertained on being cheated out of a small sum of money. It is very possible the manner of the cheat may have been such as to justify considerable indignation; but the feeling is nevertheless not poetical unless the grounds of it be large as well as just. In like manner, energetic admiration may be excited in certain minds by a display of fireworks, or a street of handsome shops; but the feeling is not poetical, because the grounds of it are false, and therefore ignoble. There is in reality nothing to deserve admiration either in the firing of packets of gunpowder, or in the display of the stocks of warehouses. But admiration excited by the budding of a flower is a poetical feeling, because it is impossible that this manifestation of spiritual power and vital beauty can ever be enough admired.

Farther, it is necessary to the existence of poetry that the grounds of these feelings should be *furnished by the imagination*. Poetical feeling, that is to say, mere noble emotion, is not poetry. It is happily inherent in all human nature deserving the name, and is

found often to be purest in the least sophisticated. But the power of assembling, by *the help of the imagination*, such images as will excite these feelings, is the power of the poet or literally of the "Maker."

Now this power of exciting the emotions depends of course on the richness of the imagination, and on its choice of those images which, in combination, will be most effective, or, for the particular work to be done, most fit. And it is altogether impossible for a writer not endowed with invention to conceive what tools a true poet will make use of, or in what way he will apply them, or what unexpected results he will bring out by them; so that it is vain to say that the details of poetry ought to possess, or ever do possess, any *definite* character. Generally speaking, poetry runs into finer and more delicate details than prose; but the details are not poetical because they are more delicate, but because they are employed so as to bring out an affecting result. For instance, no one but a true poet would have thought of exciting our pity for a bereaved father by describing his way of locking the door of his house:

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said,
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead";
But of this in my ears not a word did he speak;
And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

In like manner, in painting, it is altogether impossible to say beforehand what details a great painter may make poetical by his use of them to excite noble emotions: and we shall, therefore, find presently that a painting is to be classed in the great or inferior schools, not according to the kind of details which it represents, but according to the uses for which it employs them.

It is only farther to be noticed, that infinite confusion has been introduced into this subject by the careless and illogical custom of opposing painting to poetry, instead of regarding poetry as consisting in a noble use, whether of colors or words. Painting is properly to be opposed to *speaking or writing* but not to *poetry*. Both painting and speaking are methods of expression. Poetry is the employment of either for the noblest purposes.

This question being thus far determined.

we may proceed with our paper in the *Idler*'

"It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of Painting and Poetry may admit. There may, perhaps, be too great indulgence as well as too great a restraint of imagination; if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes transgressed those limits; and, I think, I have seen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullitions of genius; but at least he had this merit, that he never was insipid; and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

"What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael Angelo, the Homer of painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in painting, as in poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature."

From this passage we gather three important indications of the supposed nature of the Great Style. That it is the work of men in a state of enthusiasm. That it is like the writing of Homer; and that it has as little as possible of "common nature" in it.

First, it is produced by men in a state of enthusiasm. That is, by men who feel *strongly and nobly*; for we do not call a strong feeling of envy, jealousy, or ambition, enthusiasm. That is, therefore, by men who feel poetically. This much we may admit, I think, with perfect safety. Great art is produced by men who feel acutely and nobly; and it is in some sort an expression of this personal feeling. We can easily conceive that there may be a sufficiently marked distinction between such art, and that which is produced

by men who do not feel at all, but who reproduce, though ever so accurately, yet coldly, like human mirrors, the scenes which pass before their eyes.

Secondly, Great Art is like the writing of Homer, and this chiefly because it has little of "common nature" in it. We are not clearly informed what is meant by common nature in this passage. Homer seems to describe a great deal of what is common: — cookery, for instance, very carefully in all its processes. I suppose the passage in the *Iliad* which, on the whole, has excited most admiration, is that which describes a wife's sorrow at parting from her husband, and a child's fright at its father's helmet; and I hope, at least, the former feeling may be considered "common nature." But the true greatness of Homer's style is, doubtless, held by our author to consist in his imaginations of things not only uncommon but impossible (such as spirits in brazen armor, or monsters with heads of men and bodies of beasts), and in his occasional delineations of the human character and form in their utmost, or heroic, strength and beauty. We gather then on the whole, that a painter in the Great Style must be enthusiastic, or full of emotion, and must paint the human form in its utmost strength and beauty, and perhaps certain impossible forms besides, liable by persons not in an equally enthusiastic state of mind to be looked upon as in some degree absurd. This I presume to be Reynolds's meaning, and to be all that he intends us to gather from his comparisons of the Great Style with the writings of Homer. But if that comparison be a just one in all respects, surely two other corollaries ought to be drawn from it, namely, — first, that these Heroic or Impossible images are to be mingled with others very unheroic and very possible; and, secondly, that in the representation of the Heroic or Impossible forms, the greatest care must be taken in *finishing the details*, so that a painter must not be satisfied with painting well the countenance and the body of his hero, but ought to spend the greatest part of his time (as Homer the greatest number of verses) in elaborating the sculptured pattern on his shield....

¹ A paper in Johnson's *Idler* by Sir Joshua Reynolds, No. 79, Oct. 26, 1759, on which Ruskin bases his discussion. Reynolds (1723-1792) was both a great painter, and a great critic of art, in his *Discourses* delivered as President of the Royal Academy.

Of the Pathetic Fallacy 1856

From *Modern Painters*, vol. nr, chap, xn

... Now, therefore, putting these tiresome and absurd words quite out of our way, we may go on at our ease to examine the point in question, — namely, the difference between the ordinary, proper, and true appearances of things to us; and the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy; false appearances, I say, as being entirely unconnected with any real power or character in the object, and only imputed to it by us.

For instance —

The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould
Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold.

This is very beautiful, and yet very untrue. The crocus is not a spendthrift, but a hardy plant; its yellow is not gold, but saffron. How is it that we enjoy so much the having it put into our heads that it is anything else than a plain crocus?

It is an important question. For, throughout our past reasonings about art, we have always found that nothing could be good or useful, or ultimately pleasurable, which was untrue. But here is something pleasurable in written poetry which is nevertheless #«true. And what is more, if we think over our favorite poetry, we shall find it full of this kind of fallacy, and that we like it all the more for being so.

It will appear also, on consideration of the matter, that this fallacy is of two principal kinds. Either, as in this case of the crocus, it is the fallacy of wilful fancy, which involves no real expectation that it will be believed; or else it is a fallacy caused by an excited state of the feelings, making us, for the time, more or less irrational. Of the cheating of the fancy we shall have to speak presently; but, in this chapter, I want to examine the nature of the other error, that which the mind admits when affected strongly

by emotion. Thus, for instance, in *Alton Locke*,¹ —

They rowed her in across the rolling foam —
The cruel, crawling foam.

The foam is not cruel, neither does it crawl. The state of mind which attributes to it these characters of a living creature is one in which the reason is unhinged by grief. All violent feelings have the same effect. They produce in us a falseness in all our impressions of external things, which I would generally characterize as the "pathetic fallacy."

Now we are in the habit of considering this fallacy as eminently a character of poetical description, and the temper of mind in which we allow it, as one eminently poetical, because passionate. But I believe, if we look well into the matter, that we shall find the greatest poets do not often admit this kind of falseness, — that it is only the second order of poets who much delight in it.

Thus, when Dante describes the spirits falling from the bank of Acheron "as dead leaves flutter from a bough," he gives the most perfect image possible of their utter lightness, feebleness, passiveness, and scattering agony of despair, without, however, for an instant losing his own clear perception that *these* are souls, and *those* are leaves; he makes no confusion of one with the other. But when Coleridge speaks of

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,

he has a morbid, that is to say, a so far false, idea about the leaf; he fancies a life in it, and will, which there are not; confuses its powerlessness with choice, its fading death with merriment, and the wind that shakes it with music. Here, however, there is some beauty, even in the morbid passage; but take an instance in Homer and Pope. Without the knowledge of Ulysses, Elpenor, his youngest follower, has fallen from an upper chamber in the Circean palace, and has been left dead, unmissed by his leader or companions, in the haste of their departure. They cross the sea to the Cimmerian land; and Ulysses summons the shades from Tartarus. The first which

¹ A novel by Charles Kingsley (1850).

appears is that of the lost Elpenor. Ulysses, amazed, and in exactly the spirit of bitter and terrified lightness which is seen in Hamlet, addresses the spirit with the simple, startled words: —

Elpenor! How earnest thou under the shadowy darkness?
Hast thou come faster on foot than I in my black ship?

Which Pope renders thus: —

O, say, what angry power Elpenor led
To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoined,
Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?

I sincerely hope the reader finds no pleasure here, either in the nimbleness of the sail, or the laziness of the wind! And yet how is it that these conceits are so painful now, when they have been pleasant to us in the other instances?

For a very simple reason. They are not a *pathetic fallacy* at all, for they are put into the mouth of the wrong passion — a passion which never could possibly have spoken them — agonized curiosity. Ulysses wants to know the facts of the matter; and the very last thing his mind could do at the moment would be to pause, or suggest in anywise what was *not* a fact. The delay in the first three lines, and conceit in the last, jar upon us instantly like the most frightful discord in music. No poet of true imaginative power could possibly have written the passage....

The Nature of Gothic 1851-1853

From *The Stones of Venice*

This selection is the first part of chapter vi, volume n, of *The Stones of Venice*. It illustrates Ruskin's view that the art, and particularly the architecture, of a people is an expression "of their religion, their morality, their national aspirations and social habits." Fine art is thus dependent upon the social system of the people who produce it, and its worth or unworth is the final test of that system. The chapter thus marks the connection between Ruskin's art criticism and the social criticism which he was to make his chief work during the latter part of his life.

I shall endeavor to give the reader in this chapter an idea, at once broad and definite, of the true nature of *Gothic* architecture, properly so called; not of that of Venice only, but of universal Gothic: for it will be one of the most interesting parts of our subsequent inquiry, to find out how far Venetian architecture reached the universal or perfect type of Gothic, and how far it either fell short of it, or assumed foreign and independent forms.

§ ii. The principal difficulty in doing this arises from the fact that every building of the Gothic period differs in some important respect from every other; and many include features which, if they occurred in other buildings, would not be considered Gothic at all; so that all we have to reason upon is merely, if I may be allowed so to express it, a greater or less degree of *Gothicness* in each building we examine. And it is this *Gothicness*, — the character which, according as it is found more or less in a building, makes it more or less Gothic, — of which I want to define the nature; and I feel the same kind of difficulty in doing so which would be encountered by any one who undertook to explain, for instance, the nature of Redness, without any actually red thing to point to, but only orange and purple things. Suppose he had only a piece of heather and a dead oak-leaf to do it with. He might say, the color which is mixed with the yellow in this oak-leaf, and with the blue in this heather, would be red, if you had it separate; but it would be difficult, nevertheless, to make the abstraction perfectly intelligible: and it is so in a far greater degree to make the abstraction of the Gothic character intelligible, because that character itself is made up of many mingled ideas, and can consist only in their union. That is to say, pointed arches do not constitute Gothic, nor vaulted roofs, nor flying buttresses, nor grotesque sculptures; but all or some of these things, and many other things with them, when they come together so as to have life.

§ in. Observe also, that, in the definition proposed, I shall only endeavor to analyze the idea which I suppose already to exist in the reader's mind. We all have some notion, most of us a very determined one, of the

meaning of the term Gothic; but I know that many persons have this idea in their minds without being able to define it: that is to say, understanding generally that Westminster Abbey is Gothic, and St. Paul's is not, that Strasburg Cathedral is Gothic, and St. Peter's is not, they have, nevertheless, no clear notion of what it is that they recognize in the one or miss in the other, such as would enable them to say how far the work at Westminster or Strasburg is good and pure of its kind; still less to say of any nondescript building, like St. James's Palace or Windsor Castle, how much right Gothic element there is in it, and how much wanting. And I believe this inquiry to be a pleasant and profitable one; and that there will be found something more than usually interesting in tracing out this grey, shadowy, many-pinnacled image of the Gothic spirit within us; and discerning what fellowship there is between it and our Northern hearts. «And if, at any point of the inquiry, I should interfere with any of the reader's previously formed conceptions, and use the term Gothic in any sense which he would not willingly attach to it, I do not ask him to accept, but only to examine and understand, my interpretation, as necessary to the intelligibility of what follows in the rest of the work.

§ iv. We have, then, the Gothic character submitted to our analysis, just as the rough mineral is submitted to that of the chemist, entangled with many other foreign substances, itself perhaps in no place pure, or ever to be obtained or seen in purity for more than an instant; but nevertheless a thing of definite and separate nature, however inextricable or confused in appearance. Now observe: the chemist defines his mineral by two separate kinds of character; one external, its crystalline form, hardness, lustre, etc.; the other internal, the proportions and nature of its constituent atoms. Exactly in the same manner, we shall find that Gothic architecture has external forms, and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it; as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness, and such others. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs, etc. And

unless both the elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic. It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and life. It is not enough that it has the Power, if it have not the form. We must therefore inquire into each of these characters successively; and determine first, what is the Mental Expression, and secondly, what the Material Form, of Gothic architecture, properly so called.

ist. *Mental Power or Expression.* What characters, we have to discover, did the Gothic builders love, or instinctively express in their work, as distinguished from all other builders?

§ v. Let us go back for a moment to our chemistry, and note that, in defining a mineral by its constituent parts, it is not one nor another of them, that can make up the mineral, but the union of all: for instance, it is neither in charcoal, nor in oxygen, nor in lime, that there is the making of chalk, but in the combination of all three in certain measures; they are all found in very different things from chalk, and there is nothing like chalk either in charcoal or in oxygen, but they are nevertheless necessary to its existence.

So in the various mental characters which make up the soul of Gothic. It is not one nor another that produces it; but their union in certain measures. Each one of them is found in many other architectures besides Gothic; but Gothic cannot exist where they are not found, or, at least, where their place is not in some way supplied. Only there is this great difference between the composition of the mineral, and of the architectural style, that if we withdraw one of its elements from the stone, its form is utterly changed, and its existence as such and such a mineral is destroyed; but if we withdraw one of its mental elements from the Gothic style, it is only a little less Gothic than it was before, and the union of two or three of its elements is enough already to bestow a certain Gothicness of character, which gains in intensity as we add the others, and loses as we again withdraw them.

§ vi. I believe, then, that the character-

istic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:

1. Savageness.
2. Changefulness.
3. Naturalism.
4. Grotesqueness.
5. Rigidity.
6. Redundance.

These characters are here expressed as belonging to the building; as belonging to the builder, they would be expressed thus:

1. Savageness, or Rudeness.
2. Love of Change.
3. Love of Nature.
4. Disturbed Imagination.
5. Obstinacy.
6. Generosity.

And I repeat, that the withdrawal of any one, or any two, will not at once destroy the Gothic character of a building, but the removal of a majority of them will. I shall proceed to examine them in their order.

§ vn. i. SAVAGENESS. I am not sure when the word "Gothic" was first generically applied to the architecture of the North; but I presume that, whatever the date of its original usage, it was intended to imply reproach, and express the barbaric character of the nations among whom that architecture arose. It never implied that they were literally of Gothic lineage, far less that their architecture had been originally invented by the Goths themselves; but it did imply that they and their buildings together exhibited a degree of sternness and rudeness, which, in contradistinction to the character of Southern and Eastern nations, appeared like a perpetual reflection of the contrast between the Goth and the Roman in their first encounter. And when that fallen Roman, in the utmost impotence of his luxury, and insolence of his guilt, became the model for the imitation of civilized Europe, at the close of the so-called Dark ages, the word Gothic became a term of unmitigated contempt, not unminged with aversion. From that contempt, by the exertion of the antiquaries and architects of this century, Gothic architecture has been sufficiently vindicated; and perhaps some among us, in our admiration of the magnificent science of its structure, and sacredness of its expression, might desire that the term of ancient reproach should be withdrawn, and some other, of more apparent honorableness, adopted in its place. There is no chance, as there is no need, of such a substitution. As

far as the epithet was used scornfully, it was used falsely; but there is no reproach in the word, rightly understood; on the contrary, there is a profound truth, which the instinct of mankind almost unconsciously recognizes. It is true, greatly and deeply true, that the architecture of the North is rude and wild; but it is not true, that, for this reason, we are to condemn it, or despise. Far otherwise: I believe it is in this very character that it deserves our profoundest reverence.

§ vni. The charts of the world which have been drawn up by modern science have thrown into a narrow space the expression of a vast amount of knowledge, but I have never yet seen any one pictorial enough to enable the spectator to imagine the kind of contrast in physical character which exists between Northern and Southern countries. We know the differences in detail, but we have not that broad glance and grasp which would enable us to feel them in their fulness. We know that gentians grow on the Alps, and olives on the Apennines; but we do not enough conceive for ourselves that variegated mosaic of the world's surface which a bird sees in its migration, that difference between the district of the gentian and of the olive which the stork and the swallow see far off, as they lean upon the sirocco wind. Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun: here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of a golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange, and plummy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther

towards the north, until we see the orient colors change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those of the Volga, seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands: and then, farther north still, to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm, and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the north wind bites their peaks into barrenness; and, at last, the wall of ice, durable like iron, sets, deathlike, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight. And, having once traversed in thought this gradation of the zoned iris of the earth in all its material vastness, let us go down nearer to it, and watch the parallel change in the belt of animal life: the multitudes of swift and brilliant creatures that glance in the air and sea, or tread the sands of the southern zone, striped zebras and spotted leopards, glistening serpents, and birds arrayed in purple and scarlet. Let us contrast their delicacy and brilliancy of color, and swiftness of motion, with the frost-cramped strength, and shaggy covering, and dusky plumage of the northern tribes; contrast the Arabian horse with the Shetland, the tiger and leopard with the wolf and bear, the antelope with the elk, the bird of paradise with the osprey: and then, submissively acknowledging the great laws by which the earth and all that it bears are ruled throughout their being, let us not condemn, but rejoice in the expression by man of his own rest in the statutes of the lands that gave him birth. Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine, and rise into a cloudless sky; but not with less reverence let us stand by him,

when, with rough strength and hurried stroke, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb, but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.

There is, I repeat, no degradation, no reproach in this, but all dignity and honorableness: and we should err grievously in refusing either to recognize as an essential character of the existing architecture of the North, or to admit as a desirable character in that which it yet may be, this wildness of thought, and roughness of work; this look of mountain brotherhood between the cathedral and the Alp; this magnificence of sturdy power, put forth only the more energetically because the fine finger-touch was chilled away by the frosty wind, and the eye dimmed by the moor-mist, or blinded by the hail; this outspeaking of the strong spirit of men who may not gather redundant fruitage from the earth, nor bask in dreamy benignity of sunshine, but must break the rock for bread, and cleave the forest for fire, and show, even in what they did for their delight, some of the hard habits of the arm and heart that grew on them as they swung the axe or pressed the plough.

§ ix. If, however, the savageness of Gothic architecture, merely as an expression of its origin among Northern nations, may be considered, in some sort, a noble character, it possesses a higher nobility still, when considered as an index, not of climate, but of religious principle.

In the 13th and 14th paragraphs of Chapter XXI. of the first volume of this work, it was noticed that the systems of architectural ornament, properly so called, might be divided into three: i. Servile ornament, in which the execution or power of the inferior workman is entirely subjected to the intellect of the higher; i. Constitutional ornament, in which the executive inferior power is, to a certain point, emancipated and inde-

pendent, having a will of its own, yet confessing its inferiority and rendering obedience to higher powers; and 3. Revolutionary ornament, in which no executive inferiority is admitted at all. I must here explain the nature of these divisions at somewhat greater length.

Of Servile ornament, the principal schools are the Greek, Ninevite, and Egyptian; but their servility is of different kinds. The Greek master-workman was far advanced in knowledge and power above the Assyrian or Egyptian. Neither he nor those for whom he worked could endure the appearance of imperfection in anything, and, therefore, what ornament he appointed to be done by those beneath him was composed of mere geometrical forms, — balls, ridges, and perfectly symmetrical foliage, — which could be executed with absolute precision by line and rule, and were as perfect in their way, when completed, as his own figure sculpture. The Assyrian and Egyptian, on the contrary, less cognizant of accurate form in anything, were content to allow their figure sculpture to be executed by inferior workmen, but lowered the method of its treatment to a standard which every workman could reach, and then trained him by discipline so rigid, that there was no chance of his falling beneath the standard appointed. The Greek gave to the lower workman no subject which he could not perfectly execute. The Assyrian gave him subjects which he could only execute imperfectly, but fixed a legal standard for his imperfection. The workman was, in both systems, a slave.¹

§ x. But in the mediæval, or especially Christian, system of ornament, this slavery is done away with altogether; Christianity Having recognized, in small things as well as great, the individual value of every soul.

¹ The third kind of ornament, the Renaissance, is that in which the inferior detail becomes principal, the executer of every minor portion being required to exhibit skill and possess knowledge as great as that which is possessed by the master of the design; and in the endeavor to endow him with this skill and knowledge, his own original power is overwhelmed, and the whole building becomes a wearisome exhibition of well-educated imbecility. We must fully inquire into the nature of this form of error, when we arrive at the examination of the Renaissance schools. (Ruskin.)

But it not only recognizes its value; it confesses its imperfection, in only bestowing dignity upon the acknowledgment of unworthiness. That admission of lost power and fallen nature, which the Greek or Ninevite felt to be intensely painful, and, as far as might be, altogether refused, the Christian makes daily and hourly, contemplating the fact of it without fear, as tending, in the end, to God's greater glory. Therefore, to every spirit which Christianity summons to her service, her exhortation is: Do what you can, and confess frankly what you are unable to do; neither let your effort be shortened for fear of failure, nor your confession silenced for fear of shame. And it is, perhaps, the principal admirableness of the Gothic schools of architecture, that they thus receive the results of the labor of inferior minds; and out of fragments full of imperfection, and betraying that imperfection in every touch, indulgently raise up a stately and unaccusable whole.

§ xi. But the modern English mind has this much in common with that of the Greek, that it intensely desires, in all things, the utmost completion or perfection compatible with their nature. This is a noble character in the abstract, but becomes ignoble when it causes us to forget the relative dignities of that nature itself, and to prefer the perfectness of the lower nature to the imperfection of the higher; not considering that as, judged by such a rule, all the brute animals would be preferable to man, because more perfect in their functions and kind, and yet are always held inferior to him, so also in the works of man, those which are more perfect in their kind are always inferior to those which are, in their nature, liable to more faults and shortcomings. For the finer the nature, the more flaws it will show through the clearness of it; and it is a law of this universe, that the best things shall be seldomest seen in their best form. The wild grass grows well and strongly, one year with another; but the wheat is, according to the greater nobleness of its nature, liable to the bitterer blight. And therefore, while in all things that we see, or do, we are to desire perfection, and strive for it, we are nevertheless

not to set the meaner thing, in its narrow accomplishment, above the nobler thing, in its mighty progress; not to esteem smooth minuteness above shattered majesty; not to prefer mean victory to honorable defeat; not to lower the level of our aim, that we may the more surely enjoy the complacency of success.¹ But, above all, in our dealings with the souls of other men, we are to take care how we check, by severe requirement or narrow caution, efforts which might otherwise lead to a noble issue; and, still more, how we withhold our admiration from great excellencies, because they are mingled with rough faults. Now, in the make and nature of every man, however rude or simple, whom we employ in manual labor, there are some powers for better things: some tardy imagination, torpid capacity of emotion, tottering steps of thought, there are, even at the worst; and in most cases it is all our own fault that they *are* tardy or torpid. But they cannot be strengthened, unless we are content to take them in their feebleness, and unless we prize and honor them in their imperfection above the best and most perfect manual skill. And this is what we have to do with all our laborers; to look for the *thoughtful* part of them, and get that out of them, whatever we lose for it, whatever faults and errors we are obliged to take with it. For the best that is in them cannot manifest itself, but in company with much error. Understand this clearly: You can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

§ xii. And observe, you are put to stern

¹A doctrine characteristic of nineteenth-century idealism, notably in Browning.

choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must unhumanize them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves. All their attention and strength must go to the accomplishment of the mean act. The eye of the soul must be bent upon the finger-point, and the soul's force must fill all the invisible nerves that guide it, ten hours a day, that it may not err from its steely precision, and so soul and sight be worn away, and the whole human being be lost at last — a heap of sawdust, so far as its intellectual work in this world is concerned; saved only by its Heart, which cannot go into the form of cogs and compasses, but expands, after the ten hours are over, into fireside humanity. On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dulness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause: but out comes the whole majesty of him also; and we know the height of it only, when we see the clouds settling upon him. And, whether the clouds be bright or dark, there will be transfiguration behind and within them.

§ xin. And now, reader, look round this English room of yours, about which you have been proud so often, because the work of it was so good and strong, and the ornaments of it so finished. Examine again all those accurate moldings, and perfect polishings, and unerring adjustments of the seasoned wood and tempered steel. Many a time you have exulted over them, and thought how great England was, because her slightest work was done so thoroughly. Alas! if read rightly, these perfectnesses are signs of a slavery in our England a thousand times more bitter and more degrading than that of the scourged

African, or helot Greek. Men may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and skin which, after the worm's work on it, is to see God, into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with, — this it is to be slave-masters indeed; and there might be more freedom in England, though her feudal lords' lightest words were worth men's lives, and though the blood of the vexed husbandman dropped in the furrows of her fields, than there is while the animation of her multitudes is sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke, and the strength of them is given daily to be wasted into the fineness of a web, or racked into the exactness of a line.

§ xiv. And, on the other hand, go forth again to gaze upon the old cathedral front, where you have smiled so often at the fantastic ignorance of the old sculptors: examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiles and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children.

§ xv. Let me not be thought to speak wildly or extravagantly. It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves. Their universal outcry against wealth, and against nobility, is not forced from them either by the pressure of famine, or the sting of mortified pride. These do much, and have done much in all ages; but the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day. It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure. It is not that

men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labor to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and makes them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them: for, of old, the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law; now it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is pestilential air at the bottom of it. I know not if a day is ever to come when the nature of right freedom will be understood, and when men will see that to obey another man, to labor for him, yield reverence to him or to his place, is not slavery. It is often the best kind of liberty, — liberty from care. The man who says to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, has, in most cases, more sense of restraint and difficulty than the man who obeys him. The movements of the one are hindered by the burden on his shoulder; of the other, by the bridle on his lips: there is no way by which the burden may be lightened; but we need not suffer from the bridle if we do not champ at it. To yield reverence to another, to hold ourselves and our lives at his disposal, is not slavery; often, it is the noblest state in which a man can live in this world. There is, indeed, a reverence which is servile, that is to say irrational or selfish: but there is also noble reverence, that is to say, reasonable and loving; and a man is never so noble as when he is reverent in this kind; nay, even if the feeling pass the bounds of mere reason, so that it be loving, a man is raised by it. Which had, in reality, most of the serf nature in him, — the Irish peasant who was lying in wait yesterday for his landlord, with his musket muzzle thrust through the ragged hedge; or that old mountain servant, who, 100 years ago, at Invtrkeithing, gave up his own life, and the lives of his seven sons for his chief?¹ — as each fell, calling forth his brother to the death, "Another for Hector!" And therefore, in all

¹ Vide Preface to *Fair Maid of Perth*. (Ruskin.)

ages and all countries, reverence has been paid and sacrifice made by men to each other, not only without complaint, but rejoicingly; and famine, and peril, and sword, and all evil, and all shame, have been borne willingly in the causes of masters and kings; for all these gifts of the heart ennobled the men who gave, not less than the men who received them, and nature prompted, and God rewarded the sacrifice. But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognized abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes; — this nature bade not, — this God blesses not, — this humanity for no long time is able to endure.

§ xvi. We have much studied and much perfected, of late, the great civilized invention of the division of labor; only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labor that is divided; but the men: Divided into mere segments of men — broken into small fragments and crumbs of life; so that all the little piece of intelligence that is left in a man is not enough to make a pin, or a nail, but exhausts itself in making the point of a pin, or the head of a nail. Now it is a good and desirable thing, truly, to make many pins in a day; but if we could only see with what crystal sand their points were polished, — sand of human soul, much to be magnified before it can be discerned for what it is, — we should think there might be some loss in it also. And the great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities, louder than their furnace blast, is all in very deed for this, — that we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages. And all the evil to which that cry is urging our myriads can be met only in one way: not by teaching nor preaching, for to teach them is but to show them their misery, and to preach to them, if we do nothing more than preach, is to mock at it. It can be met only by a right understanding, on the part of all classes,

of what kinds of labor are good for men, raising them, and making them happy; by a determined sacrifice of such convenience, or beauty, or cheapness as is to be got only by the degradation of the workman; and by equally determined demand for the products and results of healthy and ennobling labor.

§ xvn. And how, it will be asked, are these products to be recognized, and this demand to be regulated? Easily: by the observance of three broad and simple rules:

i. Never encourage the manufacture of any article not absolutely necessary, in the production of which *Invention* has no share.

2. Never demand an exact finish for its own sake, but only for some practical or noble end.

3. Never encourage imitation or copying of any kind, except for the sake of preserving record of great works.

The second of these principles is the only one which directly rises out of the consideration of our immediate subject; but I shall briefly explain the meaning and extent of the first also, reserving the enforcement of the third for another place.

i. Never encourage the manufacture of anything not necessary, in the production of which invention has no share.

For instance. Glass beads are utterly unnecessary, and there is no design or thought employed in their manufacture. They are formed by first drawing out the glass into rods; these rods are chopped up into fragments of the size of beads by the human hand, and the fragments are then rounded in the furnace. The men who chop up the rods sit at their work all day, their hands vibrating with a perpetual and exquisitely timed palsy, and the beads dropping beneath their vibration like hail. Neither they, nor the men who draw out the rods or fuse the fragments, have the smallest occasion for the use of any single human faculty; and every young lady, therefore, who buys glass beads is engaged in the slave-trade, and in a much more cruel one than that which we have so long been endeavoring to put down.

But glass cups and vessels may become the subjects of exquisite invention; and if in buying these we pay for the invention, that is to say for the beautiful form, or color, or

engraving, and not for mere finish of execution, we are doing good to humanity.

§ xviii. So, again, the cutting of precious stones, in all ordinary cases, requires little exertion of any mental faculty; some tact and judgment in avoiding flaws, and so on, but nothing to bring out the whole mind. Every person who wears cut jewels merely for the sake of their value is, therefore, a slave-driver.

But the working of the goldsmith, and the various designing of grouped jewellery and enamel-work, may become the subject of the most noble human intelligence. Therefore, money spent in the purchase of well-designed plate, of precious engraved vases, cameos, or enamels, does good to humanity; and, in work of this kind, jewels may be employed to heighten its splendor; and their cutting is then a price paid for the attainment of a noble end, and thus perfectly allowable.

§ xix. I shall perhaps press this law farther elsewhere, but our immediate concern is chiefly with the second, namely, never to demand an exact finish, when it does not lead to a noble end. For observe, I have only dwelt upon the rudeness of Gothic, or any other kind of imperfectness, as admirable, where it was impossible to get design or thought without it. If you are to have the thought of a rough and untaught man, you must have it in a rough and untaught way; but from an educated man, who can without effort express his thoughts in an educated way, take the graceful expression, and be thankful. Only *get* the thought, and do not silence the peasant because he cannot speak good grammar, or until you have taught him his grammar. Grammar and refinement are good things, both, only be sure of the better thing first. And thus in art, delicate finish is desirable from the greatest masters, and is always given by them. In some places Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Phidias, Perugino, Turner, all finished with the most exquisite care; and the finish they give always leads to the fuller accomplishment of their

noble purposes. But lower men than these cannot finish, for it requires consummate knowledge to finish consummately, and then we must take their thoughts as they are able to give them. So the rule is simple: Always look for invention first, and after that, for such execution as will help the invention, and as the inventor is capable of without painful effort, and *no more*. Above all, demand no refinement of execution where there is no thought, for that is slaves' work, unredeemed. Rather choose rough work than smooth work, so only that the practical purpose be answered, and never imagine there is reason to be proud of anything that may be accomplished by patience and sand-paper.

§ xx. I shall only give one example, which however will show the reader what I mean, from the manufacture already alluded to, that of glass. Our modern glass is exquisitely clear in its substance, true in its form, accurate in its cutting. We are proud of this. We ought to be ashamed of it. The old Venice glass was muddy, inaccurate in all its forms, and clumsily cut, if at all. And the old Venetian was justly proud of it. For there is this difference between the English and Venetian workman, that the former thinks only of accurately matching his patterns, and getting his curves perfectly true and his edges perfectly sharp, and becomes a mere machine for rounding curves and sharpening edges, while the old Venetian cared not a whit whether his edges were sharp or not, but he invented a new design for every glass that he made, and never molded a handle or a lip without a new fancy in it. And therefore, though some Venetian glass is ugly and clumsy enough, when made by clumsy and uninventive workmen, other Venetian glass is so lovely in its forms that no price is too great for it; and we never see the same form in it twice. Now you cannot have the finish and the varied form too. If the workman is thinking about his edges, he cannot be thinking of his design; if of his design, he cannot think of his edges. Choose whether you will pay for the lovely form or the perfect finish, and choose at the same moment whether you will make the worker a man or a grindstone.

¹ With the first three supreme artists Ruskin ranks Pietro Vannucci (1446-1524), called Perugino, the teacher of Raphael; and Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), in appreciation of whom he wrote the first volume of *Modern Painters*.

§ xxi. Nay, but the reader interrupts me, — "If the workman can design beautifully, I would not have him kept at the furnace. Let him be taken away and made a gentleman, and have a studio, and design his glass there, and I will have it blown and cut for him by common workmen, and so I will have my design and my finish too."

All ideas of this kind are founded upon two mistaken suppositions: the first, that one man's thoughts can be, or ought to be, executed by another man's hands; the second, that manual labor is a degradation, when it is governed by intellect.

On a large scale, and in work determinable by line and rule, it is indeed both possible and necessary that the thoughts of one man should be carried out by the labor of others; in this sense I have already denned the best architecture to be the expression of the mind of manhood by the hands of childhood. But on a smaller scale, and in a design which cannot be mathematically defined, one man's thoughts can never be expressed by another: and the difference between the spirit of touch of the man who is inventing, and of the man who is obeying directions, is often all the difference between a great and a common work of art. How wide the separation is between original and second-hand execution, I shall endeavor to show elsewhere, it is not so much to our purpose here as to mark the other and more fatal error of despising manual labor when governed by intellect; for it is no less fatal an error to despise it when thus regulated by intellect, than to value it for its own sake. We are always in these days endeavoring to separate the two; we want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers, and miserable workers. Now it is only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can be made happy, and the two can-

not be separated with impunity. It would be well if all of us were good handicraftsmen in some kind, and the dishonor of manual labor done away with altogether; so that though there should still be a trenchant distinction of race between nobles and commoners, there should not, among the latter, be a trenchant distinction of employment, as between idle and working men, or between men of liberal and illiberal professions. All professions should be liberal, and there should be less pride felt in peculiarity of employment, and more in excellence of achievement. And yet more, in each several profession, no master should be too proud to do its hardest work. The painter should grind his own colors; the architect work in the mason's yard with his men; the master-manufacturer be himself a more skilful operative than any man in his mills; and the distinction between one man and another be only in experience and skill, and the authority and wealth which these must naturally and justly obtain.

§ xxn. I should be led far from the matter in hand, if I were to pursue this interesting subject. Enough, I trust, has been said to show the reader that the rudeness or imperfection which at first rendered the term "Gothic" one of reproach is indeed, when rightly understood, one of the most noble characters of Christian architecture, and not only a noble but an *essential* one. It seems a fantastic paradox, but it is nevertheless a most important truth, that no architecture can be truly noble which is *not* imperfect. And this is easily demonstrable. For since the architect, whom we will suppose capable of doing all in perfection, cannot execute the whole with his own hands, he must either make slaves of his workmen in the old Greek, and present English fashion, and level his work to a slave's capacities, which is to degrade it; or else he must take his workmen as he finds them, and let them show their weaknesses together with their strength, which will involve the Gothic imperfection, but render the whole work as noble as the intellect of the age can make it.

§ xxm. But the principle may be stated more broadly still. I have confined the illustration of it to architecture, but I must

not leave it as if true of architecture only. Hitherto I have used the words imperfect and perfect merely to distinguish between work grossly unskilful, and work executed with average precision and science; and I have been pleading that any degree of unskilfulness should be admitted, so only that the laborer's mind had room for expression. But, accurately speaking, no good work whatever can be perfect, and *the demand for perfection is always a sign of a misunderstanding of the ends of art.*

- § xxiv. This for two reasons, both based on everlasting laws. The first, that no great man ever stops working till he has reached his point of failure; that is to say, his mind is always far in advance of his powers of execution, and the latter will now and then give way in trying to follow it; besides that, he will always give to the inferior portions of his work only such inferior attention as they require; and according to his greatness he becomes so accustomed to the feeling of dissatisfaction with the best he can do, that in moments of lassitude or anger with himself he will not care though the beholder be dissatisfied also. I believe there has only been one man who would not acknowledge this necessity, and strove always to reach perfection, Leonardo; the end of his vain effort being merely that he would take ten years to a picture, and leave it unfinished. And therefore, if we are to have great men working At all, or less men doing their best, the work will be imperfect, however beautiful. Of human work none but what is bad can be perfect, in its own bad way.¹

§ xxv. The second reason is, that imperfection is in some sort essential to all that we know of life. It is the sign of life in a mortal body, that is to say, of a state of progress and change. Nothing that lives is, or can be, rigidly perfect; part of it is decaying, part nascent. The foxglove blossom, — a third part bud, a third part past, a third part in full bloom, — is a type of the life of this

world. And in all things that live there are certain irregularities and deficiencies which are not only signs of life, but sources of beauty. No human face is exactly the same in its lines on each side, no leaf perfect in its lobes, no branch in its symmetry. All admit irregularity as they imply change; and to banish imperfection is to destroy expression, to check exertion, to paralyze vitality. All things are literally better, lovelier, and more beloved for the imperfections which have been divinely appointed, that the law of human life may be Effort, and the law of human judgment, Mercy.

Accept this then for a universal law, that neither architecture nor any other noble work of man can be good unless it be imperfect; and let us be prepared for the otherwise strange fact, which we shall discern clearly as we approach the period of the Renaissance, that the first cause of the fall of the arts of Europe was a relentless requirement of perfection, incapable alike either of being silenced by veneration for greatness, or softened into forgiveness of simplicity.

Thus far then of the Rudeness or Savageness, which is the first mental element of Gothic architecture. It is an element in many other healthy architectures also, as in Byzantine and Romanesque; but true Gothic cannot exist without it.

§ xxvi. The second mental element above named was CHANGEFULNESS, or Variety.

I have already mentioned the allowing independent operation to the inferior workman, simply as a duty to him, and as ennobling the architecture by rendering it more Christian. We have now to consider what reward we obtain for the performance of this duty, namely, the perpetual variety of every feature of the building.

Wherever the workman is utterly enslaved, the parts of the building must of course be absolutely like each other; for the perfection of his execution can only be reached by exercising him in doing one thing, and giving him nothing else to do. The degree in which the workman is degraded may be thus known at a glance, by observing whether the several parts of the building are similar or not; and if, as in Greek work, all the capitals are alike,

¹ The Elgin marbles are supposed by many persons to be "perfect." In the most important portions they indeed approach perfection, but only there. The draperies are unfinished, the hair and wool of the animals are unfinished, and the entire bas-reliefs of the frieze are roughly cut. (Ruskin.)

and all the moldings unvaried, then the degradation is complete; if, as in Egyptian or Ninevite work, though the manner of executing certain figures is always the same, the order of design is perpetually varied, the degradation is less total; if, as in Gothic work, there is perpetual change both in design and execution, the workman must have been altogether set free.

§ xxvu. How much the beholder gains from the liberty of the laborer may perhaps be questioned in England, where one of the strongest instincts in nearly every mind is that Love of Order which makes us desire that our house windows should pair like our carriage horses, and allows us to yield our faith unhesitatingly to architectural theories which fix a form for everything, and forbid variation from it. I would not impeach love of order: it is one of the most useful elements of the English mind; it helps us in our commerce and in all purely practical matters; and it is in many cases one of the foundation stones of morality. Only do not let us suppose that love of order is love of art. It is true that order, in its highest sense, is one of the necessities of art, just as time is a necessity of music; but love of order has no more to do with our right enjoyment of architecture or painting, than love of punctuality with the appreciation of an opera. Experience, I fear, teaches us that accurate and methodical habits in daily life are seldom characteristic of those who either quickly perceive, or richly possess, the creative powers of art, there is, however, nothing inconsistent between the two instincts, and nothing to hinder us from retaining our business habits, and yet fully allowing and enjoying the noblest gifts of Invention. We already do so, in every other branch of art except architecture, and we only do *not* so there because we have been taught that it would be wrong. Our architects gravely inform us that, as there are four rules of arithmetic, there are five orders of architecture; we, in our simplicity, think that this sounds consistent, and believe them. They inform us also that there is one proper form for Corinthian capitals, another for Doric, and another for Ionic. We, considering that

there is also a proper form for the letters A, B, and C, think that this also sounds consistent, and accept the proposition. Understanding, therefore, that one form of the said capitals is proper, and no other, and having a conscientious horror of all impropriety, we allow the architect to provide us with the said capitals, of the proper form, in such and such a quantity, and in all other points to take care that the legal forms are observed; which having done, we rest in forced confidence that we are well housed.

§ xxviii. But our higher instincts are not deceived. We take no pleasure in the building provided for us, resembling that which we take in a new book or a new picture. We may be proud of its size, complacent in its correctness, and happy in its convenience. We may take the same pleasure in its symmetry and workmanship as in a well-ordered room, or a skilful piece of manufacture. And this we suppose to be all the pleasure that architecture was ever intended to give us. The idea of reading a building as we would read Milton or Dante, and getting the same kind of delight out of the stones as out of the stanzas, never enters our minds for a moment. And for good reason, — There is indeed rhythm in the verses, quite as strict as the symmetries or rhythm of the architecture, and a thousand times more beautiful, but there is something else than rhythm. The verses were neither made to order, nor to match, as the capitals were; and we have therefore a kind of pleasure in them other than a sense of propriety. But it requires a strong effort of common sense to shake ourselves quit of all that we have been taught for the last two centuries, and wake to the perception of a truth just as simple and certain as it is new: that great art, whether expressing itself in words, colors, or stones, does *not* say the same thing over and over again; that the merit of architectural, as of every other art, consists in its saying new and different things; that to repeat itself is no more a characteristic of genius in marble than it is of genius in print; and that we may, without offending any laws of good taste, require of an architect, as we do of a novelist, that he should be not only correct, but entertaining.

Yet all this is true, and self-evident; only hidden from us, as many other self-evident things are, by false teaching. Nothing is a great work of art, for the production of which either rules or models can be given. Exactly so far as architecture works on known rules, and from given models, it is not an art, but a manufacture; and it is, of the two procedures, rather less rational (because more easy) to copy capitals or moldings from Phidias, and call ourselves architects, than to copy heads and hands from Titian, and call ourselves painters.

§ xxix. Let us then understand at once, that change or variety is as much a necessity to the human heart and brain in buildings as in books; that there is no merit, though there is some occasional use, in monotony; and that we must no more expect to derive either pleasure or profit from an architecture whose ornaments are of one pattern, and whose pillars are of one proportion, than we should out of a universe in which the clouds were all of one shape, and the trees all of one size.

§ xxx. And this we confess in deeds, though not in words. All the pleasure which the people of the nineteenth century take in art, is in pictures, sculpture, minor objects of virtue, or mediaeval architecture, which we enjoy under the term picturesque: no pleasure is taken anywhere in modern buildings, and we find all men of true feeling delighting to escape out of modern cities into natural scenery: hence, as I shall hereafter show, that peculiar love of landscape which is characteristic of the age. It would be well, if, in all other matters, we were as ready to put up with what we dislike, for the sake of compliance with established law, as we are in architecture.

§ xxxi. How so debased a law ever came to be established, we shall see when we come to describe the Renaissance schools: here we have only to note, as the second most essential element of the Gothic spirit, that it broke through that law wherever it found it in existence; it not only dared, but delighted in, the infringement of every servile principle; and invented a series of forms of which the merit was, not merely that they were new, but that they were *capable of perpetual nov-*

elty. The pointed arch was not merely a bold variation from the round, but it admitted of millions of variations in itself; for the proportions of a pointed arch are changeable to infinity, while a circular arch is always the same. The grouped shaft was not merely a bold variation from the single one, but it admitted of millions of variations in its grouping, and in the proportions resultant from its grouping. The introduction of tracery was not only a startling change in the treatment of window lights, but admitted endless changes in the interlacement of the tracery bars themselves. So that, while in all living Christian architecture the love of variety exists, the Gothic schools exhibited that love in culminating energy; and their influence, wherever it extended itself, may be sooner and farther traced by this character than by any other; the tendency to the adoption of Gothic types being always first shown by greater irregularity and richer variation in the forms of the architecture it is about to supersede, long before the appearance of the pointed arch or of any other recognizable *outward* sign of the Gothic mind.

§ xxxii. We must, however, herein note carefully what distinction there is between a healthy and a diseased love of change; for as it was in healthy love of change that the Gothic architecture rose, it was partly in consequence of diseased love of change that it was destroyed. In order to understand this clearly, it will be necessary to consider the different ways in which change and monotony are presented to us in nature; both having their use, like darkness and light, and the one incapable of being enjoyed without the other: change being most delightful after some prolongation of monotony, as light appears most brilliant after the eyes have been for some time closed.

§ xxxiii. I believe that the true relations of monotony and change may be most simply understood by observing them in music. We may therein notice, first, that there is a sublimity and majesty in monotony which there is not in rapid or frequent variation. This is true throughout all nature. The greater part of the sublimity of the sea depends on its monotony; so also that of deso-

late moor and mountain scenery; and especially the sublimity of motion, as in the quiet, unchanged fall and rise of an engine beam. So also there is sublimity in darkness which there is not in light.

§ xxxiv. Again, monotony after a certain time, or beyond a certain degree, becomes either uninteresting or intolerable, and the musician is obliged to break it in one or two ways: either while the air or passage is perpetually repeated, its notes are variously enriched and harmonized; or else, after a certain number of repeated passages, an entirely new passage is introduced, which is more or less delightful according to the length of the previous monotony. Nature, of course, uses both these kinds of variation perpetually. The sea-waves, resembling each other in general mass, but none like its brother in minor divisions and curves, are a monotony of the first kind; the great plain, broken by an emergent rock or clump of trees, is a monotony of the second.

§ xxxv. Farther: in order to the enjoyment of the change in either case, a certain degree of patience is required from the hearer or observer. In the first case, he must be satisfied to endure with patience the recurrence of the great masses of sound or form, and to seek for entertainment in a careful watchfulness of the minor details. In the second case, he must bear patiently the infliction of the monotony for some moments, in order to feel the full refreshment of the change. This is true even of the shortest musical passage in which the element of monotony is employed. In cases of more majestic monotony, the patience required is so considerable that it becomes a kind of pain, — a price paid for the future pleasure.

§ xxxvi. Again: the talent of the composer is not in the monotony, but in the changes; he may show feeling and taste by his use of monotony in certain places or degrees: that is to say, by his *various* employment of it; but it is always in the new arrangement or invention that his intellect is shown, and not in the monotony which relieves it.

Lastly: if the pleasure of change be too often repeated, it ceases to be delightful, for

then change itself becomes monotonous, and we are driven to seek delight in extreme and fantastic degrees of it. This is the diseased love of change of which we have above spoken.

§ xxxvii. From these facts we may gather generally that monotony is, and ought to be, in itself painful to us, just as darkness is; that an architecture which is altogether monotonous is a dark or dead architecture; and, of those who love it, it may be truly said, "they love darkness rather than light." But monotony in certain measure, used in order to give value to change, and, above all, that *transparent* monotony which, like the shadows of a great painter, suffers all manner of dimly suggested form to be seen through the body of it, is an essential in architectural as in all other composition; and the endurance of monotony has about the same place in a healthy mind that the endurance of darkness has: that is to say, as a strong intellect will have pleasure in the solemnities of storm and twilight, and in the broken and mysterious lights that gleam among them, rather than in mere brilliancy and glare, while a frivolous mind will dread the shadow and the storm; and as a great man will be ready to endure much darkness of fortune in order to reach greater eminence of power or felicity, while an inferior man will not pay the price; exactly in like manner a great mind will accept, or even delight in, monotony which would be wearisome to an inferior intellect, because it has more patience and power of expectation, and is ready to pay the full price for the great future pleasure of change. But in all cases it is not that the noble nature loves monotony, any more than it loves darkness or pain. But it can bear with it, and receives a high pleasure in the endurance or patience, a pleasure necessary to the well-being of this world; while those who will not submit to the temporary sameness, but rush from one change to another, gradually dull the edge of change itself, and bring a shadow and weariness over the whole world from which there is no more escape.

§ xxxviii. From these general uses of variety in the economy of the world, we may at

once understand its use and abuse in architecture. The variety of the Gothic schools is the more healthy and beautiful, because in many cases it is entirely unstudied, and results, not from the mere love of change, but from practical necessities. For in one point of view Gothic is not only the best, but the *only rational* architecture, as being that which can fit itself most easily to all services, vulgar or noble. Undefined in its slope of roof, height of shaft, breadth of arch, or disposition of ground plan, it can shrink into a turret, expand into a hall, coil into a staircase, or spring into a spire, with undegraded grace and unexhausted energy; and whenever it finds occasion for change in its form or purpose, it submits to it without the slightest sense of loss either to its unity or majesty, — subtle and flexible like a fiery serpent, but ever attentive to the voice of the charmer. And it is one of the chief virtues of the Gothic builders, that they never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window, they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance, knowing (as indeed it always happened) that such daring interruptions of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry than injure it. So that, in the best times of Gothic, a useless window would rather have been opened in an unexpected place for the sake of the surprise, than a useful one forbidden for the sake of symmetry. Every successive architect, employed upon a great work, built the pieces he added in his own way, utterly regardless of the style adopted by his predecessors; and if two towers were raised in nominal correspondence at the sides of a cathedral front, one was nearly sure to be different from the other, and in each the style at the top to be different from the style at the bottom.¹

§ xxxix. These marked variations were,

however, only permitted as part of the great system of perpetual change which ran through every member of Gothic design, and rendered it as endless a field for the beholder's inquiry, as for the builder's imagination: change, which in the best schools is subtle and delicate, and rendered more delightful by intermingling of a noble monotony; in the more barbaric schools is somewhat fantastic and redundant; but, in all, a necessary and constant condition of the life of the school. Sometimes the variety is in one feature, sometimes in another; it may be in the capitals or crockets, in the niches or the traceries, or in all together, but in some one or other of the features it will be found always. If the moldings are constant, the surface sculpture will change; if the capitals are of a fixed design, the traceries will change; if the traceries are monotonous, the capitals will change; and if even, as in some fine schools, the early English for example, there is the slightest approximation to an unvarying type of moldings, capitals, and floral decoration, the variety is found in the disposition of the masses, and in the figure sculpture.

§ XL. I must now refer for a moment, before we quit the consideration of this, the second mental element of Gothic, to the opening of the third chapter of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in which the distinction was drawn (§ i) between man gathering and man governing; between his acceptance of the sources of delight from nature, and his development of authoritative or imaginative power in their arrangement: for the two mental elements, not only of Gothic, but of all good architecture, which we have just been examining, belong to it, and are admirable in it, chiefly as it is, more than any other subject of art, the work of man, and the expression of the average power of man. A picture or poem is often little more than a feeble utterance of man's admiration of something out of himself; but architecture approaches more to a creation of his own, born of his necessities, and expressive of his nature. It is also, in some sort, the work of the whole race, while the picture or statue are the work of one only, in most cases more highly gifted than his fellows. And therefore we may

¹ In the eighth chapter we shall see a remarkable instance of this sacrifice of symmetry to convenience in the arrangement of the windows of the Ducal Palace. ICRuskin.)

expect that the first two elements of good architecture should be expressive of some great truths commonly belonging to the whole race, and necessary to be understood or felt by them in all their work that they do under the sun. And observe what they are: the confession of Imperfection, and the confession of Desire of Change. The building of the bird and the bee needs not express anything like this. It is perfect and unchanging. But just because we are something better than birds or bees, our building must confess that we have not reached the perfection we can imagine, and cannot rest in the condition we have attained. If we pretend to have reached either perfection or satisfaction, we have degraded ourselves and our work. God's work only may express that; but ours may never have that sentence written upon it, — "And behold, it was very good." And, observe again, it is not merely as it renders the edifice a book of various knowledge, or a mine of precious thought, that variety is essential to its nobleness. The vital principle is not the love of *Knowledge*, but the love of *Change*. It is that strange *disquietude* of the Gothic spirit that is its greatness; that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in his triglyph furrow, and be at peace; but the work of the Gothic heart is fretwork still, and it can neither rest in, nor from, its labor, but must pass on, sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified for ever in the change that must come alike on them that wake and them that sleep.

§ XLI. The third constituent element of the Gothic mind was stated to be NATURALISM; that is to say, the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws.

This characteristic of the style partly follows in necessary connection with those named above. For, so soon as the workman is left free to represent what subjects he chooses, he must look to the nature that is

round him for material, and will endeavor to represent it as he sees it, with more or less accuracy according to the skill he possesses, and with much play of fancy, but with small respect for law. There is, however, a marked distinction between the imaginations of the Western and Eastern races, even when both are left free; the Western, or Gothic, delighting most in the representation of facts, and the Eastern (Arabian, Persian, and Chinese) in the harmony of colors and forms. Each of these intellectual dispositions has its particular forms of error and abuse, which, though I have often before stated, I must here again briefly explain; and this, the rather, because the word Naturalism is, in one of its senses, justly used as a term of reproach, and the questions respecting the real relations of art and nature are so many and so confused throughout all the schools of Europe at this day, that I cannot clearly enunciate any single truth without appearing to admit, in fellowship with it, some kind of error, unless the reader will bear with me in entering into such an analysis of the subject as will serve us for general guidance.

§ XLII. We are to remember, in the first place, that the arrangement of colors and lines is an art analogous to the composition¹ of music, and entirely independent of the representation of facts. Good coloring does not necessarily convey the image of anything but itself. It consists in certain proportions and arrangements of rays of light, but not in likenesses to anything. A few touches of certain greys and purples laid by a master's hand on white paper, will be good coloring; as more touches are added beside them, we

¹ I am always afraid to use this word "Composition"; it is so utterly misused in the general parlance respecting art. Nothing is more common than to hear divisions of art into "form, composition, and color," or "light and shade and composition," or "sentiment and composition," or it matters not what else and composition; the speakers in each case attaching a perfectly different meaning to the word, generally an indistinct one, and always a wrong one. Composition is, in plain English, "putting together," and it means the putting together of lines, of forms, of colors, of shades, or of ideas. Painters compose in color, compose in thought, compose in form, and compose in effect; the word being of use merely in order to express a scientific, disciplined, and inventive arrangement of any of these, instead of a merely natural or accidental one. (Ruskin.)

may find out that they were intended to represent a dove's neck, and we may praise, as the drawing advances, the perfect imitation of the dove's neck. But the good coloring does not consist in that imitation, but in the abstract qualities and relations of the grey and purple.

In like manner, as soon as a great sculptor begins to shape his work out of the block, we shall see that its lines are nobly arranged, and of noble character. We may not have the slightest idea for what the forms are intended, whether they are of man or beast, of vegetation or drapery. Their likeness to anything does not affect their nobleness. They are magnificent forms, and that is all we need care to know of them, in order to say whether the workman is a good or bad sculptor.

§ XLIII. Now the noblest art is an exact unison of the abstract value, with the imitative power, of forms and colors. It is the noblest composition, used to express the noblest facts. But the human mind cannot in general unite the two perfections: it either pursues the fact to the neglect of the composition, or pursues the composition to the neglect of the fact.

§ XLIV. And it is intended by the Deity that it *should* do this; the best art is not always wanted. Facts are often wanted without art, as in a geological diagram; and art often without facts, as in a Turkey carpet. And most men have been made capable of giving either one or the other, but not both; only one or two, the very highest, can give both.

Observe then. Men are universally divided, as respects their artistical qualifications, into three great classes; a right, a left, and a centre. On the right side are the men of facts, on the left the men of design,¹ in the centre the men of both.

The three classes of course pass into each other by imperceptible gradations. The men of facts are hardly ever altogether without powers of design; the men of design are al-

ways in some measure cognizant of facts; and as each class possesses more or less of the powers of the opposite one, it approaches to the character of the central class. Few men, even in that central rank, are so exactly throned on the summit of the crest that they cannot be perceived to incline in the least one way or the other, embracing both horizons with their glance. Now each of these classes has, as I above said, a healthy function in the world, and correlative diseases or unhealthy functions; and, when the work of either of them is seen in its morbid condition, we are apt to find fault with the class of workmen, instead of finding fault only with the particular abuse which has perverted their action....

§ XLV. What, then, are the diseased operations to which the three classes of workmen are liable?

§ XLVI. Primarily, two; affecting the two inferior classes:

1st, When either of those two classes Despises the other;

2nd, When either of the two classes Envis the other; producing, therefore, four forms of dangerous error.

First, when the men of facts despise design. This is the error of the common Dutch painters, of merely imitative painters of still life, flowers, etc., and other men who, having either the gift of accurate imitation or strong sympathies with nature, suppose that all is done when the imitation is perfected or sympathy expressed. A large body of English landscapists come into this class, including most clever sketchers from nature, who fancy that to get a sky of true tone, and a gleam of sunshine or sweep of shower faithfully expressed, is all that can be required of art. These men are generally themselves answerable for much of their deadness of feeling to the higher qualities of composition. They probably have not originally the high gifts of design, but they lose such powers as they originally possessed by despising, and refusing to study, the results of great power of design in others. Their knowledge, as far as it goes, being accurate, they are usually presumptuous and self-conceited, and grad-

¹ Design is used in this place as expressive of the power to arrange lines and colors nobly. By facts, I mean facts perceived by the eye and mind, not facts accumulated by knowledge. See the chapter on Roman Renaissance (vol. m, chap. a) for this distinction. (Ruskin.)

ually become incapable of admiring anything but what is like their own works. They see nothing in the works of great designers but the faults, and do harm almost incalculable in the European society of the present day by sneering at the compositions of the greatest men of the earlier ages,¹ because they do not absolutely tally with their own ideas of "Nature."

§ XLVII. The second form of error is when the men of design despise facts. All noble design must deal with facts to a certain extent, for there is no food for it but in nature. The best colorist invents best by taking hints from natural colors; from birds, skies, or groups of figures. And if, in the delight of inventing fantastic color and form, the truths of nature are wilfully neglected, the intellect becomes comparatively decrepit, and that state of art results which we find among the Chinese. The Greek designers delighted in the facts of the human form, and became great in consequence; but the facts of lower nature were disregarded by them, and their inferior ornament became, therefore, dead and valueless.

§ XLVIII. The third form of error is when the men of facts envy design: that is to say, when, having only imitative powers, they refuse to employ those powers upon the visible world around them; but, having been taught that composition is the end of art, strive to obtain the inventive powers which nature has denied them, study nothing but the works of reputed designers, and perish in a fungous growth of plagiarism and laws of art.

Here was the great error of the beginning of this century; it is the error of the meanest kind of men that employ themselves in painting, and it is the most fatal of all, rendering those who fall into it utterly useless, incapable of helping the world with either truth or fancy, while, in all probability, they deceive it by base resemblances of both, until it hardly recognizes truth or fancy when they really exist.

§ XLIX. The fourth form of error is when

the men of design envy facts; that is to say, when the temptation of closely imitating nature leads them to forget their own proper ornamental function, and when they lose the power of the composition for the sake of graphic truth; as, for instance, in the hawthorn molding so often spoken of round the porch of Bourges Cathedral, which, though very lovely, might perhaps, as we saw above, have been better, if the old builder, in his excessive desire to make it look like hawthorn, had not painted it green.

§ L. It is, however, carefully to be noted, that the two morbid conditions to which the men of facts are liable are much more dangerous and harmful than those to which the men of design are liable. The morbid state of men of design injures themselves only; that of the men of facts injures the whole world. The Chinese porcelain-painter is, indeed, not so great a man as he might be, but he does not want to break everything that is not porcelain: but the modern English fact-hunter, despising design, wants to destroy everything that does not agree with his own notions of truth, and becomes the most dangerous and despicable of iconoclasts, excited by egotism instead of religion. Again: the Bourges sculptor, painting his hawthorns green, did indeed somewhat hurt the effect of his own beautiful design, but did not prevent any one from loving hawthorn: but Sir George Beaumont,¹ trying to make Constable² paint grass brown *instead* of green, was setting himself between Constable and nature, blinding the painter, and blaspheming the work of God.

§ LI. So much, then, of the diseases of the inferior classes, caused by their envying or despising each other. It is evident that the men of the central class cannot be liable to any morbid operation of this kind, they possessing the powers of both.

But there is another order of diseases which affect all the three classes, considered with respect to their pursuit of facts. For observe, all the three classes are in some

¹ "Earlier," that is to say, pre-Raphaelite ages. Men of this stamp will praise Claude, and such other comparatively debased artists; but they cannot taste the work of the thirteenth century. (Ruskin.)

*Sir George Howland Beaumont (1753-1827), painter and critic, a friend of Wordsworth.

² John Constable (1786-1837), a noted English landscape painter.

degree pursuers of facts; even the men of design not being in any case altogether independent of external truth. Now, considering them *all* as more or less searchers after truth, there is another triple division to be made of them. Everything presented to them in nature has good and evil mingled in it: and art'stists, considered as searchers—after truth, are again to be divided into three great classes, a right, a left, and a centre. Those on the right perceive, and pursue, the good, and leave the evil: those in the centre, the greatest, perceive and pursue the good and evil together, the whole thing as it verily is: those on the left perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good.

§ LII. The first class, I say, take the good and leave the evil. Out of whatever is presented to them, they gather what it has of grace, and life, and light, and holiness, and leave all, or at least as much as possible, of the rest undrawn. The faces of their figures express no evil passions; the skies of their landscapes are without storm; the prevalent character of their color is brightness, and of their chiaroscuro fulness of light. The early Italian and Flemish painters, Angelico and Memling, Perugino, Francia, Raffaëlle in his best time, John Bellini, and our own Stothard,¹ belong eminently to this class.

§ LIII. The second, or greatest class, render all that they see in nature unhesitatingly, with a kind of divine grasp and government of the whole, sympathizing with all the good, and yet confessing, permitting, and bringing good out of the evil also. Their subject is infinite as nature, their color equally balanced between splendor and sadness, reaching occasionally the highest degrees of both, and their chiaroscuro equally balanced between light and shade.

The principal men of this class are Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Giotto, Tintoret, and Turner. Raffaëlle in his second time, Titian,

¹ Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole (1387-1455), called Fra Angelico, the painter of religious scenes in the Convent of San Marco, Florence; Hans Memling, of Bruges, a religious painter of the fifteenth century; Francesco Raibolini (1450-1517), called Francia, who painted religious subjects at Bologna; Giovanni Bellini (1427?-1526), also noted for his religious painting at Venice; Thomas Stothard (1755-1834), an English illustrator and engraver.

and Rubens are transitional; the first inclining to the eclectic, and the last two to the impure class, Raffaëlle rarely giving all the evil, Titian and Rubens rarely all the good.

§ LIV. The last class perceive and imitate evil only. They cannot draw the trunk of a tree without blasting and shattering it, nor a sky except covered with stormy clouds; they delight in the beggary and brutality of the human race; their color is for the most part subdued or lurid, and the greatest spaces of their pictures are occupied by darkness.

Happily the examples of this class are seldom seen in perfection. Salvator Rosa and Caravaggio¹ are the most characteristic: the other men belonging to it approach towards the central rank by imperceptible gradations, as they perceive and represent more and more of good. But Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo Procaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers,² all belong naturally to this lower class.

§ LV. Now, observe: the three classes into which artists were previously divided, of men of fact, men of design, and men of both, are all of Divine institution; but of these latter three, the last is in no wise of Divine institution. It is entirely human, and the men who belong to it have sunk into it by their own faults. They are, so far forth, either useless or harmful men. It is indeed good that evil should be occasionally represented, even in its worst forms, but never that it should be taken delight in: and the mighty men of the central class will always give us all that is needful of it; sometimes, as Hogarth³ did, dwelling upon it bitterly as satirists, — but this with the more effect, because they will neither exaggerate it, nor represent it mercilessly, and without the atoning points that all evil shows to a Divinely guided glance, even at its deepest. So then,

¹ Salvator Rosa (1615-1673), Neapolitan; and Michelangelo Amerighi (1569-1609), called Garavaggio from his birthplace, were constantly cited by Ruskin as bad painters of the so-called Baroque period.

² 'Bartolome' Estéban Murillo (1618-1682), the chief religious painter of Spain; Francisco Zurbarán (1598-1662), also of Spain; Camillo Procaccini, (1551-1629), a Bolognese painter; David Teniers is the name of a father and son (1582-1649 and 1610-1690), both painters of genre subjects in Flanders.

³ William Hogarth (1697-1764), a painter and engraver of genre scenes in London.

though the third class will always, I fear, in some measure exist, the two necessary classes are only the first two; and this is so far acknowledged by the general sense of men, that the basest class has been confounded with the second, and painters have been divided commonly only into two ranks, now known, I believe, throughout Europe by the names which they first received in Italy, "Puristi and Naturalisti." Since, however, in the existing state of things, the degraded or evil-loving class, though less defined than that of the Puristi, is just as vast as it is indistinct, this division has done infinite dishonor to the great faithful painters of nature: and it has long been one of the objects I have had most at heart to show that, in reality, the Purists, in their sanctity, are less separated from these natural painters than the Sensualists in their foulness; and that the difference, though less discernible, is in reality greater, between the man who pursues evil for its own sake, and him who bears with it for the sake of truth, than between this latter and the man who will not endure it at all.

§ LVI. Let us, then, endeavor briefly to mark the real relations of these three vast ranks of men, whom I shall call, for convenience in speaking of them, Purists, Naturalists, and Sensualists; not that these terms express their real characters, but I know no word, and cannot com a convenient one, which would accurately express the opposite of Purist, and I keep the terms Purist and Naturalist in order to comply, as far as possible, with the established usage of language on the Continent. Now, observe: in saying that nearly everything presented to us in nature has mingling in it of good and evil, I do not mean that nature is conceivably improvable, or that anything that God has made could be called evil, if we could see far enough into its uses, but that, with respect to immediate effects or appearances, it may be so, just as the hard rind or bitter kernel of a fruit may be an evil to the eater, though in the one is the protection of the fruit, and in the other its continuance. The Purist, therefore, does not mend nature, but receives from nature and from God that which is good

for him; while the Sensualist fills himself "with the husks that the swine did cat."

The three classes may, therefore, be likened to men reaping wheat, of which the Purists take the fine flour, and the Sensualists the chaff and straw, but the Naturalists take all home, and make their cake of the one, and their couch of the other.

§ LVII. For instance. We know more certainly every day that whatever appears to us harmful in the universe has some beneficent or necessary operation; that the storm which destroys a harvest brightens the sunbeams for harvests yet unsown, and that the volcano which buries a city preserves a thousand from destruction. But the evil is not for the time less fearful, because we have learned it to be necessary; and we easily understand the timidity or the tenderness of the spirit which would withdraw itself from the presence of destruction, and create in its imagination a world of which the peace should be unbroken, in which the sky should not darken nor the sea rage, in which the leaf should not change nor the blossom wither. That man is greater, however, who contemplates with an equal mind the alternations of terror and of beauty; who, not rejoicing less beneath the sunny sky, can bear also to watch the bars of twilight narrowing on the horizon, and, not less sensible to the blessing of the peace of nature, can rejoice in the magnificence of the ordinances by which that peace is protected and secured. But separated from both by an immeasurable distance would be the man who delighted in convulsion and disease for their own sake; who found his daily food in the disorder of nature mingled with the suffering of humanity; and watched joyfully at the right hand of the Angel whose appointed work is to destroy as well as to accuse, while the corners of the house of feasting were struck by the wind from the wilderness.

§ LVIII. And far more is this true, when the subject of contemplation is humanity itself. The passions of mankind are partly protective, partly beneficent, like the chaff and grain of the corn; but none without their use, none without nobleness when seen in balanced unity with the rest of the spirit which

they are charged to defend. The passions of which the end is the continuance of the race; the indignation which is to arm it against injustice,¹ or strengthen it to resist wanton injury; and the fear¹ which lies at the root of prudence, reverence, and awe, are all honorable and beautiful, so long as man is regarded in his relations to the existing world. The religious Purist, striving to conceive him withdrawn from those relations, effaces from the countenance the traces of all transitory passion, illumines it with holy hope and love, and seals it with the serenity of heavenly peace; he conceals the forms of the body by the deep-folded garment, or else represents them under severely chastened types, and would rather paint them emaciated by the fast, or pale from the torture, than strengthened by exertion, or flushed by emotion. But the great Naturalist takes the human being in its wholeness, in its mortal as well as its spiritual strength. Capable of sounding and sympathizing with the whole range of its passions, he brings one majestic harmony out of them all; he represents it fearlessly in all its acts and thoughts, in its haste, its anger, its sensuality, and its pride, as well as in its fortitude or faith, but makes it noble in them all; he casts aside the veil from the body, and beholds the mysteries of its form like an angel looking down on an inferior creature: there is nothing which he is reluctant to behold, nothing that he is ashamed to confess; with all that lives, triumphing, falling, or suffering, he claims kindred, either in majesty or in mercy, yet standing, in a sort, afar off, unmoved even in the deepness of his sympathy; for the spirit within him is too thoughtful to be grieved, too brave to be appalled, and too pure to be polluted.

§ LIX. How far beneath these two ranks of men shall we place, in the scale of being, those whose pleasure is only in sin or in suffering; who habitually contemplate humanity in poverty or decrepitude, fury or sensuality; whose works are either temptations to its weakness, or triumphs over its

ruin, and recognize no other subjects for thought or admiration than the subtlety of the robber, the rage of the soldier, or the joy of the Sybarite. It seems strange, when thus definitely stated, that such a school should exist. Yet consider a little what gaps and blanks would disfigure our gallery and chamber walls, in places that we have long approached with reverence, if every picture, every statue, were removed from them, of which the subject was either the vice or the misery of mankind, portrayed without any moral purpose: consider the innumerable groups having reference merely to various forms of passion, low or high, drunken revels and brawls among peasants, gambling or fighting scenes among soldiers, amours and intrigues among every class, brutal battle pieces, banditti subjects, gluts of torture and death in famine, wreck, or slaughter, for the sake merely of the excitement, — that quickening and supplying of the dull spirit that cannot be gained for it but by bathing it in blood, afterward to wither back into stained and stiffened apathy; and then that whole vast false heaven of sensual passion, full of nymphs, satyrs, graces, goddesses, and I know not what, from its high seventh circle in Correggio's Antiope,¹ down to the Greased ballet-dancers and smirking Cupids of the Parisian upholsterer. Sweep away all this, remorselessly, and see how much art we should have left.

§ LX. And yet these are only the grossest manifestations of the tendency of the school. There are subtler, yet not less certain, signs of it in the works of men who stand high in the world's list of sacred painters. I doubt not that the reader was surprised when I named Murillo among the men of this third rank. Yet, go into the Dulwich Gallery, and meditate for a little over that much celebrated picture of the two beggar boys, one eating, lying on the ground, the other standing beside him. We have among our own painters one who cannot indeed be set beside Murillo as a painter of Madonnas, for he is a pure Naturalist, and, never having seen a Ma-

¹ Not selfish fear, caused by want of trust in God, or of resolution in the soul. Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. n, pt. in, sect, i, chap, xiv, § xxvn. (Ruskin.)

¹ Antonio Allegri da Correggio (1494-1534), whose picture of Antiope is an example of the sensual art which Ruskin despised.

donna, does not paint any; but who, as a painter of beggar or peasant boys, may be set beside Murillo, or any one else, — W. Hunt. He loves peasant boys, because he finds them more roughly and picturesquely dressed, and more healthily colored, than others. And he paints all that he sees in them fearlessly; all the health and humor, and freshness and vitality, together with such awkwardness and stupidity, and what else of negative or positive harm there may be in the creature; but yet so that on the whole we love it, and find it perhaps even beautiful, or if not, at least we see that there is capability of good in it, rather than of evil; and all is lighted up by a sunshine and sweet color that makes the smockfrock as precious as cloth of gold. But look at those two ragged and vicious vagrants that Murillo has gathered out of the street. You smile at first, because they are eating so naturally, and their roguery is so complete. But is there anything else than roguery there, or was it well for the painter to give his time to the painting of those repulsive and wicked children? Do you feel moved with any charity towards children as you look at them? Are we the least more likely to take any interest in ragged schools, or to help the next pauper child that comes in our way, because the painter has shown us a cunning beggar feeding greedily? Mark the choice of the act. He might have shown hunger in other ways, and given interest to even this act of eating, by making the face wasted, or the eye wistful. But he did not care to do this. He delighted merely in the disgusting manner of eating, the food filling the cheek; the boy is not hungry, else he would not turn round to talk and grin as he eats.

§ LXI. But observe another point in the lower figure. It lies so that the sole of the foot is turned towards the spectator; not because it would have lain less easily in another attitude, but that the painter may draw, and exhibit, the grey dust engrained in the foot. Do not call this the painting of nature: it is mere delight in foulness. The lesson, if there be any, in the picture, is not one whit the stronger. We all know that a beggar's bare foot cannot be clean; there is

no need to thrust its degradation into the light, as if no human imagination were vigorous enough for its conception.

§ LXII. The position of the Sensualists, in treatment of landscape, is less distinctly marked than in that of the figure, because even the wildest passions of nature are noble: but the inclination is manifested by carelessness in marking generic form in trees and flowers; by their preferring confused and irregular arrangements of foliage or foreground to symmetrical and simple grouping; by their general choice of such picturesqueness as results from decay, disorder, and disease, rather than of that which is consistent with the perfection of the things in which it is found; and by their imperfect rendering of the elements of strength and beauty in all things. I propose to work out this subject fully in the last volume of *Modern Painters*; but I trust that enough has been here said to enable the reader to understand the relations of the three great classes of artists, and therefore also the kinds of morbid condition into which the two higher (for the last has no other than a morbid condition) are liable to fall. For, since the function of the Naturalists is to represent, as far as may be, the whole of nature, and the Purists to represent what is absolutely good for some special purpose or time, it is evident that both are liable to error from shortness of sight, and the last also from weakness of judgment. I say, in the first place, both may err from shortness of sight, from not seeing all that there is in nature; seeing only the outsides of things, or those points of them which bear least on the matter in hand. For instance, a modern continental Naturalist sees the anatomy of a limb thoroughly, but does not see its color against the sky, which latter fact is to a painter far the more important of the two. And because it is always easier to see the surface than the depth of things, the full sight of them requiring the highest powers of penetration, sympathy, and imagination, the world is full of vulgar Naturalists: not Sensualists, observe, not men who delight in evil; but men who never see the deepest good, and who bring discredit on all painting of Nature by the little that they discover in her. And

the Purist, besides being liable to this same short-sightedness, is liable also to fatal errors of judgment; for he may think that good which is not so, and that the highest good which is the least. And thus the world is full of vulgar Purists,¹ who bring discredit on all selection by the silliness of their choice; and this the more, because the very becoming a Purist is commonly indicative of some slight degree of weakness, readiness to be offended, or narrowness of understanding of the ends of things: the greatest men being, in all times of art, Naturalists, without any exception; and the greatest Purists being those who approach nearest to the Naturalists, as Benozzo Gozzoli² and Perugino. Hence there is a tendency in the Naturalists to despise the Purists, and in the Purists to be offended with the Naturalists (not understanding them, and confounding them with the Sensualists); and this is grievously harmful to both.

§ LXIII. Of the various forms of resultant mischief it is not here the place to speak: the reader may already be somewhat wearied with a statement which has led us apparently so far from our immediate subject. But the digression was necessary, in order that I might clearly define the sense in which I use the word Naturalism when I state it to be the third most essential characteristic of Gothic

¹ I reserve for another place the full discussion of this interesting subject, which here would have led me too far; but it must be noted, in passing, that this vulgar Purism, which rejects truth, not because it is vicious, but because it is humble, and consists not in choosing what is good, but in disguising what is rough, extends itself into every species of art. The most definite instance of it is the dressing of characters of peasantry in an opera or ballet scene: and the walls of our exhibitions are full of works of art which "exalt nature" in the same way, not by revealing what is great in the heart, but by smoothing what is coarse in the complexion. There is nothing, I believe, so vulgar, so hopeless, so indicative of an irretrievably base mind, as this species of Purism. Of healthy Purism carried to the utmost endurable length in this direction, exalting the heart first, and the features with it, perhaps the most characteristic instance I can give is Stothard's vignette to "Jorasse," in Rogers's Italy; at least it would be so if it could be seen beside a real group of Swiss girls. The poems of Rogers, compared with those of Crabbe, are admirable instances of the healthiest Purism and healthiest Naturalism in poetry. The first great Naturalists of Christian art were Orcagna and Giotto. (Ruskin.)

² Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-98), a Tuscan painter whose frescoes in the Gampo Santo of Pisa were greatly admired by Ruskin.

architecture. I mean that the Gothic builders belong to the central or greatest rank in *both* the classifications of artists which we have just made; that, considering all artists as either men of design, men of facts, or men of both, the Gothic builders were men of both; and that again, considering all artists as either Purists, Naturalists, or Sensualists, the Gothic builders were Naturalists.

§ LXIV. I say first, that the Gothic builders were of that central class which unites fact with design; but that the part of the work which was more especially their own was the truthfulness. Their power of artistic invention or arrangement was not greater than that of Romanesque and Byzantine workmen: by those workmen they were taught the principles, and from them received their models, of design; but to the ornamental feeling and rich fancy of the Byzantine the Gothic builder added a love of *fact* which is never found in the South. Both Greek and Roman used conventional foliage in their ornament, passing into something that was not foliage at all, knotting itself into strange cup-like buds or clusters, and growing out of lifeless rods instead of stems; the Gothic sculptor received these types, at first, as things that ought to be, just as we have a second time received them; but he could not rest in them. He saw there was not veracity in them, no knowledge, no vitality. Do what he would, he could not help liking the true leaves better; and cautiously, a little at a time, he put more of nature into his work, until at last it was all true, retaining, nevertheless, every valuable character of the original well-disciplined and designed arrangement.

§ LXV. Nor is it only in external and visible subject that the Gothic workman wrought for truth: he is as firm in his rendering of imaginative as of actual truth; that is to say, when an idea would have been by a Roman, or Byzantine, symbolically represented, the Gothic mind realizes it to the utmost. For instance, the purgatorial fire is represented in the mosaic of Torcello¹ (Romanesque) as a red stream, longitudinally striped like a ribbon, descending out of the throne of

¹ The cathedral on an island near Venice.

Christ, and gradually extending itself to envelope the wicked. When we are once informed what this means, it is enough for its purpose; but the Gothic inventor does not leave the sign in need of interpretation. He makes the fire as like real fire as he can; and in the porch of St. Maclou at Rouen the sculptured flames burst out of the Hades gate, and flicker up, in writhing tongues of stone, through the interstices of the niches, as if the church itself were on fire. This is an extreme instance, but it is all the more illustrative of the entire difference in temper and thought between the two schools of art, and of the intense love of veracity which influenced the Gothic design.

§ LXVI. I do not say that this love of veracity is always healthy in its operation. I have above noticed the errors into which it falls from despising design, and there is another kind of error noticeable in the instance just given, in which the love of truth is too hasty, and seizes on a surface truth instead of an inner one. For in representing the Hades fire, it is not the mere *form* of the flame which needs most to be told, but its unquenchableness, its Divine ordainment and limitation, and its inner fierceness, not physical and material, but in being the expression of the wrath of God. And these things are not to be told by imitating the fire that flashes out of a bundle of sticks. If we think over his symbol a little, we shall perhaps find that the Romanesque builder told more truth in that likeness of a blood-red stream, flowing between definite shores, and out of God's throne, and expanding, as if fed by a perpetual current, into the lake wherein the wicked are cast, than the Gothic builder in those torch-flickerings about his niches. But this is not to our immediate purpose; I am not at present to insist upon the faults into which the love of truth was led in the later Gothic times, but on the feeling itself, as a glorious and peculiar characteristic of the Northern builders. For, observe, it is not, even in the above instance, love of truth, but want of thought, which *causes* the fault. The love of truth, as such, is good, but when it is misdirected by thoughtlessness or over-excited by vanity, and either seizes on facts

of small value, or gathers them chiefly that it may boast of its grasp and apprehension, its work may well become dull or offensive. Yet let us not, therefore, blame the inherent love of facts, but the incautiousness of their selection, and impertinence of their statement.

§ LXVII. I said, in the second place, that Gothic work, when referred to the arrangement of all art, as purist, naturalist, or sensualist, was naturalist. This character follows necessarily on its extreme love of truth, prevailing over the sense of beauty, and causing it to take delight in portraiture of every kind, and to express the various characters of the human countenance and form, as it did the varieties of leaves and the ruggedness of branches. And this tendency is both increased and ennobled by the same Christian humility which we saw expressed in the first character of Gothic work, its rudeness. For as that resulted from a humility which confessed the imperfection of the *workman*, so this naturalist portraiture is rendered more faithful by the humility which confesses the imperfection of the *subject*. The Greek sculptor could neither bear to confess his own feebleness, nor to tell the faults of the forms that he portrayed. But the Christian workman, believing that all is finally to work together for good, freely confesses both, and neither seeks to disguise his own roughness of work, nor his subject's roughness of make. Yet this frankness being joined, for the most part, with depth of religious feeling in other directions, and especially with charity, there is sometimes a tendency to Purism in the best Gothic sculpture; so that it frequently reaches great dignity of form and tenderness of expression, yet never so as to lose the veracity of portraiture, wherever portraiture is possible: not exalting its kings into demi-gods, nor its saints into archangels, but giving what kingliness and sanctity was in them, to the full, mixed with due record of their faults; and this in the most part with a great indifference like that of Scripture history, which sets down, with unmoved and unexcusing resoluteness, the virtues and errors of all men of whom it speaks, often leaving the reader

to form his own estimate of them, without an indication of the judgment of the historian. And this veracity is carried out by the Gothic sculptors in the minuteness and generality, as well as the equity, of their delineation: for they do not limit their art to the portraiture of saints and kings, but introduce the most familiar scenes and most simple subjects; filling up the backgrounds of Scripture histories with vivid and curious representations of the commonest incidents of daily life, and availing themselves of every occasion in which, either as a symbol, or an explanation of a scene or time, the things familiar to the eye of the workman could be introduced and made of account. Hence Gothic sculpture and painting are not only full of valuable portraiture of the greatest men, but copious records of all the domestic customs and inferior arts of the ages in which it flourished.¹

§ LXVIII. There is, however, one direction in which the Naturalism of the Gothic workmen is peculiarly manifested; and this direction is even more characteristic of the school than the Naturalism itself; I mean their peculiar fondness for the forms of Vegetation. In rendering the various circumstances of daily life, Egyptian and Ninevite sculpture is as frank and as diffuse as the Gothic. From the highest pomps of state or triumphs of battle, to the most trivial domestic arts and amusements, all is taken advantage of to fill the field of granite with the perpetual interest of a crowded drama; and the early Lombardic and Romanesque sculpture is equally copious in its description of the familiar circumstances of war and the chase. But in all the scenes portrayed by the workmen of these nations, vegetation occurs only as an explanatory accessory; the reed is introduced to mark the course of the river, or the tree to mark the covert of the wild beast, or the ambush of the enemy, but there is no especial interest in the forms of the vege-

¹ The best art either represents the facts of its own day, or, if facts of the past, expresses them with accessories of the time in which the work was done. All good art, representing past events, is therefore full of the most frank anachronism, and always *ought* to be. No painter has any business to be an antiquarian. We do not want his impressions or suppositions respecting things that are past. We want his clear assertions respecting things present. (Ruskin.)

tation strong enough to induce them to make it a subject of separate and accurate study. Again, among the nations who followed the arts of design exclusively, the forms of foliage introduced were meagre and general, and their real intricacy and life were neither admired nor expressed. But to the Gothic workman the living foliage became a subject of intense affection, and he struggled to render all its characters with as much accuracy as was compatible with the laws of his design and the nature of his material, not unfrequently tempted in his enthusiasm to transgress the one and disguise the other.

§ LXIX. There is a peculiar significance in this, indicative both of higher civilization and gentler temperament, than had before been manifested in architecture. Rudeness, and the love of change, which we have insisted upon as the first elements of Gothic, are also elements common to all healthy schools. But here is a softer element mingled with them, peculiar to the Gothic itself. The rudeness or ignorance which would have been painfully exposed in the treatment of the human form, are still not so great as to prevent the successful rendering of the wayside herbage; and the love of change, which becomes morbid and feverish in following the haste of the hunter, and the rage of the combatant, is at once soothed and satisfied as it watches the wandering of the tendril, and the budding of the flower. Nor is this all: the new direction of mental interest marks an infinite change in the means and the habits of life. The nations whose chief support was in the chase, whose chief interest was in the battle, whose chief pleasure was in the banquet, would take small care respecting the shapes of leaves and flowers; and notice little in the forms of the forest trees which sheltered them, except the signs indicative of the wood which would make the toughest lance, the closest roof, or the clearest fire. The affectionate observation of the grace and outward character of vegetation is the sure sign of a more tranquil and gentle existence, sustained by the gifts, and gladdened by the splendor, of the earth. In that careful distinction of species, and richness of delicate and undisturbed organiza-

tion, which characterize the Gothic design, there is the history of rural and thoughtful life, influenced by habitual tenderness, and devoted to subtle inquiry; and every discriminating and delicate touch of the chisel, as it rounds the petal or guides the branch, is a prophecy of the development of the entire body of the natural sciences, beginning with that of medicine, of the recovery of literature, and the establishment of the most necessary principles of domestic wisdom and national peace.

§ LXX. I have before alluded to the strange and vain supposition, that the original conception of Gothic architecture had been derived from vegetation, — from the symmetry of avenues, and the interlacing of branches. It is a supposition which never could have existed for a moment in the mind of any person acquainted with early Gothic; but, however idle as a theory, it is most valuable as a testimony to the character of the perfected style. It is precisely because the reverse of this theory is the fact, because the Gothic did not arise out of, but developed itself into, a resemblance to vegetation, that this resemblance is so instructive as an indication of the temper of the builders. It was no chance suggestion of the form of an arch from the bending of a bough, but a gradual and continual discovery of a beauty in natural forms which could be more and more perfectly transferred into those of stone, that influenced at once the heart of the people, and the form of the edifice. The Gothic architecture arose in massy and mountainous strength, axe-hewn, and iron-bound, block heaved upon block by the monk's enthusiasm and the soldier's force; and cramped and stanchioned into such weight of grisly wall, as might bury the anchorite in darkness, and beat back the utmost storm of battle, suffering but by the same narrow crosslet the passing of the sunbeam, or of the arrow. Gradually, as that monkish enthusiasm became more thoughtful, and as the sound of war became more and more intermittent beyond the gates of the convent or the keep, the stony pillar grew slender and the vaulted roof grew light, till they had wreathed themselves into the semblance of the summer

woods at their fairest, and of the dead field-flowers, long trodden down in blood, sweet monumental statues were set to bloom for ever, beneath the porch of the temple, or the canopy of the tomb.

§ LXXI. Nor is it only as a sign of greater gentleness or refinement of mind, but as a proof of the best possible direction of this refinement, that the tendency of the Gothic to the expression of vegetative life is to be admired. That sentence of Genesis, "I have given thee every green herb for meat," like all the rest of the book, has a profound symbolical as well as a literal meaning. It is not merely the nourishment of the body, but the food of the soul, that is intended. The green herb is, of all nature, that which is most essential to the healthy spiritual life of man. Most of us do not need fine scenery; the precipice and the mountain peak are not intended to be seen by all men, — perhaps their power is greatest over those who are unaccustomed to them. But trees, and fields, and flowers were made for all, and are necessary for all. God has connected the labor which is essential to the bodily sustenance, with the pleasures which are healthiest for the heart; and while He made the ground stubborn, He made its herbage fragrant, and its blossoms fair. The proudest architecture that man can build has no higher honor than to bear the image and recall the memory of that grass of the field which is, at once, the type and the support of his existence; the goodly building is then most glorious when it is sculptured into the likeness of the leaves of Paradise; and the great Gothic spirit, as we showed it to be noble in its disquietude, is also noble in its hold of nature; it is, indeed, like the dove of Noah, in that she found no rest upon the face of the waters, — but like her in this also, "Lo, IN HER MOUTH WAS AN OLIVE BRANCH, PLUCKED OFF."

§ LXXII. The fourth essential element of the Gothic mind was above stated to be the sense of the GROTESQUE; but I shall defer the endeavor to define this most curious and subtle character until we have occasion to examine one of the divisions of the Renaissance schools, which was morbidly influenced by it (vol. in, chap. m). It is the less

necessary to insist upon it here, because every reader familiar with Gothic architecture must understand what I mean, and will, I believe, have no hesitation in admitting that the tendency to delight in fantastic and ludicrous, as well as in sublime, images, is a universal instinct of the Gothic imagination.

§ LXXIII. The fifth element above named was RIGIDITY; and this character I must endeavor carefully to define, for neither the word I have used, nor any other that I can think of, will express it accurately. For I mean, not merely stable, but *active* rigidity; the peculiar energy which gives tension to movement, and stiffness to resistance, which makes the fiercest lightning forked rather than curved, and the stoutest oak-branch angular rather than bending, and is as much seen in the quivering of the lance as in the glittering of the icicle.

§ LXXIV. I have before had occasion (vol. i, chap, xm, § vn) to note some manifestations of this energy or fixedness; but it must be still more attentively considered here, as it shows itself throughout the whole structure and decoration of Gothic work. Egyptian and Greek buildings stand, for the most part, by their own weight and mass, one stone passively incumbent on another: but in the Gothic vaults and traceries there is a stiffness analogous to that of the bones of a limb, or fibres of a tree; an elastic tension and communication of force from part to part, and also a studious expression of this throughout every visible line of the building. And, in like manner, the Greek and Egyptian ornament is either mere surface engraving, as if the face of the wall had been stamped with a seal, or its lines are flowing, lithe, and luxuriant; in either case, there is no expression of energy in the framework of the ornament itself. But the Gothic ornament stands out in prickly independence, and frosty fortitude, jutting into crockets, and freezing into pinnacles; here starting up into a monster, there germinating into a blossom; anon knitting itself into a branch, alternately thorny, bossy, and bristly, or writhed into every form of nervous entanglement; but, even when most graceful, never for an instant languid,

always quickset; erring, if at all, ever on the side of brusquerie.

§ LXXV. The feelings or habits in the workman which give rise to this character in the work, are more complicated and various than those indicated by any other sculptural expression hitherto named. There is, first, the habit of hard and rapid working; the industry of the tribes of the North, quickened by the coldness of the climate, and giving an expression of sharp energy to all they do (as above noted, vol. i, chap, xm, § vn), as opposed to the languor of the Southern tribes, however much of fire there may be in the heart of that languor, for lava itself may flow languidly. There is also the habit of finding enjoyment in the signs of cold, which is never found, I believe, in the inhabitants of countries south of the Alps. Cold is to them an unredeemed evil, to be suffered, and forgotten as soon as may be; but the long winter of the North forces the Goth (I mean the Englishman, Frenchman, Dane, or German), if he would lead a happy life at all, to find sources of happiness in foul weather as well as fair, and to rejoice in the leafless as well as in the shady forest. And this we do with all our hearts, finding perhaps nearly as much contentment by the Christmas fire as in the summer sunshine, and gaining health and strength on the ice-fields of winter, as well as among the meadows of spring. So that there is nothing adverse or painful to our feelings in the cramped and stiffened structure of vegetation checked by cold; and instead of seeking, like the Southern sculptor, to express only the softness of leafage nourished in all tenderness, and tempted into all luxuriance by warm winds and glowing rays, we find pleasure in dwelling upon the crabbed, perverse, and morose animation of plants that have known little kindness from earth or heaven, but, season after season, have had their best efforts palsied by frost, their brightest buds buried under snow, and their goodliest limbs lopped by tempest.

§ LXXVI. There are many subtle sympathies and affections which join to confirm the Gothic mind in this peculiar choice of subject; and when we add to the influence of these, the necessities consequent upon the

employment of a rougher material, compelling the workman to seek for vigor of effect, rather than refinement of texture or accuracy of form, we have direct and manifest causes for much of the difference between the Northern and Southern cast of conception: but there are indirect causes holding a far more important place in the Gothic heart, though less immediate in their influence on design. Strength of will, independence of character, resoluteness of purpose, impatience of undue control, and that general tendency to set the individual reason against authority, and the individual deed against destiny, which, in the Northern tribes, has opposed itself throughout all ages to the languid submission, in the Southern, of thought to tradition, and purpose to fatality, are all more or less traceable in the rigid lines, vigorous and various masses, and daringly projecting and independent structure of the Northern Gothic ornament: while the opposite feelings are in like manner legible in the graceful and softly guided waves and wreathed bands, in which Southern decoration is constantly disposed, in its tendency to lose its independence, and fuse itself into the surface of the masses upon which it is traced, and in the expression seen so often, in the arrangement of those masses themselves, of an abandonment of their strength to an inevitable necessity, or a listless repose.

§ LXXVII. There is virtue in the measure, and error in the excess, of both these characters of mind, and in both of the styles which they have created, the best architecture, and the best temper, are those which unite them both; and this fifth impulse of the Gothic heart is therefore that which needs most caution in its indulgence. It is more definitely Gothic than any other, but the best Gothic building is not that which is *most* Gothic: it can hardly be too frank in its confession of rudeness, hardly too rich in its changefulness, hardly too faithful in its naturalism; but it may go too far in its rigidity, and, like the great Puritan spirit in its extreme, lose itself either in frivolity of division, or perversity of purpose.¹ It actu-

ally did so in its later times; but it is gladdening to remember that in its utmost nobleness, the very temper which has been thought most adverse to it, the Protestant spirit of self-dependence and inquiry, was expressed in its every line. Faith and aspiration there were, in every Christian ecclesiastical building, from the first century to the fifteenth; but the moral habits to which England in this age owes the kind of greatness that she has, — the habits of philosophical investigation, of accurate thought, of domestic seclusion and independence, of stern self-reliance, and sincere upright searching into religious truth, — were only traceable in the features which were the distinctive creation of the Gothic schools, in the veined foliage, and thorny fretwork, and shadowy niche, and buttressed pier, and fearless height of subtle pinnacle and crested tower, sent like an "unperplexed question up to Heaven."¹

§ LXXVIII. Last, because the least essential, of the constituent elements of this noble school, was placed that of REDUNDANCE, — the uncalculating bestowal of the wealth of its labor. There is, indeed, much Gothic, and that of the best period, in which this element is hardly traceable, and which depends for its effect almost exclusively on loveliness of simple design and grace of uninvolved proportion — still, in the most characteristic buildings, a certain portion of their effect depends upon accumulation of ornament; and many of those which have most influence on the minds of men, have attained it by means of this attribute alone. And although, by careful study of the school, it is possible to arrive at a condition of taste which shall be better contented by a few perfect lines than by a whole facade covered with fretwork, the building which only satisfies such a taste is not to be considered the

thian. At length they arrived at the conclusion that "they who owned (or allowed) such names as Monday, Tuesday, January, February, and so forth, served themselves heirs to the same if not greater punishment than had been denounced against the idolaters of old." (Ruskin.)

¹ See the beautiful description of Florence in Elizabeth Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*, which is not only a noble poem, but the only book I have seen which, favoring the Liberal cause in Italy, gives a just account of the incapacities of the modern Italian. (Ruskin.)

¹ See the account of the meeting at Talla Linns, in 1682, given in the fourth chapter of the *Heart of Midlothian*.

best. For the very first requirement of Gothic architecture being, as we saw above, that it shall both admit the aid, and appeal to the admiration, of the rudest as well as the most refined minds, the richness of the work is, paradoxical as the statement may appear, a part of its humility. No architecture is so haughty as that which is simple; which refuses to address the eye, except in a few clear and forceful lines; which implies, in offering so little to our regards, that all it has offered is perfect; and disdains, either by the complexity or the attractiveness of its features, to embarrass our investigation, or betray us into delight. That humility, which is the very life of the Gothic school, is shown not only in the imperfection, but in the accumulation, of ornament. The inferior rank of the workman is often shown as much in the richness, as the roughness, of his work; and if the co-operation of every hand, and the sympathy of every heart, are to be received, we must be content to allow the redundancy which disguises the failure of the feeble, and wins the regard of the inattentive. There are, however, far nobler interests mingling, in the Gothic heart, with the rude love of decorative accumulation: a magnificent enthusiasm, which feels as if it never could do enough to reach the fulness of its ideal; an unselfishness of sacrifice, which would rather cast fruitless labor before the altar than stand idle in the market; and, finally, a profound sympathy with the fulness and wealth of the material universe, rising out of that Naturalism whose operation we have already endeavored to define. The sculptor who sought for his models among the forest leaves, could not but quickly and deeply feel that complexity need not involve the loss of grace, nor richness that of repose; and every hour which he spent in the study of the minute and various work of Nature, made him feel more forcibly the barrenness of what was best in that of man: nor is it to be wondered at, that, seeing her perfect and exquisite creations poured forth in a profusion which conception could not grasp nor calculation sum, he should think that it ill became him to be niggardly of his own rude craftsmanship; and where he

saw throughout the universe a faultless beauty lavished on measureless spaces of brodered field and blooming mountain, to grudge his poor and imperfect labor to the few stones that he had raised one upon another, for habitation or memorial. The years of his life passed away before his task was accomplished; but generation succeeded generation with unwearied enthusiasm, and the cathedral front was at last lost in the tapestry of its traceries, like a rock among the thickets and herbage of spring.¹

The Roots of Honor

From *Unto This Last*

1860

In 1860 Ruskin began a series of papers on political economy in the *Cornhill Magazine*, then edited by W. M. Thackeray, which were republished in *Harper's Magazine*. He undertook to combat the views of the orthodox economists, such as John Stuart Mill, in regard to the law of supply and demand, wages, capital, and especially the nature of wealth, the measure of which Ruskin insisted should be real and intrinsic value, and not merely value in exchange. He later included in his protest the taking of rent and interest. The series ceased after four numbers, in consequence of the outcry from readers of the magazine. The articles appeared in book form in 1862. *Unto This Last* is the development into political economy of Ruskin's social views, which began to take form in the chapter on "The Nature of Gothic." He wrote of these essays in his preface: "I believe them to be the best, that is to say, the truest, rightest-worded, and most serviceable things I have ever written."

i. Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious — certainly the least creditable — is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection.

Of course, as in the instances of alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, and other such popular

¹ The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the outward forms in which the moral or imaginative elements which composed the inner spirit of Gothic architecture are exhibited.

creeds, political economy has a plausible idea at the root of it. "The social affections," says the economist, "are accidental and disturbing elements in human nature; but avarice and the desire of progress are constant elements. Let us eliminate the inconstants, and, considering the human being merely as a covetous machine, examine by what laws of labor, purchase, and sale, the greatest accumulative result in wealth is attainable. Those laws once determined, it will be for each individual afterwards to introduce as much of the disturbing affectionate element as he chooses, and to determine for himself the result on the new conditions supposed."

ii. This would be a perfectly logical and successful method of analysis, if the accidentals afterwards to be introduced were of the same nature as the powers first examined. Supposing a body in motion to be influenced by constant and inconstant forces, it is usually the simplest way of examining its course to trace it first under the persistent conditions, and afterwards introduce the causes of variation. But the disturbing elements in the social problem are not of the same nature as the constant ones; they alter the essence of the creature under examination the moment they are added; they operate, not mathematically, but chemically, introducing conditions which render all our previous knowledge unavailable. We made learned experiments upon pure nitrogen, and have convinced ourselves that it is a very manageable gas: but behold! the thing which we have practically to deal with is its chloride; and this, the moment we touch it on our established principles, sends us and our apparatus through the ceiling.

in. Observe, I neither impugn nor doubt the conclusions of the science, if its terms are accepted. I am simply uninterested in them, as I should be in those of a science of gymnastics which assumed that men had no skeletons. It might be shown, on that supposition, that it would be advantageous to roll the students up into pellets, flatten them into cakes, or stretch them into cables; and that when these results were effected, the reinsertion of the skeleton would be attended

with various inconveniences to their constitution. The reasoning might be admirable, the conclusions true, and the science deficient only in applicability. Modern political economy stands on a precisely similar basis. Assuming, not that the human being has no skeleton, but that it is all skeleton, it founds an ossifiant theory of progress on this negation of a soul; and having shown the utmost that may be made of bones, and constructed a number of interesting geometrical figures with death's-heads and humeri, successfully proves the inconvenience of the reappearance of a soul among these corpuscular structures. I do not deny the truth of this theory: I simply deny its applicability to the present phase of the world.

iv. This inapplicability has been curiously manifested during the embarrassment caused by the late strikes of our workmen.¹ Here occurs one of the simplest cases, in a pertinent and positive form, of the first vital problem which political economy has to deal with (the relation between employer and employed); and at a severe crisis, when lives in multitudes, and wealth in masses, are at stake, the political economists are helpless — practically mute; no demonstrable solution of the difficulty can be given by them, such as may convince or calm the opposing parties. Obstinate the masters take one view of the matter; obstinate the operatives another; and no political science can set them at one.

v. It would be strange if it could, it being not by "science" of any kind that men were ever intended to be set at one. Disputant after disputant vainly strives to show that the interests of the masters are, or are not, antagonistic to those of the men: none of the pleaders ever seeming to remember that it does not absolutely or always follow that the persons must be antagonistic because their interests are. If there is only a crust of bread in the house, and mother and children are starving, their interests are not the same. If the mother eats it, the children want it; if the children eat it, the mother must go hungry to her work. Yet it does not necessarily follow that there will be "antagonism"

¹ The reference is to the builders' strike in the autumn of 1850.

between them, that they will fight for the crust, and that the mother, being strongest, will get it, and eat it. Neither, in any other case, whatever the relations of the persons may be, can it be assumed for certain that, because their interests are diverse, they must necessarily regard each other with hostility, and use violence or cunning to obtain the advantage.

vi. Even if this were so, and it were as just as it is convenient to consider men as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine, the logical conditions of the question are still indeterminable. It can never be shown generally either that the interests of master and laborer are alike, or that they are opposed; for, according to circumstances, they may be either. It is, indeed, always the interest of both that the work should be rightly done, and a just price obtained for it; but, in the division of profits, the gain of the one may or may not be the loss of the other. It is not the master's interest to pay wages so low as to leave the men sickly and depressed, nor the workman's interest to be paid high wages if the smallness of the master's profit hinders him from enlarging his business, or conducting it in a safe and liberal way. A stoker ought not to desire high pay if the company is too poor to keep the engine-wheels in repair.

vii. And the varieties of circumstance which influence these reciprocal interests are so endless, that all endeavor to deduce rules of action from balance of expediency is in vain. And it is meant to be in vain, For no human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice. He has therefore rendered all endeavors to determine expediency futile for evermore. No man ever knew, or can know, what will be the ultimate result to himself, or to others, of any given line of conduct. But every man may know, and most of us do know, what is a just and unjust act. And all of us may know also, that the consequences of justice will be ultimately the best possible, both to others and ourselves, though we can neither say what is best, nor how it is likely to come to pass.

I have said balances of justice, meaning, in the term justice, to include affection, — such affection as one man owes to another. All right relations between master and operative, and all their best interests, ultimately depend on these.

vin. We shall find the best and simplest illustration of the relations of master and operative in the position of domestic servants.

We will suppose that the master of a household desires only to get as much work out of his servants as he can, at the rate of wages he gives. He never allows them to be idle; feeds them as poorly and lodges them as ill as they will endure, and in all things pushes his requirements to the exact point beyond which he cannot go without forcing the servant to leave him. In doing this, there is no violation on his part of what is commonly called "justice." He agrees with the domestic for his whole time and service, and takes them; — the limits of hardship in treatment being fixed by the practice of other masters in his neighborhood; that is to say, by the current rate of wages for domestic labor. If the servant can get a better place, he is free to take one, and the master can only tell what is the real market value of his labor, by requiring as much as he will give.

This is the politico-economical view of the case, according to the doctors of that science, who assert that by this procedure the greatest average of work will be obtained from the servant, and therefore, the greatest benefit to the community, and through the community, by reversion, to the servant himself.

That, however, is not so. It would be so if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economist's equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of his results. The largest quantity of work will not be done by this curious engine for pay, or under pressure, or by help of any kind of fuel which may be supplied by the chaldron. It will be done only when the motive force, that is to say,

the will or spirit of the creature, is brought to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel; namely, by the affections.

ix. It may indeed happen, and does happen often, that if the master is a man of sense and energy, a large quantity of material work may be done under mechanical pressure, enforced by strong will and guided by wise method; also it may happen, and does happen often, that if the master is indolent and weak (however good-natured), a very small quantity of work, and that bad, may be produced by the servant's undirected strength, and contemptuous gratitude. But the universal law of the matter is that, assuming any given quantity of energy and sense in master and servant, the greatest material result obtainable by them will be, not through antagonism to each other, but through affection for each other; and that if the master, instead of endeavoring to get as much work as possible from the servant, seeks rather to render his appointed and necessary work beneficial to him, and to forward his interests in all just and wholesome ways, the real amount of work ultimately done, or of good rendered, by the person so cared for, will indeed be the greatest possible.

Observe, I say, "of good rendered," for a servant's work is not necessarily or always the best thing he can give his master. But good of all kinds, whether in material service, in protective watchfulness of his master's interest and credit, or in joyful readiness to seize unexpected and irregular occasions of help.

Nor is this one whit less generally true because indulgence will be frequently abused, and kindness met with ingratitude. For the servant who, gently treated, is ungrateful, treated ungenerally, will be revengeful; and the man who is dishonest to a liberal master will be injurious to an unjust one.

x. In any case, and with any person, this unselfish treatment will produce the most effective return. Observe, I am here considering the affections wholly as a motive power; not at all as things in themselves desirable or noble, or in any other way abstractedly good. I look at them simply as

an anomalous force, rendering every one of the ordinary political economist's calculations nugatory; while, even if he desired to introduce this new element into his estimates, he has no power of dealing with it; for the affections only become a true motive power when they ignore every other motive and condition of political economy. Treat the servant kindly, with the idea of turning his gratitude to account, and you will get, as you deserve, no gratitude, nor any value for your kindness; but treat him kindly without any economical purpose, and all economical purposes will be answered; in this, as in all other matters, whosoever will save his life shall lose it, whoso loses it shall find it.¹

xi. The next clearest and simplest example of relation between master and operative is that which exists between the commander of a regiment and his men.

Supposing the officer only desires to apply the rules of discipline so as, with least trouble to himself, to make the regiment most effective, he will not be able, by any rules, or

¹ The difference between the two modes of treatment, and between their effective material results, may be seen very accurately by a comparison of the relations of Esther and Charlie in *Bleak House*, with those of Miss Brass and the Marchioness in *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

The essential value and truth of Dickens's writings have been unwisely lost sight of by many thoughtful persons, merely because he presents his truth with some color of caricature. Unwisely, because Dickens's caricature, though often gross, is never mistaken. Allowing for his manner of telling them, the things he tells us are always true. I wish that he could think it right to limit his brilliant exaggeration to works written only for public amusement; and when he takes up a subject of high national importance, such as that which he handled in *Hard Time*?, that he would use severer and more accurate analysis. The usefulness of that work (to my mind, in several respects, the greatest he has written) is with many persons seriously diminished because Mr. Bounderby is a dramatic monster, instead of a characteristic example of a worldly master; and Stephen Blackpool a dramatic perfection, instead of a characteristic example of an honest workman. But let us not lose the use of Dickens's wit and insight, because he chooses to speak in a circle of stage fire. He is entirely right in his main drift and purpose in every book he has written; and all of them, but especially *Hard Times*, should be studied with close and earnest care by persons interested in social questions. They will find much that is partial, and, because partial, apparently unjust; but if they examine all the evidence on the other side, which Dickens seems to overlook, it will appear, after all their trouble, that his view was the finally right one, grossly and sharply told. (Ruskin.)

administration of rules, on this selfish principle, to develop the full strength of his subordinates. If a man of sense and firmness, he may, as in the former instance, produce a better result than would be obtained by the irregular kindness of a weak officer; but let the sense and firmness be the same in both cases, and assuredly the officer who has the most direct personal relations with his men, the most care for their interests, and the most value for their lives, will develop their effective strength, through their affection for his own person, and trust in his character, to a degree wholly unattainable by other means. The law applies still more stringently as the numbers concerned are larger; a charge may often be successful, though the men dislike their officers; a battle has rarely been won, unless they loved their general.

xii. Passing from these simple examples to the more complicated relations existing between a manufacturer and his workmen, we are met first by certain curious difficulties, resulting, apparently, from a harder and colder state of moral elements. It is easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection existing among soldiers for the colonel. Not so easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection among cotton-spinners for the proprietor of the mill. A body of men associated for purposes of robbery (as a Highland clan in ancient times) shall be animated by perfect affection, and every member of it be ready to lay down his life for the life of his chief. But a band of men associated for purposes of legal production and accumulation is usually animated, it appears, by no such emotions, and none of them are in anywise willing to give his life for the life of his chief. Not only are we met by this apparent anomaly, in moral matters, but by others connected with it, in administration of system. For a servant or a soldier is engaged at a definite rate of wages, for a definite period; but a workman at a rate of wages variable according to the demand for labor, and with the risk of being at any time thrown out of his situation by chances of trade. Now, as, under these contingencies, no action of the affections can take place, but only an explosive action of $\wedge$ /V affections, two points offer themselves for consideration in the matter.

The first — How far the rate of wages may be so regulated as not to vary with the demand for labor.

The second — How far it is possible that bodies of workmen may be engaged and maintained at such fixed rate of wages (whatever the state of trade may be), without enlarging or diminishing their number, so as to give them permanent interest in the establishment with which they are connected, like that of the domestic servants in an old family, or an *esprit de corps*, like that of the soldiers in a crack regiment.

xiii. The first question is, I say, how far it may be possible to fix the rate of wages irrespectively of the demand for labor.

Perhaps one of the most curious facts in the history of human error is the denial by the common political economist of the possibility of thus regulating wages; while, for all the important, and much of the unimportant, labor on the earth, wages are already so regulated.

We do not sell our prime-ministership by Dutch auction; nor, on the decease of a bishop, whatever may be the general advantages of simony, do we (yet) offer his diocese to the clergyman who will take the episcopacy at the lowest contract. We (with exquisite sagacity of political economy!) do indeed sell commissions, but not openly, generalships: sick, we do not inquire for a physician who takes less than a guinea; litigious, we never think of reducing six-and-eightpence to four-and-sixpence; caught in a shower, we do not canvass the cabmen, to find one who values his driving at less than sixpence a mile.

It is true that in all these cases there is, and in every conceivable case there must be, ultimate reference to the presumed difficulty of the work, or number of candidates for the office. If it were thought that the labor necessary to make a good physician would be gone through by a sufficient number of students with the prospect of only half-guinea fees, public consent would soon withdraw the unnecessary half-guinea. In this ultimate sense, the price of labor is indeed always regulated by the demand for it; but so far as the practical and immediate ad-

ministration of the matter is regarded, the best labor always has been, and is, as *all* labor ought to be, paid by an invariable standard.

xiv. "What!" the reader perhaps answers 5
amazedly: "pay good and bad workmen alike?"

Certainly. The difference between one prelate's sermons and his successor's, — or between one physician's opinion and another's, — is far greater, as respects the 10
qualities of mind involved, and far more important in result to you personally, than the difference between good and bad laying of bricks (though that is greater than most 15
people suppose). Yet you pay with equal fee, contentedly, the good and bad workmen upon your soul, and the good and bad workmen upon your body; much more may you pay, contentedly, with equal fees, the good 20
and bad workmen upon your house.

"Nay, but I choose my physician and (?) my clergyman, thus indicating my sense of the quality of their work." By all means, also, choose your bricklayer; that is the 25
proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labor is, that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. 30
The false, unnatural, and destructive system is when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum. 35

xv. This equality of wages, then, being the first object towards which we have to discover the directest available road; the second is, as above stated, that of maintaining constant numbers of workmen in employment, 40
whatever may be the accidental demand for the article they produce.

I believe the sudden and extensive inequalities of demand which necessarily arise in the mercantile operations of an active 45
nation, constitute the only essential difficulty which has to be overcome in a just organization of labor. The subject opens into too many branches to admit of being investigated in a paper of this kind; but the following 50
general facts bearing on it may be noted.

The wages which enable any workman to live are necessarily higher, if his work is liable to intermission, than if it is assured and continuous; and however severe the struggle for work may become, the general law will always hold, that men must get more daily pay if, on the average, they can only calculate on work three days a week, than they would require if they were sure of work six 10
days a week. Supposing that a man cannot live on less than a shilling a day, his seven shillings he must get, either for three days' violent work, or six days' deliberate work. The tendency of all modern mercantile operations is to throw both wages and trade into the form of a lottery, and to make the workman's 15
pay depend on intermittent exertion, and the principal's profit on dexterously used chance.

xvi. In what partial degree, I repeat, this may be necessary, in consequence of the activities of modern trade, I do not here investigate; contenting myself with the fact, that in its fatallest aspects it is assuredly unnecessary, and results merely from love of 25
gambling on the part of the masters, and from ignorance and sensuality in the men. The masters cannot bear to let any opportunity of gain escape them, and frantically rush at every gap and breach in the walls of Fortune, raging to be rich, and affronting, with impatient covetousness, every risk of ruin; while the men prefer three days of violent labor, and three days of drunkenness, to six days of moderate work and wise rest. 35
There is no way in which a principal, who really desires to help his workmen, may do it more effectually than by checking these disorderly habits both in himself and them; keeping his own business operations on a scale which will enable him to pursue them securely, not yielding to temptations of precarious gain; and, at the same time, leading his workmen into regular habits of labor and life, either by inducing them rather to take 45
low wages in the form of a fixed salary, than high wages, subject to the chance of their being thrown out of work, or, if this be impossible, by discouraging the system of violent exertion for nominally high day wages, and leading the men to take lower pay for more regular labor.

In effecting any radical changes of this kind, doubtless there would be great inconvenience and loss incurred by all the originators of movement. That which can be done with perfect convenience and without loss, is not always the thing that most needs to be done, or which we are most imperatively required to do.

xvn. I have already alluded to the difference hitherto existing between regiments of men associated for purposes of violence, and for purposes of manufacture; in that the former appear capable of self-sacrifice — the latter, not; which singular fact is the real reason of the general lowness of estimate in which the profession of commerce is held, as compared with that of arms. Philosophically, it does not, at first sight, appear reasonable (many writers have endeavored to prove it unreasonable) that a peaceable and rational person, whose trade is buying and selling, should be held in less honor than an unpeaceable and often irrational person, whose trade is slaying. Nevertheless, the consent of mankind has always, in spite of the philosophers, given precedence to the soldier.

And this is right.

For the soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own meaning, the world honors it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected braves more than merchants: the reason it honors the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be — fond of pleasure or of adventure — all kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determine[^] the choice of his profession, and may affect (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it, but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact — of which we are well assured — that, put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that this choice may be put to him at any moment, and has beforehand taken his part — virtually takes such part continually — does, in reality, die daily.

xvin. Not less is the respect we pay to the

lawyer and physician, founded ultimately on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the learning or acuteness of a great lawyer, our chief respect for him depends on our belief that, set in a judge's seat, he will strive to judge justly, come of it what may. Could we suppose that he would take bribes, and use his acuteness and legal knowledge to give plausibility to iniquitous decisions, no degree of intellect would win for him our respect. Nothing will win it, short of our tacit conviction, that in all important acts of his life justice is first with him; his own interest, second.

In the case of a physician, the ground of the honor we render him is clearer still. Whatever his science, we should shrink from him in horror if we found him regard his patients merely as subjects to experiment upon; much more, if we found that, receiving bribes from persons interested in their deaths, he was using his best skill to give poison in the mask of medicine.

Finally, the principle holds with utmost clearness as it respects clergymen. No goodness of disposition will excuse want of science in a physician or of shrewdness in an advocate; but a clergyman, even though his power of intellect be small, is respected on the presumed ground of his unselfishness and serviceableness.

xix. Now there can be no question but that the tact, foresight, decision, and other mental powers, required for the successful management of a large mercantile concern, if not such as could be compared with those of a great lawyer, general, or divine, would at least match the general conditions of mind required in the subordinate officers of a ship, or of a regiment, or in the curate of a country parish. If, therefore, all the efficient members of the so-called liberal professions are still, somehow, in public estimate of honor, preferred before the head of a commercial firm, the reason must lie deeper than in the measurement of their several powers of mind.

And the essential reason for such preference will be found to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community; but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first

object in all his dealings must be (the public believe) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbor (or customer) as possible. Enforcing this upon him, by political statute, as the necessary principle of his action; recommending it to him on all occasions, and themselves reciprocally adopting it; proclaiming vociferously, for law of the universe, that a buyer's function is to cheapen, and a seller's to cheat, — the public, nevertheless, involuntarily condemn the man of commerce for his compliance with their own statement, and stamp him for ever as belonging to an inferior grade of human personality.

xx. This they will find, eventually, they must give up doing. They must not cease to condemn selfishness; but they will have to discover a kind of commerce which is not exclusively selfish. Or, rather, they will have to discover that there never was, or can be, any other kind of commerce; that this which they have called commerce was not commerce at all, but cozening; and that a true merchant differs as much from a merchant according to laws of modern political economy, as the hero of the *Excursion* from Autolycus. They will find that commerce is an occupation which gentlemen will every day see more need to engage in, rather than in the businesses of talking to men, or slaying them: that, in true commerce, as in true preaching, or true fighting, it is necessary to admit the idea of occasional voluntary loss; — that sixpences have to be lost, as well as lives, under a sense of duty; that the market may have its martyrdoms as well as the pulpit; and trade its heroisms, as well as war.

May have — in the final issue, must have — and only has not had yet, because men of heroic temper have always been misguided in their youth into other fields, not recognizing what is in our days, perhaps, the most important of all fields; so that, while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one.

xxi. The fact is, that people never have had clearly explained to them the true func-

tions of a merchant with respect to other people. I should like the reader to be very clear about this.

Five great intellectual professions, relating to daily necessities of life, have hitherto existed — three exist necessarily, in every civilized nation:

The Soldier's profession is to *defend* it.

The Pastor's, to *teach* it.

The Physician's, to *keep it in health*.

The Lawyer's, to *enforce justice* in it.

The Merchant's, to *provide* for it.

And the duty of all these men is, on due occasion, to *die* for it.

"On due occasion," namely:

The Soldier, rather than leave his post in battle.

The Physician, rather than leave his post in plague.

The Pastor, rather than teach Falsehood.

The Lawyer, rather than countenance Injustice.

The Merchant — What is *his* "due occasion" of death?

xxn. It is the main question for the merchant, as for all of us. For, truly, the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live.

Observe, the merchant's function (or manufacturer's, for in the broad sense in which it is here used the word must be understood to include both) is to provide for the nation. It is no more his function to get profit for himself out of that provision than it is a clergyman's function to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object, of his life, if he be a true clergyman, any more than his fee (or *honorarium*) is the object of life to a true physician. Neither is his fee the object of life to a true merchant. All three, if true men, have a work to be done irrespective of fee — to be done even at any cost, or for quite the contrary of fee; the pastor's function being to teach, the physician's to heal, and the merchant's, as I have said, to provide. That is to say, he has to understand to their very root the qualities of the thing he deals in, and the means of obtaining or producing it; and he has to apply all his sagacity and energy to the producing or obtaining it in

perfect state, and distributing it at the cheapest possible price where it is most needed.

And because the production or obtaining of any commodity involves necessarily the agency of many lives and hands, the merchant becomes in the course of his business the master and governor of large masses of men in a more direct, though less confessed way, than a military officer or pastor; so that on him falls, in great part, the responsibility for the kind of life they lead: and it becomes his duty, not only to be always considering how to produce what he sells in the purest and cheapest forms, but how to make the various employments involved in the production, or transference of it, most beneficial to the men employed.

xxm. And as into these two functions, requiring for their right exercise the highest intelligence, as well as patience, kindness, and tact, the merchant is bound to put all his energy, so for their just discharge he is bound, as soldier or physician is bound, to give up, if need be, his life, in such way as it may be demanded of him. Two main points he has in his providing function to maintain: first, his engagements (faithfulness to engagements being the real root of all possibilities in commerce); and, secondly, the perfectness and purity of the thing provided; so that, rather than fail in any engagement, or consent to any deterioration, adulteration, or unjust and exorbitant price of that which he provides, he is bound to meet fearlessly any form of distress, poverty, or labor, which may, through maintenance of these points, come upon him.

xxiv. Again: in his office as governor of the men employed by him, the merchant or manufacturer is invested with a distinctly paternal authority and responsibility. In most cases, a youth entering a commercial establishment is withdrawn altogether from home influence; his master must become his father, else he has, for practical and constant help, no father at hand: in all cases the master's authority, together with the general tone and atmosphere of his business, and the character of the men with whom the youth

is compelled in the course of it to associate, have more immediate and pressing weight than the home influence, and will usually neutralize it either for good or evil; so that the only means which the master has of doing justice to the men employed by him is to ask himself sternly whether he is dealing with such subordinate as he would with his own son, if compelled by circumstances to take such a position.

Supposing the captain of a frigate saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of a common sailor; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of the men under him. So, also, supposing the master of a manufactory saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of an ordinary workman; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of his men. This is the only effective, true, or practical RULE which can be given on this point of political economy.

And as the captain of a ship is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of wreck, and to share his last crust with the sailors in case of famine, so the manufacturer, in any commercial crisis or distress, is bound to take the suffering of it with his men, and even to take more of it for himself than he allows his men to feel; as a father would in a famine, shipwreck, or battle, sacrifice himself for his son.

xxv. All which sounds very strange: the only real strangeness in the matter being, nevertheless, that it should so sound. For all this is true, and that not partially nor theoretically, but everlastingly and practically: all other doctrine than this respecting matters political being false in premises, absurd in deduction, and impossible in practice, consistently with any progressive state of national life; all the life which we now possess as a nation showing itself in the resolute denial and scorn, by a few strong minds and faithful hearts, of the economic principles taught to our multitudes, which principles, so far as accepted, lead straight to national destruction.

PROM *Fors Clavigera*

1871

In 1871 Ruskin began a series of letters under this title, which he explains as *Fors*, that is, Fate, Force, or Fortune bearing the *Clavis*, that is, a club, a key, or a nail, which stand for power, patience, law. In Letter V he expounds his plan for a working Utopia within the realm of Queen Victoria, to be called St. George's Guild. This may be regarded as an effort to put into practice the teaching of Carlyle in regard to work, sacrifice, and obedience. The *Fors Clavigera* papers continued to appear at intervals to the number of ninety-six. They contain careful accounts of the expenses of the Guild, which Ruskin met in large part out of his own fortune. They are the most characteristic expression of Ruskin's views on a wide range of subjects, all of them in harmony with the principle of the real and intrinsic, as opposed to a scale of relative and conventional values.

LETTER 5

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of singing of birds is come.
Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come."¹

DENMARK HILL, 1st May, 1871

MY FRIENDS:

i. It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were likely little to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words, — the saddest of them, perhaps, too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are a part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass, — the flowers never appear on the earth; — that for you no bird may ever sing; — for you no perfect Love arise and fulfil your life in peace.

"And why not for us as for others?" Will you answer me so and take my ear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult; — nor am I happier than you. For me the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you that

you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

ii. Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labor, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonor all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honor of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country, and many an age, women have been compelled to labor for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband." Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labor of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labor for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honor to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race since they grew to be male and female out of starfish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from by natural selection, — according to modern science.

in. That modern science, also, economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of

¹ Song of Solomon, ii, 11-13.

gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom: — as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

iv. And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration, just in time;¹ — and it happened that, on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum, and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which as yet in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet on front of it, bearing this inscription:

Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with pietra dura fruits. — *English. Present Century.* No

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it "I," the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota of Miscreation, — so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant, that I am not myself capable of conceiving a Number two, or three, or any rivalry or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practiced everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of **everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms**, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

¹ Here is another curious instance. I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal or exemption from taxation of agricultural horses and carts, in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of economic principle respecting production, quoted on last page. (Ruskin.)

v. But the second chance that came to me that day was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this, I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that "there were seven sorts of leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven, because, when I wrote *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands. So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves. On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower."¹ Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and ad-

¹ In Letter 7 Ruskin said: "I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend; ... but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong."

mirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,¹ and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating you.

vi. I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other. Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts — the leaf and root — one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robcs, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey; and we call them "Flowers."

vii. In a certain sense, therefore, you see the Botanical lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers — there are only — gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily in its bloom; — which the great poets always knew, — well; — Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the first Psalm before

Chaucer. The Botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit, exist, all of them, only — that there may be flowers. He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians and apes. It may, or may not be true — it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is, that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; that all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of Light is in his eyes, — the centre of Force in his soul, — the pertinence of action in his deeds.

Arid all true science — which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not — all true science is *savoir vivre*.¹ But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is *savoir mourir*.²

vin. And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one.

And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April (Cœur de Lion's death-day, and Albert Diirer's), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

¹ In Letter 4 Ruskin had told of a Savoyard guide, who, when "I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own.... would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered, *Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre!*" [Poor child, he does not know how to live!]

² knowing how to die.

¹ The statue of Science was erected when the Viaduct was opened, 1869.

But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her? Are you the better for what she replied? If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world's length of copper wire, — which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them; — though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals, and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one, — the two words of common sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India or to any other place.

ix. You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colors, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut, the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening — Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light — walking in fair procession on the lawns of it and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls "Rail-road Enterprise." You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley — you blasted rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange — you Fools Everywhere.

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near, to go fast from this place to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other: these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it — that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

x. Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like — out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl, — (you have nearly managed to get it driven by an iron goblin, as it is); — well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if

you had held the stilts yourself. But instead of holding them you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine; — watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

xi. Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. I can show you examples, millions of them, of happy people made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar,¹ happier than these. Or bring me, — for I am not invincible by any kind of evidence, — bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *an* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics; but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress "in the light of a monstrous Sham." I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose-bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before indeed, but I forget where. There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I think it was, a country festival such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people — their work all done for them by goblins — we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But

¹ i.e., familiar spirit or goblin.

there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plough, and their steam-plough whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia plough-boys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought; whereas here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.

xii. But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hess's high-art frescoes; (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the days of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five-hundred-fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into *cinque-cento-fold*² iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

xiii. It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work — that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service: but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the "posi-

¹ Heinrich Marie von Hess (i 798-1863), who painted the frescoes in the Hofkirche at Munich.

² Five-hundred-fold; perhaps with incidental allusion to the "cinque-cento" period of Italian art — the sixteenth century.

tion of William,"¹ on ghostly self-going planes; but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world — nay all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are not. Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

xiv. There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.²

Admiration — the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope — the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbor, faith-

ful, and satisfied. These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy — the great "*savoir mounr*" — is doing with them.

xv. The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction; chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war, changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter, and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere, — is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

xvi. Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will, by planting wisely and tending carefully; — drought where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; so full offish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold

*A reference to Letter i: "James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December, lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that evening."

¹Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines) vol. vi, p. 135.

²Love chief of the three spiritual needs, put last, as culminating, or crowning, because men must be capable of admiration and hope before they can be capable of love. Wordsworth's verse, "We live by admiration, hope, and love" is answered presently with the words in a reverse order — love, hope and admiration. (Ruskin.)

its face out in the rain,, and even *that* falls dirty.

xvii. Then for the third, Earth, meant to be nourishing for you and blossoming. You have learned, about it, that there is no such thing as a flower; and as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother-Earth, Demeter,¹ into the Avenger Earth, Tisiphone — with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

This is what you have done for the Three **Material Useful Things.**

xviii. Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For Admiration, you have learned contempt and conceit. There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather, and exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.²

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any **plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so**

cians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your

n e i g h b

¹ Ruskin quotes a letter to the *Times* giving an account of the destruction of the gardens of Paris during the siege, 1870-71.

* Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of April) I got a letter from Venice bringing me the, I believe, well grounded report the Venetians have requested permission from the government of Italy to pull down their Ducal Palace and "rebuild it." Put up a horrible model of it, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission. Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, only that architects might charge commission for putting up false models of them in their place. (Ruskin.)

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man — the desire to defraud his neighbor.

5 And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for "justice."

10 xix. Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords, — any masters, — who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

20 Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn, — not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

25 xx. I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall see the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day Of this year, with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being to begin, and gradually — no matter how slowly — to increase the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be ~~by the State~~ but cultivated by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

30 xxi. I do not care with how many, or how few, this thing is begun, nor on what considerable scale, — if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens. So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them. If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions: SO We will try to make some small piece of

English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it, but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons; no equality upon it; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats. We will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields, — and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it; — perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have

some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles; — butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind; we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men; — nay, — even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom, as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.

Faithfully yours

JOHN RUSKIN

Matthew Arnold • 1821-1888

Matthew Arnold, critic and poet, was born at Laleham, December 14, 1811, six years before his father began his famous headmastership at Rugby. After private tutoring and a year at Winchester, he entered Rugby in 1837, leaving in 1841 for Balliol College, Oxford, on a scholarship. Here he formed a strong friendship for Arthur Hugh Clough, won the Newdigate prize with a poem on Cromwell, and took his degree in 1845 with a second class. Shortly after, he was elected a fellow of Oriel College. In 1847 he became secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who secured for him the position of Inspector of Schools in 1851. In the same year Arnold married Frances, daughter of Sir William Wightman.

Arnold published *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* in 1848. The year after his marriage appeared *Em-pedocles on Etna*, and the next year (1853), *Poems*, which included the well-known *Sohrab and Rustum*, *Requiescat*, and *The Scholar-Gipsy*. In 1855^{ne} published *Poems, Second Series*, and two years later accepted the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford. During his ten years' tenure of the chair he wrote *On Translating Homer* (1861), *Essays in Criticism* (1865), and *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867).

Matthew Arnold is a further illustration of the tendency of English men of letters of the Victorian period to turn from purely aesthetic pursuits to criticism of life and society. His latest volume of poetry, *New Poems*, published in 1867, contains many poems reflecting the religious doubts raised by science. In his essay on *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* (1865) he asserted that the romantic poets were lacking in know-

ledge of life, that an age of creation must be prepared for by criticism, and that such criticism must concern itself with life as well as with letters. He wrote a series of articles for *The Cornhill Magazine*, subsequently brought together under the title *Culture and Anarchy*, in which, like Carlyle in *Past and Present* and Ruskin in *Unto This Last*, he set forth his receipt for the regeneration of society. Religious uncertainty continued to preoccupy him, and in several works of which the most important is *Literature and Dogma* (1873)^{ne} tried to reconcile Christianity with the scientific point of view. He visited the United States in 1883, delivering his lectures, *Emerson and Literature and Science*. His *Essays in Criticism, Second Series* appeared in 1888, the year of his death.

As a poet Arnold was much influenced by Wordsworth, whose serious contemplation of human life he admired and followed in such poems as *The Buried Life*, *The Future*, *Resignation*. He did not share Wordsworth's trust in nature. While he found comfort in the spectacle of the quiet precision with which nature does its work, he was aware of another aspect of natural forces, in which they appear in hostility to man's higher self. "Nature is cruel; man is sick of blood," he wrote. Arnold saw in the moral striving of humanity something superior to nature. "Man must begin where Nature ends." Arnold recognized in poetry two elements: "criticism of life" and "natural magic." He found its chief value, with reference to his own age, in the former. Accordingly his virtues as a poet are those of the classic rather than of the romantic school — seriousness and clearness of thought, firmness of structure, reserve and precision. At the same time, he shows an honest lyrical reaction to his own joys and sorrows and to those of his generation, a balance of emotion and intellect, and a fine restraint and serenity.

Arnold's classical spirit appears in the preface to his *Poems* of 1853, in which he argues that the greatness of a poem consists in its total effect, rather than in its beauties of detail — a principle which he illustrated in his longest narrative poem, *Sohrab and Rustum*. This principle he carried over into his criticism of life, in which he made "totality," the pursuit of total perfection — the development of all the powers of knowing, action, and feeling — the highest objective of the individual. This pursuit he called culture, which he declared could be promoted by getting to know "the best that has been thought and said in the world." He thought of state and church chiefly as means of promoting this individual pursuit of excellence, as restraining influences upon personal idiosyncrasy in the name of collective reason. He saw in the powerful middle class of England the chief instrument of progress, and he sought to correct its faults — its stress upon a mechanical system of faith and morality inherited from the Puritans, and its tendency to measure human progress by material prosperity. For such people he adopted from Heine the term "Philistines." While he admitted that morality was three-fourths of life, he held that acuteness of conscience, which he called Hebraism, needed to be balanced by liveliness of consciousness, which he identified as Hellenism. In the spirit of right reason he protested against Carlyle's doctrine of activity and renunciation, against Macaulay's complacent admiration of the achievements of the age, against the faith of the Liberals in political machinery and reform, against the trust of the scientists in the heaping up of knowledge about the universe. He attacked overemphasis upon any quality or attitude, however good in itself. Particularly against the new destructive emphasis of science upon values of knowing, he thought it necessary to defend the human values of conduct and aesthetics that had accumulated in religion and literature; and accordingly he came to the defense of Christianity and of classical education, against such exponents of the scientific spirit as Huxley.

In the work of civilization to which he felt called, Arnold became a great master of controversy. His style, however, remained urbane and suave. He disarmed his opponents by humor, instead of overwhelming them by objurgation. He relied on irony rather than on invective and denunciation. Like Newman, he was a product of the Oxford school of controversy, and, like Newman, in a prose of utter plainness and simplicity he could introduce passages of haunting rhythm or splendid eloquence. He is one of the few English writers who have won equal distinction in poetry and in prose.

Arnold's works are published in fifteen volumes (1904), and the poems in a single volume (Globe Edition, 1890). Selections from the poetry are found in *The Golden Treasury* series. A volume of prose is edited with an excellent introduction by L. E. Gates. A biography by Herbert Paul is in the English Men of Letters series (1901). *Matthew Arnold: How to Know Him*, by Stuart Pratt Sherman, gives an excellent critical appreciation, as does W. C. Brownell in *Victorian Prose Masters*. Arnold's Letters to Clough were edited by H. F. Lowry in 1933.

Quiet Work

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee —
One lesson that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties served in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their en-
mity —

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity: 5
Of labor, that in still advance outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on, n
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil,
Laborers that shall not fail, when man is
gone.

Pub. 1849.

Shakespeare

Others abide¹ our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask: thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea, 5
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-
place,

¹ submit to.

Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams
know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honored, self-
secure, 10
Didst tread on earth unguessed at. — Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which
bow,

Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Pub. 1849.

The Forsaken Merman

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shorewards blow,
Now the salt tides seawards flow, 5
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray,
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go — 10
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear; 15

- Children's voices, wild with pain —
 Surely she will come again!
 Call her once and come away;
 This way, this way!
 "Mother dear, we cannot stay!" 20
 The wild white horses foam and fret."
 Margaret! Margaret!
- Come, dear children, come away down;
 Call no more!
 One last look at the white-walled town, 25
 And the little grey church on the windy shore;
 Then come down!
 She will not come though you call all day;
 Come away, come away!
- Children dear, was it yesterday 30
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
 In the caverns where we lay,
 Through the surf and through the swell,
 The far-off sound of a silver bell?
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep, 35
 Where the winds are all asleep;
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground; 40
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
 Where great whales come sailing by,
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
 Round the world for ever and aye? 45
 When did music come this way?
 Children dear, was it yesterday?
- Children dear, was it yesterday
 (Call yet once) that she went away?
 Once she sate with you and me, 50
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee.
 She combed its bright hair, and she tended
 it well,
 When down swung the sound of the far-off
 bell.
 She sighed, she looked up through the clear
 green sea. 55
 She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
 in the little grey church on the shore to-day.
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world — ah me!
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with
 thee."
- I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the
 waves; 60
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind
 sea-caves."
 She smiled, she went up through the surf in
 the bay.
- Children dear, was it yesterday?
 Children dear, were we long alone?
 "The sea grows stormy, the little ones
 moan. 65
 Long prayers," I said, "in the world they
 say,
 Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf
 in the bay.
 We went up the beach, by the sandy down
 Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-
 walled town;
 Through the narrow paved streets, where all
 was still, 70
 To the little grey church on the windy hill.
 From the church came a murmur of folk at
 their prayers,
 But we stood without in the cold blowing
 airs.
 We climbed on the graves, on the stones
 worn with rains,
 And we gazed up the aisle through the
 small leaded panes. 75
 She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
 "Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
 Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
 But, ah, she gave me never a look, 80
 For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
 Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
 Come away, children, call no more!
 Come away, come down, call no more!
- Down, down, down! 85
 Down to the depths of the sea!
 She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
 Singing most joyfully.
 Hark, what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
 For the humming street, and the child with
 its toy! 90
 For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
 For the wheel where I spun,
 And the blessed light of the sun!"
 And so she sings her fill,
 Singing most joyfully, 95

Till the spindle falls from her hand,
 And the whizzing wheel stands still.
 She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
 And over the sand at the sea;
 And her eyes are set in a stare; 100
 And anon there breaks a sigh,
 And anon there drops a tear,
 From a sorrow-clouded eye,
 And a heart sorrow-laden,
 A long, long sigh; 105
 For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaid
 And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children;
 Come children, come down!
 The hoarse wind blows colder; no
 Lights shine in the town.
 She will start from her slumber
 When gusts shake the door;
 She will hear the winds howling,
 Will hear the waves roar. 115
 We shall see, while above us
 The waves roar and whirl,
 A ceiling of amber,
 A pavement of pearl.
 Singing, "Here came a mortal, 120
 But faithless was she!
 And alone dwell for ever
 The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
 When soft the winds blow, 125
 When clear falls the moonlight,
 When spring-tides are low;
 When sweet airs come seaward
 From heaths starred with broom,
 And high rocks throw mildly 130
 On the blanched sands a gloom;
 Up the still, glistening beaches,
 Up the creeks we will hie,
 Over banks of bright seaweed
 The ebb-tide leaves dry. 135
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
 At the white, sleeping town;
 At the church on the hill-side —
 And then come back down.
 Singing, "There dwells a loved one, 140
 But cruel is she!
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea."
 Pub. 1849.

FROM Empedocles on Etna

Empedocles was a Greek philosopher of the fifth century, B.C., who, after meditating on man's fate, plunged into the crater of Mount Etna in Sicily.

Empedocles' Song, Act I, Scene 2

The music below ceases, and Empedocles speaks, accompanying himself in a solemn manner on his harp.

The outspread world to span
 A cord the Gods first slung,
 And then the soul of man
 There, like a mirror, hung,
 And bade the winds through space impel the
 gusty toy. 5

Hither and thither spins
 The wind-borne, mirroring soul,
 A thousand glimpses wins,
 And never sees a whole;
 Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and leaves
 its last opportunity. 10

The Gods laugh in their sleeve
 To watch man doubt and fear,
 Who knows not what to believe
 Where he sees nothing clear,
 And dares stamp nothing false where he
 finds nothing sure. 15

Is this, Pausanias,¹ so?
 And can our souls not strive,
 But with the winds must go,
 And hurry where they drive?
 Is Fate indeed so strong, man's strength in-
 deed so poor? 20

I will not judge. That man,
 Howbeit, I judge as lost,
 Whose mind allows a plan,
 Which would degrade it most;
 And he treats doubt the best who tries to
 see least ill. 25

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!
 Thou art my friend; to thee,
 All knowledge that I have,
 All skill I wield, are free.
 Ask not the latest news of the last miracle; 30

¹ The physician in the play.

- Ask not what days and nights
In trance Pantheia¹ lay,
But ask how thou such sights
Mayst see without dismay;
Ask what most help when known, thou son
of Anchitus! 35
- What? hate, and awe, and shame
Fill thee to see our time;
Thou fcelest thy soul's frame
Shaken and out of chime?
What? life and time go hard with thee too,
as with us, 40
- Thy citizens, 'tis said,
Envy thee and oppress,
Thy goodness no men aid,
All strive to make it less; 44
Tyranny, pride, and lust fill Sicily's abodes;
- Heaven is with earth at strife,
Signs make thy soul afraid,
The dead return to life,
Rivers are dried, winds stayed:
Scarce can one think in calm, so threatening
are the Gods; 50
- And we feel, day and night,
The burden of ourselves —
Well, then, the wiser might
In his own bosom delves,
And asks what ails him so, and gets what
cure he can. 55
- The Sophist sneers: Fool, take
Thy pleasure, right or wrong.
The pious wail: Forsake
A world these Sophists throng.
Be neither Saint nor Sophist led, but be a
man! 60
- These hundred doctors try
To preach thee to their school.
We have the truth! they cry,
And yet their oracle,
Trumpet it as they will, is but the same as
thine. 65
- Once read thy own breast right,
And thou hast done with fears;
Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee, at
that shrine! 70
- What makes thee struggle and rave?
Why are men ill at ease? —
'Tis that the lot they have
Fails their own will to please;
For man would make no murmuring, were
his will obeyed. 75
- And why is it that still
Man with his lot thus fights? —
'Tis that he makes this *will*
The measure of his *rightt*,
And believes Nature outraged if his will's
gainsaid. 80
- Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn
How deep a fault is this;
Couldst thou but once discern
Thou hast no *right* to bliss,
No title from the Gods to welfare and re-
pose, 85
- Then thou wouldst look less mazed
Whene'er from bliss debarred,
Nor think the Gods were crazed
When thy own lot went hard.
But we are all the same — the fools of our
own woes! 90
- For, from the first faint morn
Of life, the thirst for bliss
Deep in man's heart is born;
And, sceptic as he is,
He fails not to judge clear if this is quenched
or no. 95
- Nor is that thirst to blame.
Man errs not that he deems
His welfare his true aim;
He errs because he dreams
The world does but exist that welfare *to*
bestow. *iroo*
- We mortals are no kings
For each of whom to sway

¹ Pausanias has tried to cheer Empedocles' spirits by getting him to tell how he cured this woman who had been in a trance thirty days.

A new-made world up-springs,
 Meant merely for his play.
 No, we are strangers here; the world is from
 of old. 105

In vain our pent wills fret
 And would the world subdue.
 Limits we did not set
 Condition all we do.
 Born into life we are, and life must be our
 mold. no

Born into life! — man grows
 Forth from his parents' stem,
 And blends their bloods, as those
 Of theirs are blent in them;
 So each new man strikes root into a far fore-
 time. 115

Born into life! — we bring
 A bias with us here,
 And, when here, each new thing
 Affects us we come near;
 To tunes we did not call our being must keep
 chime. 120

Born into life! — in vain,
 Opinions, those or these,
 Unaltered to retain
 The obstinate mind decrees;
 Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing in. 125

Born into life! — who lists
 May what is false hold dear,
 And for himself make mists
 Through which to see less clear; 129
 The world is what it is, for all our dust and din.

Born into life! — 'tis we,
 And not the world, are new;
 Our cry for bliss, our plea,
 Others have urged it too —
 Our wants have all been felt, our errors made
 before. 135

No eye could be too sound
 To observe a world so vast,
 No patience too profound
 To sort what's here amassed;
 How man may here best live no care too great
 to explore. 140

But we — as some rude guest
 Would change, where'er he roam,
 The manners there professed
 To those he brings from home —
 We mark not the world's course, but would
 have it take *ours*. 145

The world's course proves the terms
 On which man wins content;
 Reason the proof confirms —
 We spurn it, and invent
 A false course for the world, and for ourselves
 false powers. 150

Riches we wish to get,
 Yet remain spendthrifts still;
 We would have health, and yet
 Still use our bodies ill;
 Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth to
 life's last scenes. 155

We would have inward peace,
 Yet will not look within;
 We would have misery cease,
 Yet will not cease from sin;
 We want all pleasant ends, but will use no
 harsh means; 160

We do not what we ought;
 What we ought not, we do;
 And lean upon the thought
 That chance will bring us through;
 But our own acts, for good or ill, are mightier
 powers. 165

Yet, even when man forsakes
 All sin, — is just, is pure,
 Abandons all that makes
 His welfare insecure, —
 Other existences there are, which clash with
 ours. 170

Like us, the lightning-fires
 Love to have scope and play;
 The stream, like us, desires
 An unimpeded way;
 Like us, the Libyan wind delights to roam
 at large. 175

Streams will not curb their pride
 The just man not to entomb,

Nor lightnings go aside
To leave his virtues room;
Nor is that wind less rough that blows a
good man's barge. 180

Nature, with equal mind,
Sees all her sons at play,
Sees man control the wind,
The wind sweep man away;
Allows the proudly-riding and the foundering
bark. 185

And, lastly, though of ours
No weakness spoil our lot,
Though the non-human powers
Of Nature harm us not,
The ill deeds of other men make often *our*
life dark. 190

What were the wise man's plan? —
Through this sharp, toil-set life,
To fight as best he can,
And win what's won by strife. —
But we an easier way to cheat our pains have
found. 195

Scratched by a fall, with moans,
As children of weak age
Lend life to the dumb stones
Whereon to vent their rage,
And bend their little fists, and rate¹ the
senseless ground; 200

So, loath to suffer mute,
We, peopling the void air,
Make Gods to whom to impute
The ills we ought to bear;
With God and Fate to rail at, suffering
easily. 205

Yet grant — as sense long missed
Things that are now perceived,
And much may still exist
Which is not yet believed —
Grant that the world were full of Gods we
cannot see; 210

All things the world which fill
Of but one stuff are spun,
¹ berate.

That we who rail are still,
With what we rail at, one:
One with the o'er-labored Power that through
the breadth and length 215

Of earth, and air, and sea,
In men, and plants, and stones,
Hath toil perpetually,
And travails, pants, and moans;
Fain would do all things well, but sometimes
fails in strength. 220

And patiently exact
This universal God
Alike to any act
Proceeds at any nod,
And quietly declaims the cursings of himself.

This is not what man hates,
Yet he can curse but this.
Harsh Gods and hostile Fates
Are dreams! this only *is* —
Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the foolish
elf. 230

Nor only, in the intent
To attach blame elsewhere,
Do we at will invent
Stern Powers who make their care 234
To embitter human life, malignant Deities;

But, next, we would reverse
The scheme ourselves have spun,
And what we made to curse
We now would lean upon,
And feign kind Gods who perfect what man
vainly tries. 240

Look, the world tempts our eye,
And we would know it all!
We map the starry sky,
We mine this earthen ball,
We measure the sea-tides, we number the
sea-sands; 245

We scrutinize the dates
Of long-past human things,
The bounds of effaced states,
The lines of deceased kings;
We search out dead men's words, and works
of dead men's hands; 250

We shut our eyes, and muse
 How our own minds are made,
 What springs of thought they use,
 How Tightened, how betrayed —
 And spend our wit to name what most em-
 ploy unnamed. 255

But still, as we proceed,
 The mass swells more and more
 Of volumes yet to read,
 Of secrets yet to explore.
 Our hair grows grey, our eyes are dimmed,
 our heat is tamed; 260

We rest our faculties,
 And thus address the Gods:
 "True Science if there is,
 It stays in your abodes!
 Man's measures cannot mete the immeasurable
 All. 265

"You only can take in
 The world's immense design;
 Our desperate search was sin,
 Which henceforth we resign,
 Sure only that your mind sees all things
 which befall." 270

Fools! that in man's brief term
 He cannot all things view,
 Affords no ground to affirm
 That there are Gods who do;
 Nor does being weary prove that he has
 where to rest. 275

Again. — Our youthful blood
 Claims rapture as its right;
 The world, a rolling flood
 Of newness and delight,
 Draws in the enamored gazer to its shining
 breast; 280

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,
 Gives flowers after flowers;
 With passionate warmth we clasp
 Hand after hand in ours;
 Now do we soon perceive how fast our youth
 is spent. 285

At once our eyes grow clear!
 We see in blank dismay

Year posting after year,
 Sense after sense decay;
 Our shivering heart is mined by secret dis-
 content; 290

Yet still, in spite of truth,
 In spite of hopes entombed,
 That longing of our youth
 Burns ever unconsumed,
 Still hungrier for delight as delights grow
 more rare. 295

We pause; we hush our heart,
 And then address the Gods:
 "The world hath failed to impart
 The joy our youth forbodes,
 Failed to fill up the void which in our breasts
 we bear. 300

¹Changeful till now, we still
 Looked on to something new;
 Let us, with changeless will,
 Henceforth look on to you,
 To find with you the joy we in vain here
 require." 305

Fools! that so often here
 Happiness mocked our prayer,
 I think, might make us fear
 A like event elsewhere;
 Make us not fly to dreams, but moderate
 desire. 310

And yet, for those who know
 Themselves, who wisely take
 Their way through life, and bow
 To what they cannot break,
 Why should I say that life need yield but
 moderate bliss? 315

Shall we, with tempers spoiled,
 Health sapped by living ill,
 And judgments all embroiled
 By sadness and self-will,
 Shall we judge what for man is not true bliss
 or is? 320

Is it so small a thing
 To have enjoyed the sun,

To have lived light in the spring,
 To have loved, to have thought, to have
 done;
 To have advanced true friends, and beat
 down baffling foes — 325

That we must feign a bliss
 Of doubtful future date,
 And, while we dream on this,
 Lose all our present state,
 And relegate to worlds yet distant our re-
 pose? 330

Not much, I know, you prize
 What pleasures may be had,
 Who look on life with eyes
 Estranged, like mine, and sad;
 And yet the village-churl feels the truth
 more than you, 335

Who's loath to leave this life
 Which to him little yields —
 His hard-tasked sunburnt wife,
 His often-labored fields,
 The boors with whom he talked, the country-
 spots he knew. 340

But thou, because thou hear'st
 Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,
 Because the Gods thou fear'st
 Fail to make blest thy state,
 Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust the joys
 there are! 345

I say: Fear not! Life still
 Leaves human effort scope.
 But, since life teems with ill,
 Nurse no extravagant hope;
 Because thou must not dream, thou need'st
 not then despair! 350
 Pub. 1852.

Self-Dependence

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
 What I am, and what I ought to be,
 At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears
 me
 Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire 5
 O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
 "Ye who, from my childhood up, have
 calmed me,
 Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye
 waters,
 On my heart your mighty charm renew; 10
 Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
 Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of
 heaven,
 Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
 In the rustling night-air came the answer: 15
 "Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
 Undistracted by the sights they see,
 These demand not that the things without
 them
 Yield them love, amusement, sympathy. 20

"And with joy the stars perform their shin-
 ing,
 And the sda its long moon-silvered roll;
 For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
 All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful 25
 In what state God's other works may be,
 In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
 These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
 A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear: 30
 "Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
 Who finds himself, loses his misery!"
 Pub. 1852.

Morality

We cannot kindle when we will
 The fire that in the heart resides;
 The spirit bloweth and is still,
 In mystery our soul abides.
 But tasks in hours of insight willed, 35
 Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
 We bear the burden and the heat
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done. 10
 Not till the hours of light return,
 All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
 When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
 Ask, how *she* viewed thy self-control, 15
 Thy struggling, tasked morality —
 Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
 Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
 Whose eyes thou wert afraid to seek, 20
 See, on her face a glow is spread,
 A strong emotion on her cheek!
 "Ah, child," she cries, "that strife divine,
 Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on wry brow— 25
 I do not strive, I do not weep;
 I rush with the swift spheres and glow
 In joy, and when I will, I sleep. —
 Yet that severe, that earnest air,
 I saw, I felt it once — but where?" 30

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
 Nor wore the manacles of space;
 I felt it in some other clime,
 I saw it in some other place.
 'Twas when the heavenly house I trod, 35
 And lay upon the breast of God."
 Pub. 1852.

The Buried Life

Light flows our war of mocking words, and
 yet,
 Behold, with tears my eyes are wet!
 I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
 Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
 We know, we know that we can smile! 5
 But there's a something in this breast,
 To which thy light words bring no rest,
 And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
 Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
 And turn those limpid eyes on mine, 10
 And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.

Alas, is even love too weak
 To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
 Are even lovers powerless to reveal
 To one another what indeed they feel? 15
 I knew the mass of men concealed
 Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed
 They would by other men be met
 With blank indifference, or with blame re-
 proved;
 I knew they lived and moved 20
 Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest
 Of men, and alien to themselves — and yet
 The same heart beats in every human breast!

But we, my love! — does a like spell benumb
 Our hearts, our voices? — must we too be dumb?
 Ah, well for us, if even we, 26
 Even for a moment, can get free
 Our heart, and have our lips unchained;
 For that which seals them hath been deep-
 ordained.

Fate, which foresaw 30
 How frivolous a baby man would be —
 By what distractions he would be possessed,
 How he would pour himself in every strife,
 And well-nigh change his own identity —
 That it might keep from his capricious play
 His genuine self, and force him to obey 36
 Even in his own despite his being's law,
 Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
 The unregarded river of our life
 Pursue with indiscernible flow its way; 40
 And that we should not see
 The buried stream, and seem to be
 Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
 Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded
 streets, 45
 But often, in the din of strife,
 There rises an unspeakable desire
 After the knowledge of our buried life;
 A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
 In tracking out our true, original course; 50
 A longing to inquire
 Into the mystery of this heart that beats
 So wild, so deep in us — to know
 Whence our lives come, and where they go.
 And many a man in his own breast then
 delves, \$5

But deep enough, alas, none ever mines.
 And we have been on many thousand lines,
 And we have shown, on each, spirit and
 power;

But hardly have we, for one little hour,
 Been on our own line, have we been our-
 selves — 60

Hardly had skill to utter one of all
 The nameless feelings that course through
 our breast,

But they course on for ever unexpressed.
 And long we try in vain to speak and act
 Our hidden self, and what we say and do 65
 Is eloquent, is well — but 'tis not true!

And then we will no more be racked
 With inward striving, and demand
 Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
 Their stupefying power; 70

Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!
 Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
 From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
 As from an infinitely distant land,
 Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
 A melancholy into all our day. 76

Only — but this is rare —
 When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
 When, jaded with the rush and glare
 Of the interminable hours, 80
 Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
 When our world-deafened ear
 Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed —
 A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,
 And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again. 85
 The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
 And what we mean, we say, and what we
 would, we know.

A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
 And hears its winding murmur; and he sees
 The meadows where it glides, the sun, the
 breeze. 90

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
 Wherein he doth for ever chase
 That flying and elusive shadow, rest.
 An air of coolness plays upon his face,
 And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
 And then he thinks he knows 96
 The hills where his life rose,
 And the sea where it goes.

Pub. 1852.

Lines Written in Kensington Gardens

In this lone, open glade I lie,
 Screened by deep boughs on either hand;
 And at its end, to stay the eye,
 Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-trees
 stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his, 5
 Across the girdling city's hum.
 How green under the boughs it is!
 How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
 To take his nurse his broken toy; 10
 Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
 Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
 What endless, active life is here!
 What blowing daisies, fragrant grass! 15
 An air-stirred forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
 Where the tired angler lies, stretched out,
 And, eased of basket and of rod,
 Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout. 20

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
 Be others happy if they can!
 But in my helpless cradle I
 Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurled, 25
 Think often, as I hear them rave,
 That peace has left the upper world
 And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
 When I who watch them am away, 30
 Still all things in this glade go through
 The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
 The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
 The night comes down upon the grass, 35
 The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
 To feel, amid the city's jar,

That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

40

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.
Pub. 1852.

The Future

A wanderer is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time.
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light, 5
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
Whether he wakes,
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles, 10
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream;
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain; 15
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea —
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream 20
Of the lands which the River of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts, 25
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough? 30
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then lived on her breast,
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear 35

As Rebckah¹ read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure? 40

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near, 45
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?²
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time 50
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Bordered by cities, and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds 55
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot³ as the sights which we
see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge 60
In a blacker, incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows, 65
Fiercer the sun overhead.
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed. ?•

Haply, the river of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream —
May acquire, if not the calm 75
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

¹ See Genesis xxiv.

^a See Exodus iii.

³ variegated.

And the width of the waters, the hush
 Of the *grey* expanse where he floats,
 Freshening its current and spotted with foam
 As it draws to the Ocean, may strike 81
 Peace to the soul of the man on its breast —
 As the pale waste widens around him —
 As the banks fade dimmer away,
 As the stars come out, and the night-wind 85
 Brings up the stream
 Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.
 Pub. 1852.

Requiescat

Strew on her roses, roses,
 And never a spray of yew!
 In quiet she reposes;
 Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required; 5
 She bathed it in smiles of glee.
 But her heart was tired, tired,
 And now they Jet her be.

Her life was turning, turning, 10
 In mazes of heat and sound;
 But for peace her soul was yearning,
 And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
 It fluttered and failed for breath.
 To-night it doth inherit 15
 The vasty hall of death.

Pub. 1853.

The Scholar-Gipsy

There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there, and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtlety of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with

were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others: that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned. — Glanvil's *Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661. (Arnold.)

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
 Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
 No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
 Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their
 throats,
 Nor the cropped herbage shoot another
 head. 5
 But when the fields are still,
 And the tired men and dogs all gone to
 rest,
 And only the white sheep are sometimes
 seen
 Cross and recross the strips of moon-
 blanched green, 9
 Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
 In this high field's dark corner, where he
 leaves
 His coat, his basket, and his earthen
 cruse,
 And in the sun, all morning, binds the
 sheaves,
 Then here, at noon, comes back his
 stores to use — 15
 Here will I sit and wait,
 While to my ear from uplands far away
 The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
 With distant cries of reapers in the
 corn² —
 All the live murmur of a summer's day. 20

Screened is this nook, o'er the high half-
 reaped field,
 And here till sun-down, shepherd! will I be.
 Through the thick corn the scarlet
 poppies peep,
 And round green roots and yellowing
 stalks, I see

¹ Joseph Glanvil (1636-80), Oxford graduate, clergyman, and writer on philosophical subjects.
² grain.

- Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep;
 And air-swept lindens yield 26
 Their scent, and rustle down their per-
 fumed showers
 Of bloom on the bent grass where I am
 laid,
 And bower me from the August sun with
 shade;
 And the eye travels down to Oxford's
 towers. 30
- And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book.
 Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!
 The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
 Of shining parts and quick inventive brain,
 Who, tired of knocking at preferment's
 door, 35
 One summer morn forsook
 His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-
 lore,
 And roamed the world with that wild
 brotherhood,
 And came, as most men deemed, to little
 good, 39
 But came to Oxford and his friends no more.
- But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
 Two scholars, whom at college erst he
 knew,
 Met him, and of his way of life enquired,
 Whereat he answered that the gipsy-crew,
 His mates, had arts to rule as they de-
 sired 45
 The workings of men's brains,
 And they can bind them to what thoughts
 they will.
 "And I," he said, "the secret of their art,
 When fully learned, will to the world
 impart;
 But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this
 skill." 50
- This said, he left them, and returned no more.
 But rumors hung about the countryside,
 That the lost scholar long was seen to
 stray,
 Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-
 tied,
 In hat of antique shape, and cloak of
 grey, 55
 The same the gipsies wore.
- Shepherds had met him on the Hurst¹ in
 spring;
 At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire
 moors,
 On the warm ingle-bench,² the smock-
 frocked bpoors
 Had found him seated at their entering; 60
- But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would
 fly.-
 \tAnd I myself seem half to know thy looks,
 And put the shepherds, wanderer! on thy
 trace;
 And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the
 rooks,
 I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
 Or in my boat I lie 66
 Moored to the cool bank in the summer-
 heats,
 'Mid wide grass meadows which the
 sunshine fills,
 And watch the warm, green-muffled
 Cumner hills,
 And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy re-
 treats. 70
- For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground:
 Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
 Returning home on summer-nights, have
 met
 Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-
 hithe,³
 Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers
 wet, 75
 As the punt's rope chops round;
 And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
 And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
 Plucked in shy fields and distant Wych-
 wood⁴ bowers;
 And thine eyes resting on the moonlit
 stream. 80
- And then they land, and thou art seen no
 more! —
 Maidens who from the distant hamlets
 come
- ¹ Cumner Hurst, a wooded hill three miles south of
 Oxford.
² A bench next to the fireside.
³ A village one mile beyond Cumner Hurst from
 Oxford.
⁴ A forest about ten miles north of Oxford.

To dance around the Fyfield¹ elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen
thee roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way. 85

Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers: the frail-leaved white anemony,
Dark bluebells, drenched with dews of
summereves,

And purple orchises with spotted leaves;
But none hath words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge,² when hay-
time's here 91

In June, and many a scythe in sunshine
flames,

Men who through those wide fields of
breezy grass,

Where black-winged swallows haunt the
glittering Thames,

To bathe in the abandoned lasher³ pass,
Have often passed thee near, 96

Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure
spare,

Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted
air:

But when they came from bathing, thou
wast gone! 100

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on agate,
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes,
and late, 105

For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee eying, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding
kine;

And marked thee, when the stars come
out and shine,

Through the long dewy grass move slow
away. no

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
(Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged
way

¹ About a mile south of Bablockhithe.

^a This and other English places mentioned subsequently in the poem are all in the near vicinity of Oxford.

³ A pool below a runway or race.

Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush
you see

With scarlet patches tagged, and shreds of
grey,
Above the forest-ground called Thes-
saly.) 115

The blackbird, picking food,
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at
all;

So often has he known thee past him
stray,

Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered
spray,

And waiting for the spark from heaven to
fall. 120

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill,
Where home through flooded fields foot-
travellers go,

Have I not passed thee on the wooden
bridge,

Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the
snow,

Thy face toward Hinksey and its wintry
ridge? 125

And thou hast climbed the hill,
And gained the white brow of the Cumner
range;

Turned once to watch, while thick the
snowflakes fall,

The line of festal light in Christ-Church
hall;¹

Then sought thy straw in some sequestered
grange. 130

But what — I dream! Two hundred years
are flown,

Since first thy story ran through Oxford
halls,

And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-
scribe

That thou wert wandered from the studious
walls

To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-
tribe; 135

And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard
laid:

Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-
known grave

¹ The dining hall of Christ-Church College, Oxford.

Tall grasses and white flowering nettles
wave, 139
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
For what wears out the life of mortal men?

Tis that from change to change their
being rolls;

Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers. 146

Till, having used our nerves with bliss and
teen,¹

And tired upon a thousand schemes our
wit,

To the just-pausing Genius² we remit

Our worn-out life, and are — what we
have been. 150

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou
perish, so?

Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire;
Else wert thou long since numbered with
the dead,

Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy
fire!

The generations of thy peers are fled, 155
And we ourselves shall go;

But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's
page, 159

Because thou hadst what we, alas! have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with
powers

Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other
things;

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been
baffled, brings. 165

O life unlike to ours!

Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for
what he strives,

And each half-lives a hundred different
lives;

Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in
hope. 170

¹ sadness. ² attendant spirit.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and
we,

Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in
deeds,

Whose vague resolves never have been
fulfilled; 175

For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments
new;

Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won
to-day:

Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too? 180

Yes, we await it! but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us, one¹

Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;

And all his store of sad experience he 185
Lays bare of wretched days;

Tells us his misery's birth and growth and
signs,

And how the dying spark of hope was
fed,

And how the breast was soothed, and
how the head,

And all his hourly-varied anodynes. 190

This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would
end,

And waive all claim to bliss, and try to
bear,

With close-lipped patience for our only
friend,

Sad patience, too near neighbor to de-
spair. 195

-O But none has hope like thine!

Thou through the fields and through the
woods dost stray,

Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,

And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits, were fresh and
clear, 201

And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames,
Before this strange disease of modern life,

¹ The reference here can only be surmised.

With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
 Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts,
 was rife — 205

Fly hence, our contact fear!
 Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering
 wood!

Averse, as Dido did, with gesture stern,
 From her false friend's¹ approach in
 Hades turn,
 Wave us away; and keep thy solitude! 210

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
 Still clutching the inviolable shade,
 With a free onward impulse brushing
 through,

By night, the silvered branches of the glade,
 Far on the forest-skirts, where none pur-
 sue, 215

On some mild pastoral slope
 Emerge; and resting on the moonlit pales,
 Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
 With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
 From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly! 221
 For strong the infection of our mental
 strife,

Which, though it gives no bliss, yet
 spoils for rest;

And we should win thee from thy own fair
 life,

Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
 Soon, soon thy cheer would die, 226

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy
 powers,

And thy clear aims be cross and shifting
 made;

And then thy glad perennial youth
 would fade,

fade, and grow old at last, and die like
 ours. 230

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and
 smiles!

As some grave Tyrian² trader, from the
 sea,

Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
 Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,

¹ /Eneas, upon whose departure from Carthage Dido
 killed herself.

^a From Tyre, in Phoenicia.

The fringes of a southward-facing brow
 Among the /Egean isles; 236

And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
 Freight with amber grapes and Chian
 wine,

Green bursting figs, and tunnies¹ steeped
 in brine,

And knew the intruders on his ancient
 home, 240

The young light-hearted masters of the waves!
 And snatched his rudder, and shook out
 more sail;

And day and night held on² indignantly
 O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
 Betwixt the Syrtcs³ and soft Sicily, 245

To where the Atlantic raves
 Outside the western straits;⁴ and unbent
 sails

There, where down cloudy cliffs, through
 sheets of foam, 248

Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians⁵ come;
 And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Pub. 1853.

Thyrsis

A *Monody*, to commemorate the author J
 friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, who died
 at Florence, 1861

Thus yesterday, today, tomorrow come,
 They hustle one another and they pass;
 Cut all our hustling morrows only make
 The smooth today of God.

From *Lucretius*, an unpublished Tragedy.

Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and Arnold's
Thyrsis are the three great pastoral elegies in
 English literature. /

How changed is here each spot man makes
 or fills!

In the two Hinkseys⁶ nothing keeps the
 same;

The village street its haunted mansion
 lacks,

And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,

¹ large mackerel. ² kept on under full sail.

³ A shallow gulf on the north coast of Africa.

⁴ At Gibraltar.

⁵ From the Spanish peninsula.

⁶ These and other places mentioned in the poem are
 all near Oxford. Cf. *The Scholar-Gipsy*.

And from the roofs the twisted chimney-
stacks — 5

Are ye too changed, ye hills?

See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men

To-night from Oxford up your pathway
strays!

Here came I often, often, in old days —
n Thyrsis¹ and I; we still had Thyrsis then. 10

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth
Farm,

Up past the wood, to where the elm-tree
crowns

The hill behind whose ridge the sunset
flames?

The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
The Vale, the three lone weirs, the youth-
ful Thames? — 15

This winter-eve is warm

Humid the air! leaflets, yet soft as spring,
The tender purple spray on copse and
briers!

And that sweet city with her dreaming
spires,

She needs not June for beauty's height-
ening. 20

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night!

Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power
' Befalls me wandering through this up-
land dim.

Once passed I blindfold here, at any hour;
Now seldom come I, since I came with
him. 25

That single elm-tree bright
Against the west — I miss it! is it gone?
We prized it dearly; while it stood, we
said,
Our friend, the Gypsy-Scholar, was not
dead;

While the tree lived, he in these fields
lived on. 30

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here,
But once I knew each field, each flower,
each stick;

And with the country-folk acquaintance
made

By barn in threshing-time, by new-built
rick.

¹ Clough.

Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first
assayed. 35

Ah me! this many a year

My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holiday!

p. Needs must I lose them, needs with heavy
[heart

D Into the world and wave of men depart;
} But Thyrsis of his own will went away. 40

It irked him to be here; he could not rest.

He loved each simple joy the country
yields,

He loved his mates; but yet he could not
keep,

For that a shadow lowered on the fields,
Here with the shepherds and the silly
sheep. 45

Some life of men unblest

He knew, which made him droop, and
filled his head.

He went; his piping took a troubled
sound

Of storms that rage outside our happy
ground; 49

He could not wait their passing, he is dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,

When the year's primal burst of bloom is
o'er,

Before the roses and the longest day —
When garden-walks and ail the grassy floor
With blossoms red and white of fallen.

May 55

And chestnut-flowers are strewn —
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
From the wet field, through the vexed
garden-trees,

Come with the volleying rain and tossing
breeze:

√ J The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I! 60

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?

Soon will the high midsummer pomps
come on,

Soon will the musk carnations break and
swell,

Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap-
dragon,

Sweet-William with his homely cottage-
smell, 65

And stocks in fragrant blow;

Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
 And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
 And groups under the dreaming garden-
 trees,
 And the full moon, and the white evening-
 star. 70

He hearkens not! light comes, he is flown!
 What matters it? next year he will return,
 And we shall have him in the sweet
 spring-days,
 With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling
 fern,
 And bluebells trembling by the forest-
 ways, 75
 And scent of hay new-mown.
 But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see;
 See him come back, and cut a smoother
 reed,
 And blow a strain the world at last shall
 heed—
 For Time, not Corydon,¹ hath conquered
 thee! 80

Alack, for Corydon no rival now! —
 But when Sicilian shepherds lost a mate,
 Some good survivor with his flute would
 g^o
 Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate;²
 And cross the unpermitted ferry's flow,³
 And relax Pluto's brow, 86
 And make leap up with joy the beauteous
 head
 Of Proserpine,⁴ among whose crowned
 hair
 Are flowers first opened on Sicilian air,
 And flute⁵ his friend, like Orpheus, from
 the dead. 90

O easy access to the hearer's grace
 When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine!
 For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,
 She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,
 She knew each lily white which Enna⁶
 yields, 95
 Each rose with blushing face;

¹ Corydon defeated Thyrsis in a song contest. See Virgil's sixth Eclogue.

² When Bion died, his friend Moschus, another Sicilian pastoral poet, wrote an elegy (second century, B.C.). ³ The Styx.

⁴ Wife of Pluto.

⁵ As Orpheus did Eurydice.

⁶ The Sicilian vale from which Pluto carried off Proserpine.

She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian
 strain.
 But, ah, of our poor Thames she never
 heard!
 Her foot the Cumner cowslips never
 stirred;
 And we should tease her with our plaint
 in vain! 100

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words
 will be,
 Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
 In the old haunt, and find our tree-topped
 hill!
 Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?
 I know the wood which hides the daf-
 fodil, 105
 I know the Fyfield tree,
 I know what white, what purple fritillaries
 The grassy harvest of the river-fields,
 Above by Ensham, down by Sandford,
 yields,
 And what sedged brooks are Thames's
 tributaries; no

I know these slopes; who knows them if not
 I? —
 But many a dingle on the loved hillside,
 With thorns once studded, old, white-
 blossomed trees,
 Where thick the cowslips grew, and far
 descried
 High towered the spikes of purple
 orchises, 115
 Hath since our day put by
 The coronals of that forgotten time;
 Down each green bank hath gone the
 plowboy's team,
 And only in the hidden brookside gleam
 Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime. 120

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's
 door,
 Above the locks, above the boating throng,
 Unmoored our skiff when through the
 Wytham flats,
 Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet
 among
 And darting swallows and light water-
 gnats, 125
 We tracked the shy Thames shore?

Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny
 swell
 Of our boat passing heaved the river-
 grass,
 Stood with suspended scythe to see us
 pass? —
 They all are gone, and thou art gone as
 well! 130

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too the
 night

In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
 I see her veil draw soft across the day,
 I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
 The cheek grown thin, the brown hair
 sprent with gray; 135
 I feel her ringer light

Laid pausefully upon life's headlong
 train; —

The foot less prompt to meet the morning
 dew,
 The heart less bounding at emotion new,
 And hope, once crushed, less quick to
 spring again. 140

And long the way appears, which seemed so
 short

To the unpracticed eye of sanguine youth;
 And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy
 air,

The mountain-tops where is the throne of
 Truth,
 Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and
 bare! 145

Unbreachable the fort
 Of the long-battered world uplifts its wall;
 And strange and vain the earthly turmoil
 grows,
 And near and real the charm of thy
 repose,
 And night as welcome as a friend would
 fall. 150

But hush! the upland hath a sudden loss
 Of quiet! — Look, adown the dusk hill-
 side,

A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
 As in old days, jovial and talking, ride!
 From hunting with the Berkshire hounds
 they come. 155
 Quick! let me fly, and cross

Into yon farther field!—Tis done; and
 see,

Backed by the sunset, which doth glorify
 The orange and pale violet evening-sky,
 Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree! the
 Tree! 160

I take the omen! Eve lets down her veil,
 The white fog creeps from bush to bush
 about,

The west unflushes, the high stars grow
 bright,

And in the scattered farms the lights come
 out.

I cannot reach the Signal-tree to-night,
 Yet, happy omen, hail! 166

Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale¹
 (For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids
 keep

The morningless and awakening sleep
 Under the flowery oleanders pale), 170

Hear it, O Thyrasis, still our Tree is there! —
 Ah, vam! These English fields, this upland
 dim,

These brambles pale with mist engar-
 landed,

That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not for
 him;

To a boon southern country he is fled, 175

And now in happier air,
 Wandering with the great Mother's train
 divine

(And purer or more subtle soul than thee,
 I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see!)
 Within a folding of the Apennine, 180

Thou hearest the immortal strains of old! —
 Putting his sickle to the perilous grain

In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian
 king,²

For thee the Lityrses-song again
 Young Daphnis³ with his silver voice
 doth sing; 185

Sings his Sicilian fold,

¹ Clough was buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Florence.

² Lityrses, who invited visitors to compete against him in a reaping-contest. The men whom he defeated were killed, and his song was sung as a dirge for them.

³ With the help of Hercules, Daphnis won the contest and slew Lityrses.

His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded
eyes —

And how a call celestial round him rang,
And heavenward from the fountain-brink
he sprang,

And all the marvel of the golden skies. 190

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here
Sole in these fields; yet will I not despair.

Despair I will not, while I yet descry
'Neath the mild canopy of English air
That lonely tree against the western
sky. 195

Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,
Our Gypsy-Scholar haunts, outliving thee!
Fields where soft sheep from cages pull
the hay,

Woods with anemones in flower till May,
Know him a wanderer still; then why not
me? 200

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.

This does not come with houses or with
gold,
With place, with honor, and a flattering
crew;

'Tis not in the world's market bought
and sold — 205

But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired;
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
He wends unfollowed, he must house
alone;

Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-
spired. 210

Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wert
bound;

Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour!
Men gave thee nothing; but this happy
quest,

If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee
power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave thee
rest. 215

And this rude Cumner ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet
fields,
Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful
time,

Here was thine height of strength, thy
golden prime!

And still the haunt beloved a virtue
yields. 220

What though the music of thy rustic flute
Kept not for long its happy, country tone;
Lost it too soon, and learned a stormy
note

Of men contention-tossed, of men who
groan,
Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired
thy throat — 225

It failed, and thou wast mute!
Yet hadst thou always visions of our light,
And long with men of care thou couldst
not stay,

And soon thy foot resumed its wandering
way,

Left human haunt, and on alone till
night. 230

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits
here!

'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,
Thyrsis! in reach of sheep-bells is my
home.

Then through the great town's harsh, heart-
wearying roar,

Let in thy voice a whisper often come, 235

To chase fatigue and fear:

Why faintest thou? I wandered till I died.

Roam on! The light we sought is shining still.

*Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet crowns the
hill,*

Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside. 240
Pub. 1866.

Isolation

To Marguerite

This is the fourth in a series of seven poems published under the heading *Switzerland*.

We were apart; yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew, 5
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was gravel I might have known,
 What far too soon, alas! I learned —
 The heart can bind itself alone,
 And faith may oft be unreturned. 10
 Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell —
 Thou lov'st no more; — Farewell! Fare-
 well!

Farewell! — and thou, thou lonely heart,
 Which never yet without remorse
 Even for a moment didst depart 15
 From thy remote and sphered course
 To haunt the place where passions reign —
 Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame
 Which Luna felt, that summer night, 20
 Flash through her pure immortal frame,
 When she forsook the starry height
 To hang over Endymion's sleep
 Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved 25
 How vain a thing is mortal love,
 Wandering in heaven, far removed,
 But thou hast long had place to prove
 This truth — to prove, and make thine own:
 "Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone." 30

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
 Which touch thee are unmatng things —
 Ocean and clouds and night and day,
 Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;
 And life, and others' joy and pain, 35
 And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men — for they, at least,
 Have dreamed two human hearts might blend
 In one, and were through faith released
 From isolation without end 40
 Prolonged; nor knew, although not less
 Alone than thou, their loneliness.

Pub. 1857.

Dover Beach

The sea is calm to-night.
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair
 Upon the straits; on the French coast the
 light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England
 stand, 4
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
 Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
 Only, from the long line of spray
 Where the sea meets the moon-blanchd sand,
 Listen! you hear the grating roar
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and
 fling 10
 At their return, up the high strand,
 Begin, and cease; and then again begin,
 With tremulous cadence slow; and bring
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles, long ago, 15
 Heard it on the 'Egean, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
 Of human misery; we
 Find also in the sound a thought,
 Hearing it by this distant northern sea. 20

The Sea of Faith
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's
 shore
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled,
 But now I only hear
 Its melancholy long withdrawing roar, 25
 Retreating, to the breath
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles¹ of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams, 31
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,
 And we are here as on a darkling plain, 35
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and
 flight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.
 Pub. 1867.

Rugby Chapel

November, 1857

Coldly, sadly descends
 The autumn-evening. The field
 Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
 ' beaches.

Of withered leaves, and the elms,
 Fade into dimness apace, 5
 Silent; — hardly a shout
 From a few boys late at their play!
 The lights come out in the street,
 In the school-room windows; — but cold,
 Solemn, unlighted, austere, 10
 Through the gathering darkness, arise
 The chapel-walls, in whose bound
 Thou, my father!¹ art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
 Of the autumn evening. But ah! 15
 That word, *gloom*, to my mind
 Brings thee back, in the light
 Of thy radiant vigor again;
 In the gloom of November we passed
 Days not dark at thy side; 20
 Seasons impaired not the ray
 Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.
 Such thou wast! and I stand
 In the autumn evening, and think
 Of bygone autumns with thee. 25

Fifteen years have gone round
 Since thou arosest to tread,
 In the summer-morning, the road
 Of death, at a call unforeseen,
 Sudden. For fifteen years, 30
 We who till then in thy shade
 Rested as under the boughs
 Of a mighty oak, have endured
 Sunshine and rain as we might,
 Bare, unshaded, alone, 35
 Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore
 Tarriest thou now? For that force,
 Surely, has not been left vain!
 Somewhere, surely, afar, 40
 In the sounding labor-house vast
 Of being, is practised that strength,
 Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
 Conscious or not of the past, 45
 Still thou performest the word
 Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —
 Prompt, unwearied, as here!

Still thou upraised with zeal
 The humble good from the ground, 50
 Sternly represses the bad!
 Still, like a trumpet, doth rouse
 Those who with half-open eyes
 Tread the border-land dim
 'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st, 55
 Succorest! — this was thy work,
 This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
 Of mortal men on the earth?
 Most men eddy about 60
 Here and there — eat and drink,
 Chatter and love and hate,
 Gather and squander, are raised
 Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
 Striving blindly, achieving 65
 Nothing; and then they die —
 Perish; — and no one asks
 Who or what they have been,
 More than he asks what waves,
 In the moonlit solitudes mild 70
 Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
 Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
 Ardent, unquenchable, fires, 75
 Not with the crowd to be spent,
 Not without aim to go round
 In an eddy of purposeless dust,
 Effort unmeaning and vain.
 Ah yes! some of us strive
 Not without action to die 80
 Fruitless, but something to snatch
 From dull oblivion, nor all
 Glut the devouring grave!
 We, we have chosen our path —
 Path to a clear-purposed goal, 85
 Path of advance! — but it leads
 A long, steep journey, through sunk
 Gorges, o'er the mountains in snow.
 Cheerful, with friends, we set forth —
 Then, on the height, comes the storm. 90
 Thunder crashes from rock
 To rock, the cataracts reply,
 Lightnings dazzle our eyes.
 Roaring torrents have breached
 The track, the stream-bed descends 95
 In the place where the wayfarer once
 Planted his footstep — the spray

¹ Dr. Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), famous head-master of Rugby.

- Boils o'er its borders! aloft
 The unseen snow-beds dislodge
 Their hanging ruin; alas, 100
 Havoc is made in our train!
 Friends, who set forth at our side,
 Falter, are lost in the storm.
 We, we only are left!
 With frowning foreheads, with lips 105
 Sternly compressed, we strain on,
 On — and at nightfall at last
 Come to the end of our way,
 To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;
 Where the gaunt and taciturn host no
 Stands on the threshold, the wind
 Shaking his thin white hairs —
 Holds his lantern to scan
 Our storm-beat figures, and asks:
 Whom in our party we bring? 115
 Whom we have left in the snow?
- Sadly we answer: We bring
 Only ourselves! we lost
 Sight of the rest in the storm.
 Hardly ourselves we fought through, 120
 Stripped, without friends, as we are.
 Friends, companions, and train,
 The avalanche swept from our side.
- But thou would'st not *along*
 Be saved, my father! *alone* 125
 Conquer and come to thy goal,
 Leaving the rest in the wild.
 We were weary, and we ,
 Fearful, and we in our march
 Fain to drop down and to die. 130
 Still thou turnedst, and still
 Beckonedst the trembler, and still
 Gavest the weary thy hand.
 If, in the paths of the world,
 Stones might have wounded thy feet,
 Toil or dejection have tried 136
 Thy spirit, of that we saw
 Nothing — to us thou wast still
 Cheerful, and helpful and firm!
 Therefore to thee it was given 140
 Many to save with thyself;
 And, at the end of thy day,
 O faithful shepherd! to come,
 Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.
- And through thee I believe 145
 In the noble and great who are gone;
- Pure souls honored and blest
 By former ages, who else —
 Such, so soulless, so poor,
 Is the race of men whom I see — 150
 Seemed but a dream of the heart,
 Seemed but a cry of desire.
 Yes! I believe that there lived
 Others like thee in the past,
 Not like the men of the crowd 155
 Who all round me to-day
 Bluster or cringe, and make life
 Hideous, and arid, and vile;
 But souls tempered with fire,
 Fervent, heroic, and good, fbo
 Helpers and friends of mankind.
- Servants of God! — or sons
 Shall I not call you? because
 Not as servants ye knew
 Your Father's innermost mind, 165
 His, who unwillingly sees
 One of his little ones lost —
 Yours is the praise, if mankind
 Hath not as yet in its march
 Fainted, and fallen, and died! 170
- See! In the rocks of the world
 Marches the host of mankind,
 A feeble, wavering line.
 Where are they tending? — A God
 Marshalled them, gave them their goal. 175
 Ah, but the way is so long!
 Years they have been in the wild!
 Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
 Rising all round, overawe;
 Factions divide them, their host 180
 Threatens to break, to dissolve.
 — Ah, keep, keep them combined!
 Else, of the myriads who fill
 That army, not one shall arrive;
 Sole they shall stray; in the rocks 185
 Stagger for ever in vain,
 Die one by one in the waste.
- Then, in such hour of need
 Of your fainting, dispirited race,
 Ye, like angels, appear, 190
 Radiant with ardor divine!
 Beacons of hope, ye appear!
 Languor is not in your heart,
 Weakness is not in your word,

Weariness not on your brow, 195
 Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
 Panic, despair, flee away.
 Ye move through the ranks, recall
 The stragglers, refresh the outworn, 5
 Praise, re-inspire the brave! 200
 Order, courage, return.
 Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
 Follow your steps as ye go.
 Ye fill up the gaps in our files, 10
 Strengthen the wavering line, 205
 Stablish, continue our march,
 On, to the bound of the waste,
 On, to the City of God.
 Pub. 1867.

Preface to Essays in Criticism

Fmt Series

1865

Arnold's most famous piece of prose. It illustrates fully his urbanity and his playfulness; and has, moreover, a higher quality of eloquence than his reserve usually permitted.

Several of the Essays which are here collected and reprinted had the good or the bad fortune to be much criticized at the time of their first appearance. I am not now going to inflict upon the reader a reply to those criticisms; for one or two explanations which are desirable, I shall elsewhere, perhaps, be able some day to find an opportunity, but, indeed, it is not in my nature, — some of my critics 35 would rather say, not in my power, — to dispute on behalf of any opinion, even my own, very obstinately. To try and approach truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, nor to persist in pressing forward, on 40 any one side, with violence and self-will, — it is only thus, it seems to me, that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious Goddess, whom we shall never see except in outline, but only thus even in outline. He who 45 will do nothing but fight impetuously towards her on his own, one, favorite, particular line, is inevitably destined to run his head into the folds of the black robe in which she is wrapped.

So it is not to reply to my critics that I 50 write this Preface, but to prevent a misunder-

standing, of which certain phrases that some of them use make me apprehensive. Mr. Wright,¹ one of the many translators of Homer, has published a letter to the Dean of Canterbury, complaining of some remarks of mine, uttered now a long while ago, on his version of the *Iliad*.² One cannot be always studying one's own works, and I was really under the impression, till I saw Mr. Wright's complaint, that I had spoken of him with all respect. The reader may judge of my astonishment, therefore, at finding, from Mr. Wright's pamphlet, that I had "declared with much solemnity that there is not any proper reason for his existing." That I never said; but, on looking back at my Lectures on Translating Homer, I find that I did say, not that Mr. Wright, but that Mr. Wright's version of the *Iliad*, repeating in the main the merits and defects of Cowper's version, as Mr. Sotheby's repeated those of Pope's version, had, if I might be pardoned for saying so, no proper reason for existing. Elsewhere I expressly spoke of the merit of his version; but I confess that the phrase, qualified as I have shown, about its want of a proper reason for existing, I used. Well, the phrase had, perhaps, too much vivacity; we have all of us a right to exist, we and our works; an unpopular author should be the last person to call in question this right. So I gladly withdraw the offending phrase, and I am sorry for having used it; Mr. Wright, however, would perhaps be more indulgent to my vivacity, if he considered that we are none of us likely to be lively much longer. My vivacity is but the last sparkle of flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse of color before we all go into drab, — the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austere literal future. Yes, the world will soon be the Philistines'! and then, with every voice, not of thunder, silenced, and the whole earth filled and ennobled every morning by the magnificent roaring of the young lions of the *Daily Telegraph*, we shall all yawn in one another's faces with the dismalest, the most unimpeachable gravity.

¹ Ichabod Charles Wright (1795-1871), translator of Dante and Homer.

² In Arnold's *Lectures On Translating Homer*.

But I return to my design in writing this Preface. That design was, after apologizing to Mr. Wright for my vivacity of five years ago, to beg him and others to let me bear my own burdens, without saddling the great and famous University to which I have the honor to belong with any portion of them. What I mean to deprecate is such phrases as, "his professorial assault," "his assertions issued *ex cathedra*"* "the sanction of his name as the representative of poetry," and so on. Proud as I am of my connection with the University of Oxford,² I can truly say that, knowing how unpopular a task one is undertaking when one tries to pull out a few more stops in that powerful but at present somewhat narrow-toned organ, the modern Englishman, I have sought always to stand by myself, and to compromise others as little as possible. Besides this, my native modesty is such that I have always been shy of assuming the honorable style of Professor, because this is a title I share with so many distinguished men, — Professor Pepper, Professor Anderson, Professor Frickel, and others, — who adorn it, I feel, much more than I do.

However, it is not merely out of modesty that I prefer to stand alone, and to concentrate on myself, as a plain citizen of the republic of letters, and not as an office-bearer in a hierarchy, the whole responsibility for all I write; it is much more out of genuine devotion to the University of Oxford, for which I feel, and always must feel, the fondest, the most reverential attachment. In an epoch of dissolution and transformation, such as that on which we are now entered, habits, ties, and associations are inevitably broken up, the action of individuals becomes more distinct, the shortcomings, errors, heats, disputes, which necessarily attend individual action, are brought into greater prominence. Who would not gladly keep clear, from all **these passing clouds, an august institution** which was there before they arose, and which will be there when they have blown over?

It is true, the *Saturday Review* maintains

that our epoch of transformation is finished; that we have found our philosophy; that the British nation has searched all anchorages for the spirit, and has finally anchored itself, in the fulness of perfected knowledge, on Benthamism.¹ This idea at first made a great impression on me; not only because it is so consoling in itself, but also because it explained a phenomenon which in the summer of last year had, I confess, a good deal troubled me. At that time my avocations led me to travel almost daily on one of the Great Eastern Lines, — the Woodford Branch. Every one knows that the murderer, Muller, perpetrated his detestable act on the North London Railway, close by. The English middle class, of which I am myself a feeble unit, travel on the Woodford Branch in large numbers. Well, the demoralization of our class, — the class which (the newspapers are constantly saying it, so I may repeat it without vanity) has done all the great things which have ever been done in England, — the demoralization, I say, of our class, caused by the Bow tragedy, was something bewildering. Myself a transcendentalist (as the *Saturday Review* knows), I escaped the infection; and, day after day, I used to ply my agitated fellow-travellers with all the consolations which my transcendentalism would naturally suggest to me. I reminded them how Caesar refused to take precautions against assassination, because life was not worth having at the price of an ignoble solicitude for it. I reminded them what insignificant atoms we all are in the life of the world. "Suppose the worst to happen," I said, addressing a portly jeweller from Cheapside; "suppose even yourself to be the victim; // *n'y a pas d'homme necessaire*."² We should miss you for a day or two upon the Woodford Branch; but the great mundane movement would still go on, the gravel walks of your villa would still be rolled, dividends would still be paid at the Bank, omnibuses would still run, there would still be the old crush at the corner of Fenchurch Street." All was of no avail. Nothing could moderate, in the bosom of the great English middle class, their

¹ from his official seat.

² When the above was written the author had still the Chair of Poetry at Oxford, which he has since vacated. (Arnold.)

¹ The utilitarianism of the school of Jeremy Bentham.

^a No man is necessary.

passionate, absorbing, almost bloodthirsty clinging to life. At the moment I thought this over-concern a little unworthy; but the *Saturday Review* suggests a touching explanation of it. What I took for the ignoble clinging to life of a comfortable worldling, was, perhaps, only the ardent longing of a faithful Benthamite, traversing an age still dimmed by the last mists of transcendentalism, to be spared long enough to see his religion in the full and final blaze of its triumph. This respectable man, whom I imagined to be going up to London to serve his shop, or to buy shares, or to attend an Exeter Hall meeting, or to assist at the deliberations of the Marylebone Vestry, was even, perhaps, in real truth, on a pious pilgrimage, to obtain from Mr. Bentham's executors a secret bone of his great, dissected master.¹

And yet, after all, I cannot but think that the *Saturday Review* has here, for once, fallen a victim to an idea, — a beautiful but deluding idea, — and that the British nation has not yet, so entirely as the reviewer seems to imagine, found the last word of its philosophy. No, we are all seekers still! seekers often make mistakes, and I wish mine to redound to my own discredit only, and not to touch Oxford. Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

There are our young barbarians, all at play!

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, — to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? — nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen. Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire

¹ Bentham's skeleton is preserved at University College, Oxford.

us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone, that bondage which Goethe, in his incomparable lines on the death of Schiller, makes it his friend's highest praise (and nobly did Schiller deserve the praise) to have left miles out of sight behind him; — the bondage of "*was uns alle bandigt, das Gemeine!*"¹ She will forgive me, even if I have unwittingly drawn upon her a shot or two aimed at her unworthy son; for she is generous, and the cause in which I fight is, after all, hers. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone?

The Function of Criticism at the Present Time

1865

This is the first essay in *Essays in Criticism, First Series*. Here Arnold sets forth his principle of criticism, applied to life as well as to literature. It will be seen that Arnold protests not only against the selfishness and complacent materialism of his countrymen, but against their sectarian narrowness. His remedy is a more intellectual one than Carlyle's — i.e., the application of ideas to life.

Many objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said that "of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires — criticism"; and that the power and value of

¹ That which constrains us all, the commonplace.

English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. And the other day, having been led by an excellent notice of Wordsworth, published in the *North Britton Review*, to turn again to his biography, I found, in the words of this great man, whom I, for one, must always listen to with the profoundest respect, a sentence passed on the critic's business, which seems to justify every possible disparagement of it. Wordsworth says in one of his letters:

"The writers in these publications" (the *Reviews*), "while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favorable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry."

And a trustworthy reporter of his conversation quotes a more elaborate judgment to the same effect:

"Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time consumed in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others; a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless."

It is almost too much to expect of poor human nature, that a man capable of producing some effect in one line of literature, should, for the greater good of society, voluntarily doom himself to impotence and obscurity in another. Still less is this to be expected from men addicted to the composition of the "false or malicious criticism" of which Wordsworth speaks. However, everybody would admit that a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written. Everybody, too, would be willing to admit, as a general proposition, that the critical faculty is lower than the inventive. But is at true that criticism is really, in itself, a bane-

ful and injurious employment? is it true that all time given to writing critiques on the works of others would be much better employed if it were given to original composition, of whatever kind this may be? Is it true that Johnson had better have gone on producing more *Irenes*¹ instead of writing his *Lives of the Poets*? nay, is it certain that Wordsworth himself was better employed in making his Ecclesiastical Sonnets than when he made his celebrated Preface,³ so full of criticism, and criticism of the works of others? Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes — not difficult, I think, to be traced — which may have led Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic may with advantage seize an occasion for trying his own conscience, and for asking himself of what real service, at any given moment, the practice of criticism either is, or may be made, to his own mind and spirit, and to the minds and spirits of others.

The critical power is of lower rank than the creative. True; but in assenting to this proposition, one or two things are to be kept in mind. It is undeniable that the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the true function of man; it is proved to be so by man's finding in it his true happiness. But it is undeniable, also, that men may have the sense of exercising this free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; if it were not so, all but a very few men would be shut out from the true happiness of all men. They may have it in well-doing, they may have it in learning, they may have it even in criticizing. This is one thing to be kept in mind. Another is, that the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art, however high this exercise of it may rank, is not at all

¹ A tragedy by Johnson produced February 6, 1749. ³ Seep. 54.

epochs and under all conditions possible; and that therefore labor may be vainly spent in attempting it, which might with more fruit be used in preparing for it, in rendering it possible. This creative power works with elements, with materials; what if it has not those materials, those elements, ready for its use? In that case it must surely wait till they are ready. Now, in literature — I will limit myself to literature, for it is about literature that the question arises — the elements with which the creative power works are ideas; the best ideas on every matter which literature touches, current at the time. At any rate we may lay it down as certain that in modern literature no manifestation of the creative power not working with these can be very important or fruitful. And I say *current* at the time, not merely accessible at the time; for creative literary genius does not principally show itself in discovering new ideas, that is rather the business of the philosopher. The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations, making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare; this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power, as I said in the words already quoted, "in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." Thus

it tends, at last, to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself. It tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

Or, to narrow our range, and quit these considerations of the general march of genius and of society — considerations which are apt to become too abstract and impalpable — every one can see that a poet, for instance, ought to know life and the world before dealing with them in poetry; and life and the world being in modern times very complex things, the creation of a modern poet, to be worth much, implies a great critical effort behind it; else it would be a comparatively poor, barren, and short-lived affair. This is why Byron's poetry had so little endurance in it, and Goethe's so much; both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, and he knew them much more as they really are.

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it in fact something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting w

completeness and variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he could have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is — his thought richer, and his influence of wider application — was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

But to speak of books and reading may easily lead to a misunderstanding here. It was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry at this epoch; Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading. Pindar and Sophocles — as we all say so glibly, and often with so little discernment of the real import of what we are saying — had not many books; Shakespeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakespeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive. And this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise, in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand, all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they are helps to this. Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work. This is by no means an equivalent to the artist for the nationally diffused life and thought of the epochs of Sophocles or Shakespeare; but, besides that it may be a means of preparation for such epochs, it does really constitute, if many share in it, a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great value. Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely-combined critical effort of Germany formed for Goethe, when he lived and worked. There was no national glow of life and thought there, as in the Athens of Pericles or the England of Eliza-

beth. That was the poet's weakness. But there was a sort of equivalent for it in the complete culture and unfettered thinking of a large body of Germans. That was his strength. In the England of the first quarter of this century there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Elizabeth, nor yet a culture and a force of learning and criticism such as were to be found in Germany. Therefore the creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis; a thorough interpretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first sight it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have come a crop of works of genius equal to that which came out of the stir of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renaissance, with its powerful episode the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. These were, in the main, disinterestedly intellectual and spiritual movements; movements in which the human spirit looked for its satisfaction in itself and in the increased play of its own activity. The French Revolution took a political, practical character. The movement which went on in France under the old regime, from 1700 to 1789, was far more really akin than that of the Revolution itself to the movement of the Renaissance; the France of Voltaire and Rousseau told far more powerfully upon the mind of Europe than the France of the Revolution. Goethe reproached this last expressly with having "thrown quiet culture back." Nay, and the true key to how much in our Byron, even in our Wordsworth, is this! — that they had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind. The French Revolution, however, that object of so much blind love and so much blind hatred — found undoubtedly its motive-power in the intelligence of men, and not in their practical sense; — this is what distinguishes it from the English Revolution of Charles the First's time. This is what makes it a more spiritual event than our Revolution, an event of much

more powerful and world-wide interest, though practically less successful — it appeals to an order of ideas which are universal, certain, permanent. 1789 asked of a thing, Is it rational? 1641 asked of a thing, Is it legal? or, when it went furthest, Is it according to conscience? This is the English fashion, a fashion to be treated, within its own sphere, with the highest respect; for its success, within its own sphere, has been prodigious. But what is law in one place is not law in another; what is law here to-day is not law even here to-morrow; and as for conscience, what is binding on one man's conscience is not binding on another's. The old woman¹ who threw her stool at the head of the surplined minister in the Tron Church at Edinburgh obeyed an impulse to which millions of the human race may be permitted to remain strangers. But the prescriptions of reason are absolute, unchanging, of universal validity; *to count by tens is the easiest way of counting* — that is a proposition of which every one, from here to the Antipodes, feels the force; at least I should say so if we did not live in a country where it is not impossible that any morning we may find a letter in the *Times* declaring that a decimal coinage is an absurdity. That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason, and with an ardent zeal for making its prescriptions triumph, is a very remarkable thing, when we consider how little of mind or anything so worthy and quickening as mind, comes into the motives which alone, in general, *impel* great masses of men. In spite of the extravagant direction given to this enthusiasm, in spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas, a unique and still living power; it is — it will probably long remain — the greatest, the most animating event in history. And as no sincere passion for the things of the mind, even though it turn out in many respects an unfortunate passion,

is ever quite thrown away and quite barren of good, France has reaped from hers one fruit — the natural and legitimate fruit, though not precisely the grand fruit she expected: she is the country in Europe where *the people* is most alive.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go for hours. And all we are in the habit of saying on it has undoubtedly a great deal of truth. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world of politics and practice, violently to revolutionize this world to their bidding — that is quite another thing. There is the world of ideas and there is the world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day: "That a thing is an anomaly, I consider to be no objection to it whatever." I venture to think he was wrong; that a thing is an anomaly *is* an objection to it, but absolutely and in the sphere of ideas: it is not necessarily, under such and such circumstances, or at such and such a moment, an objection to it in the sphere of politics and practice. Joubert¹ has said beautifully: "*C'est la force et le droit qui reglent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit.*" Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready. *Force nil right is ready*; and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right — *right*, so far as we are concerned, *is not ready* — until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, will depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it.

¹ Janet Geddes, who gave the signal for the resistance of the Scotch to the imposition of the English liturgy under Charles I, in 1637.

¹ Joseph Joubert (1754-1824), a French moralist, of whom Arnold wrote in one of the *Essays in Criticism*.

Therefore for other people enamored of their own newly discerned right, to attempt to impose it upon us as ours, and violently to substitute their right for our force, is an act of tyranny, and to be resisted. It sets at nought the second great half of our maxim, *force till right is ready*. This was the grand error of the French Revolution; and its movement of ideas, by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere, ran, indeed, a prodigious and memorable course, but produced no such intellectual fruit as the movement of ideas of the Renaissance, and created, in opposition to itself, what I may call an *epoch of concentration*. The great force of that epoch of concentration was England, and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French Revolution¹ as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded, and his observation therefore at fault. But on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth. They contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought. It is his accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. It does not hurt him that Dr. Price² and the Liberals were displeased with him; it does not even

hurt him that George the Third and the Tories were enchanted with him. His greatness is that he lived in a world which neither English Liberalism nor English Toryism is apt to enter; — the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits. So far is it from being really true of him that he "to party gave up what was meant for mankind," that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, with his sincere conviction of its mischievousness, he can close a memorandum on the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote — the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December 1791 — with these striking words:

"The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, for ever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. // *a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate.*"

That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature, or indeed in any literature. That is what I call living by ideas: when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other — still to be able to think, still to be irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and, like Balaam, to be unable to speak anything *but what the Lord has put in your mouth*. I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

For the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament, and be-

* Sec vol. i, p. 868.

³ Dr. Richard Price (1723-91), whose address in defense of the French Revolution called forth Burke's *Reflections*.

lieves, point-blank, that for a thing to be an anomaly is absolutely no objection to it whatever. He is like the Lord Auckland of Burke's day, who, in a memorandum on the French Revolution, talks of "certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, who have presumed themselves capable of establishing a new system of society." The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas easily become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice. This would be all very well if the dislike and neglect confined themselves to ideas transported out of their own sphere, and meddling rashly with practice; but they are inevitably extended to ideas as such, and to the whole life of intelligence; practice is everything, a free play of the mind is nothing. The notion of the free play of the mind upon all subjects being a pleasure in itself, being an object of desire, being an essential provider of elements without which a nation's spirit, whatever compensations it may have for them, must, in the long run, die of inanition, hardly enters into an Englishman's thoughts. It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine quality of man's nature, just this disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake, — it is noticeable, I say, that this word has in our language no sense of the kind, no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one. But criticism, real criticism, is essentially the exercise of this very quality. It obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever. This is an instinct for which there is, I think, little original sympathy in the practical English nature, and what there was of it has undergone a long benumbing period of blight and suppression in the epoch of concentration which followed the French Revolution.

But epochs of concentration cannot well endure for ever; epochs of expansion, in the due course of things, follow them. Such an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country. In the first place all danger of a hostile forcible pressure of foreign ideas upon our practice has long disappeared; like the traveller in the fable, therefore, we begin to wear our cloak a little more loosely. Then, with a long peace, the ideas of Europe steal gradually and amicably in, and mingle, though in infinitesimally small quantities at a time, with our own notions. Then, too, in spite of all that is said about the absorbing and brutalizing influence of our passionate material progress, it seems to be indisputable that this progress is likely, though not certain, to lead in the end to an apparition of intellectual life; and that man, after he has made himself perfectly comfortable and has now to determine what to do with himself next, may begin to remember that he has a mind, and that the mind may be made the source of great pleasure. I grant it is mainly the privilege of faith, at present, to discern this end to our railways, our business, and our fortune-making; but we shall see if, here as elsewhere, faith is not in the end the true prophet. Our ease, our travelling, and our unbounded liberty to hold just as hard and securely as we please to the practice to which our notions have given birth, all tend to beget an inclination to deal a little more freely with these notions themselves, to canvass them a little, to penetrate a little into their real nature. Fluttermgs of curiosity, in the foreign sense of the word, appear amongst us, and it is in these that criticism must look to find its account. Criticism first; a time of true creative activity, perhaps — which, as I have said, must inevitably be preceded amongst us by a time of criticism — hereafter, when criticism has done its work.

It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word — disinterestedness. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from

what is called "the practical view of things;" by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them. Else criticism, besides being really false to its own nature, merely continues in the old rut which it has hitherto followed in this country, and will certainly miss the chance now given to it.

For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted. An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing, it may be said, as just an organ for a free play of the mind, we have not. But we have the *Edinburgh Review*, existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of the mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *British Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Times*, exist-

ing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society; every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favor. Directly this play of mind wants to have more scope, and to forget the pressure of practical considerations a little, it is checked, it is made to feel the chain. We saw this the other day in the extinction, so much to be regretted, of the *Home and Foreign Review*. Perhaps in no organ of criticism in this country was there so much knowledge, so much play of mind; but these could not save it. The *Dublin Review* subordinates play of mind to the practical business of English and Irish Catholicism, and lives. It must needs be that men should act in sects and parties, that each of these sects and parties should have its organ, and should make this organ subserve the interests of its action; but it would be well, too, that there should be a criticism, not the minister of these interests, not their enemy, but absolutely and entirely independent of them. No other criticism will ever attain any real authority or make any real way towards its end, — the creating a current of true and fresh ideas.

It is because criticism has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice, has been so directly polemical and controversial, that it has so ill accomplished, in this country, its best spiritual work; which is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarizing, to lead him towards perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things. A polemical -practical criticism makes men blind even to the ideal imperfection of their practice, makes them willingly assert its ideal perfection, in order the better to secure it against attack; and clearly this is narrowing and baneful for them. If they were reassured on the practical side, speculative considerations of ideal perfection they might be brought to enter-

tain, and their spiritual horizon would thus gradually widen. Sir Charles Adderley¹ says to the Warwickshire farmers:

"Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world!—The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world."

Mr. Roebuck² says to the Sheffield cutlers:

"I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last."

Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City.

Das wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blicke
Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt —

says Goethe; "the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do." Clearly this is a better line of reflection for weak humanity, so long as it remains on this earthly field of labor and trial.

But neither Sir Charles Adderley nor Mr. Roebuck is by nature inaccessible to considerations of this sort. They only lose sight of them owing to the controversial life we all lead, and the practical form which all speculation takes with us. They have in view opponents whose aim is not ideal, but practical; and in their zeal to uphold their own practice against these innovators, they go so far as even to attribute to this practice an ideal perfection. Somebody has been wanting to introduce a six-pound franchise, or to abolish church-rates, or to collect agri-

cultural statistics by force, or to diminish local self-government. How natural, in reply to such proposals, very likely improper or ill-timed, to go a little beyond the mark and to say stoutly, "such a race of people as we stand, so superior to all the world! The old Anglo-Saxon race, the best breed in the whole world! I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last! I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" And so long as criticism answers this dithyramb by insisting that the old Anglo-Saxon race would be still more superior to all others if it had no church-rates, or that our unrivalled happiness would last yet longer with a six-pound franchise, so long will the strain, "The best breed in the whole world!" swell louder and louder, everything ideal and refining will be lost out of sight, and both the assailed and their critics will remain in a sphere, to say the truth, perfectly unvital, a sphere in which spiritual progression is impossible. But let criticism leave church-rates and the franchise alone, and in the most candid spirit, without a single lurking thought of practical innovation, confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper immediately after reading Mr. Roebuck:

"A shocking child murder has just been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody."

Nothing but that; but, in juxtaposition with the absolute eulogies of Sir Charles Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquent, how suggestive are those few lines! "Our old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whole world!" — how much that is harsh and ill-favored there is in this best! Wragg! If we are to talk of ideal perfection, of "the best in the whole world," has any one reflected what a touch of grossness in our race, what an original shortcoming in the more delicate spiritual perceptions, is shown by the natural growth amongst us of such hideous names — Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg! In Ionia and Attica they were luckier in this respect than

¹ Sir Charles Bowyer Adderley, Baron Norton (1814-1905), a leading Tory politician.

² John Arthur Roebuck (1802-79), Member of Parliament for Sheffield.

"the best race in the world;" by the Illissus there was no Wragg, poor thing! And "our unrivalled happiness,"—what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the workhouse, the dismal Mapperly Hills — how dismal those who have seen them will remember; — the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! "I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" Perhaps not, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the final touch — short, bleak and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody*. The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivalled happiness; or (shall I say?) the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straightforward vigor of our old Anglo-Saxon breed! There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. By eluding sterile conflict, by refusing to remain in the sphere where alone narrow and relative conceptions have any worth and validity, criticism may diminish its momentary importance, but only in this way has it a chance of gaining admittance for those wider and more perfect conceptions to which all its duty is really owed. Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody*; but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key.

It will be said that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism, and that, by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment and abandoning the sphere of practical life, it condemns itself to a slow and obscure work. Slow and obscure it may be, but it is the only proper work of criticism. The mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are, very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas repose, and must repose, the general practice of the world. That is as much as saying that whoever sets himself to

see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its own work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as it is in England. But it is only by remaining collected, and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service; and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course, and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him.

For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. But it is not easy to lead a practical man — unless you reassure him as to your practical intentions, you have no chance of leading him — to see that a thing which he has always been used to look at from one side only, which he greatly values, and which, looked at from that side, quite deserves, perhaps, all the prizing and admiring which he bestows upon it — that this thing, looked at from another side, may appear much less beneficent and beautiful, and yet retain all its claims to our practical allegiance. Where shall we find language innocent enough, how shall we make the spotless purity of our intentions evident enough, to enable us to say to the political Englishman that the British constitution itself, which, seen from the practical side, looks such a magnificent organ of progress and virtue, seen from the speculative side — with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theory, its studied avoidance of clear thoughts — that, seen from this side, our august constitution sometimes looks — forgive me, shade of Lord Somers!¹ — a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines? How is *Cobbett*² to say this and not be mis-

¹ A leading statesman of the eighteenth century, noted as a defender of the constitution.

² William Cobbett (1766-1835), a radical journalist.

understood, blackened as he is with the smoke of a lifelong conflict in the field of political practice? how is Mr. Carlyle to say it and not be misunderstood, after his furious raid into this field with his *Latter-day Pamphlets*? how is Mr. Ruskin, after his pugnacious political economy? I say, the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere, if he wants to make a beginning for that more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps one day make its benefits felt even in this sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner.

Do what he will, however, the critic will still remain exposed to frequent misunderstandings, and nowhere so much as in this country. For here people are particularly indisposed even to comprehend that without this free disinterested treatment of things, truth and the highest culture are out of the question. So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to think of reaching them in any other. "We are all *terra filii*,"¹ cries their eloquent advocate; "all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other way than the way dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it *the liberal party*, and let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along. If one of us speaks well, applaud him; if one of us speaks ill, applaud him too; we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth." In this way the pursuit of truth becomes really a social, practical pleasurable affair, almost requiring a chairman, a secretary, and advertisements; with the excitement of a little resistance, an oc-

¹ sons of the earth.

casional scandal, to give the happy sense of difficulty overcome; but, in general, plenty of bustle and very little thought. To act is so easy, as Goethe says; to think is so hard! It is true that the critic has many temptations to go with the stream, to make one of the party movement, one of these *terra filii*; it seems ungracious to refuse to be a *terra filius*, when so many excellent people are; but the critic's duty is to refuse, or, if resistance is vain, at least to cry with Obermann:¹ *Pensons en résistant*.³

How serious a matter it is to try and resist, I had ample opportunity of experiencing when I ventured some time ago to criticize the celebrated first volume of Bishop Colenso.³ The echoes of the storm which was then raised I still, from time to time, hear grumbling round me. That storm arose out of a misunderstanding almost inevitable. It is a result of no little culture to attain to a clear perception that science and religion are two wholly different things; the multitude will for ever confuse them; but happily that is of no great real importance, for while it imagines itself to live by its false science, it does really live by its true religion. Dr. Colenso, however, in his first volume did all he could to strengthen the confusion, and to make it dangerous. He did this with the best intentions, I freely admit, and with the most candid ignorance that this was the natural effect of what he was doing; but, says Joubert, "Ignorance, which in matters of morals extenuates the crime, is itself, in intellectual matters, a crime of the first order." I criticized Bishop Colenso's speculative confusion. Immediately there was a cry raised: "What is this? here is a liberal attacking a liberal. Do not you belong to the movement? are not you a friend of truth? Is not Bishop Colenso in pursuit of truth? then speak with proper respect of his book. Dr. Stanley is another friend of truth, and you speak with proper respect of his book; why make these invidious differences? both books

¹ The title of a book by the French romanticist Étienne Pivert de Senancour (1770-1846).

³ Let us perish in resisting.

⁴ John William Colenso (1814-83), Bishop of Natal, whose heresy on the subject of eternal punishment aroused a storm of ecclesiastical controversy.

are excellent, admirable, liberal; Bishop Colenso's perhaps the most so, because it is the boldest, and will have the best practical consequences for the liberal cause. Do you want to encourage to the attack of a brother liberal his, and your, and our implacable enemies, the *Church and State Review* or the *Record*—the High Church rhinoceros and the Evangelical hya-na? Be silent, therefore; or rather speak, speak as loud as ever you can! and go into ecstasies over the eighty and odd pigeons."

But criticism cannot follow this coarse and indiscriminate method. It is unfortunately possible for a man in pursuit of truth to write a book which reposes upon a false conception. Even the practical consequences of a book are to genuine criticism no recommendation of it, if the book is, in the highest sense, blundering. I see that a lady who herself, too, is in pursuit of truth, and who writes with great ability, but a little too much, perhaps, under the influence of the practical spirit of the English liberal movement, classes Bishop Colenso's book and M. Renan's together, in her survey of the religious state of Europe, as facts of the same order, works, both of them, of "great importance;" "great ability, power, and skill;" Bishop Colenso's, perhaps, the most powerful; at least, Miss Cobbe¹ gives special expression to her gratitude that to Bishop Colenso "has been given the strength to grasp, and the courage to teach, truths of such deep import." In the same way, more than one popular writer has compared him to Luther. Now it is just this kind of false estimate which the critical spirit is, it seems to me, bound to resist. It is really the strongest possible proof of the low ebb at which, in England, the critical spirit is, that while the critical hit in the religious literature of Germany is Dr. Strauss's book,² in that of France M. Renan's book, the book of Bishop Colenso is the critical hit in the re-

ligious literature of England. Bishop Colenso's book reposes on a total misconception of the essential elements of the religious problem, as that problem is now presented for solution. To criticism therefore, which seeks to have the best that is known and thought on this problem, it is, however well meant, of no importance whatever. M. Renan's book attempts a new synthesis of the elements furnished to us by the Four Gospels. It attempts, in my opinion, a synthesis, perhaps premature, perhaps impossible, certainly not successful. Perhaps we shall always have to acquiesce in Fleury's sentence on such recastings of the Gospel-story: *Quiconque s' imagine la pouvoir mieux écrire, ne l'entend pas*.¹ M. Renan had himself passed by anticipation a like sentence on his own work, when he said: "If a new presentation of the character of Jesus were offered to me, I would not have it; its very clearness would be, in my opinion, the best proof of its insufficiency." His friends may with perfect truth rejoin that at the sight of the Holy Land, and of the actual scene of the Gospel-story, all the current of M. Renan's thoughts may have naturally changed, and a new casting of that story irresistibly suggested itself to him; and that this is just a case for applying Cicero's maxim: Change of mind is not inconsistency — *nemo doctus unquam mutatonem consiliu inconstantiam dixit esse*.² Nevertheless, for criticism, M. Renan's first thought must still be the truer one, as long as his new casting so fails more fully to commend itself, more fully (to use Coleridge's happy phrase about the Bible) to find us. Still M. Renan's attempt is, for criticism, of the most real interest and importance, since, with all its difficulty, a fresh synthesis of the New Testament *data* — not a making war on them, in Voltaire's fashion, not a leaving them out of mind in the world's fashion, but the putting a new construction upon them, the taking them from under the old traditional, conventional point of view and placing them under

¹ Frances Power Cobbe (1822-1904), a popular writer on religious topics.

² David Friedrich Strauss (1808-74), a German theologian, and Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-92), French scholar and critic, both wrote lives of Jesus which attempt to rationalize the miraculous elements in the narrative of the Gospels.

¹ Whoever imagines that he has power to write better does not understand it.

² No wise man ever said that change of opinion was inconsistency.

a new one — is the very essence of the religious problem, as now presented; and only by efforts in this direction can it receive a solution.

Again, in the same spirit in which she judges Bishop Colenso, Miss Cobbe, like so many earnest liberals of our practical race, both here and in America, herself sets vigorously about a positive re-construction of religion, about making a religion of the future out of hand, or at least setting about making it. We must not rest, she and they are always thinking and saying, in negative criticism, we must be creative and constructive; hence we have such works as her recent *Religious Duty*, and works still more considerable, perhaps, by others, which will be in every one's mind. These works often have much ability; they often spring out of sincere convictions, and a sincere wish to do good; and they sometimes, perhaps, do good. Their fault is (if I may be permitted to say so) one which they have in common with the British College of Health, in the New Road. Every one knows the British College of Health; it is that building with the lion and the statue of the Goddess Hygeia before it; at least I am sure about the lion, though I am not absolutely certain about the Goddess Hygeia. This building does credit, perhaps, to the resources of Dr. Morrison¹ and his disciples; but it falls a good deal short of one's idea of what a British College of Health ought to be. In England, where we hate public interference and love individual enterprise, we have a whole crop of places like the British College of Health; the grand name without the grand thing. Unluckily, creditable to individual enterprise as they are, they tend to impair our taste by making us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to a public institution. The same may be said of the religions of the future of Miss Cobbe and others. Creditable, like the British College of Health, to the resources of their authors, they yet tend to make us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to religious constructions. The historic re-

ligions, with all their faults, have had this; it certainly belongs to the religious sentiment, when it truly flowers, to have this; and we impoverish our spirit if we allow a religion of the future without it. What then is the duty of criticism here? To take the practical point of view, to applaud the liberal movement and all its works — its New Road religions of the future into the bargain — for their general utility's sake? By no means; but to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal.

For criticism, these are elementary laws; but they never can be popular, and in this country they have been very little followed, and one meets with immense obstacles in following them. That is a reason for asserting them again and again. Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well-meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction, if in the sphere of the ideal they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance. It must be patient, and know how to wait; and flexible, and know how to attach itself to things and how to withdraw from them. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fulness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which in the practical sphere may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings or illusions of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent. And this without any notion of favoring or injuring, in the practical sphere, one power or the other; without any notion of playing off, in this sphere, one power against the other. When one looks, for instance, at the English Divorce Court — an institution which perhaps has its practical conveniences, but which in the ideal sphere is so hideous; an institution which neither makes divorce impossible nor makes it decent, which allows a man to get rid of his wife, or a wife of her husband, but makes them drag one another first, for the public edification, through a mire of unutterable infamy — when one looks at this charming institution, I say, with its crowded trials,

¹James Morison (1770-1840), who discovered a "universal remedy" known as Morison's pills.

its newspaper reports, and its money compensations, this institution in which the gross unregenerate British Philistine has indeed stamped an image of himself — one may be permitted to find the marriage theory of Catholicism refreshing and elevating. Or when Protestantism, in virtue of its supposed rational and intellectual origin, gives the law to criticism too magisterially, criticism may and must remind it that its pretensions, in this respect, are illusive and do it harm; that the Reformation was a moral rather than an intellectual event; that Luther's theory of grace no more exactly reflects the mind of the spirit than Bossuet's philosophy of history reflects it; and that there is no more antecedent probability of the Bishop of Durham's stock of ideas being agreeable to perfect reason than of Pope Pius the Ninth's. But criticism will not on that account forget the achievements of Protestantism in the practical and moral sphere; nor that, even in the intellectual sphere, Protestantism, though in a blind and stumbling manner, carried forward the Renaissance, while Catholicism threw itself violently across its path.

I lately heard a man of thought and energy contrasting the want of ardor and movement which he now found amongst young men in this country with what he remembered in his own youth, twenty years ago. "What reformers we were then!" he exclaimed; "what a zeal we had! how we canvassed every institution in Church and State, and were prepared to remodel them all on first principles!" He was inclined to regret, as a spiritual flagging, the lull which he saw. I am disposed rather to regard it as a pause in which the turn to a new mode of spiritual progress is being accomplished. Everything was long seen, by the young and ardent amongst us, in inseparable connection with politics and practical life. We have pretty well exhausted the benefits of seeing things in this connection, we have got all that can be got by so seeing them. Let us try a more disinterested mode of seeing them; let us betake ourselves more to the serenest life of the mind and spirit. This life, too, may have its excesses and dangers; but they are not for us at present. Let us think of quietly en-

larging our stock of true and fresh ideas, and not, as soon as we get an idea or half an idea, be running out with it into the street, and trying to make it rule there. Our ideas will, in the end, shape the world all the better for maturing a little. Perhaps in fifty years' time it will in the English House of Commons be an objection to an institution that it is an anomaly, and my friend the Member of Parliament will shudder in his grave. But let us in the meanwhile rather endeavor that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That will be a change so vast, that the imagination almost fails to grasp it. *Ab infegro saclorum nascitur ordo.*¹

If I have insisted so much on the course which criticism must take where politics and religion are concerned, it is because, where these burning matters are in question, it is most likely to go astray. I have wished, above all, to insist on the attitude which criticism should adopt toward things in general; on its right tone and temper of mind. But then comes another question as to the subject-matter which literary criticism should seek. Here in general, its course is determined for it by the idea which is the law of its being; the idea of a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas. By the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth, must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides, and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence. The English critic, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him. Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business, and so in some sense it is, but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is

¹ From the renewal of the generations order is born.

the valuable one; and thus knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself. And it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it — but insensibly, and in the second place, not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract lawgiver — that he will generally do most good to his readers. Sometimes, no doubt, for the sake of establishing an author's place in literature, and his relation to a central standard (and if this is not done, how are we to get at our *best in the world*?) criticism may have to deal with a subject-matter so familiar that fresh knowledge is out of the question, and then it must be all judgment; an enunciation and detailed application of principles. Here the great safeguard is never to let oneself become abstract, always to retain an intimate and lively consciousness of the truth of what one is saying, and, the moment this fails us, to be sure that something is wrong. Still, under all circumstances, this mere judgment and application of principles is, in itself, not the most satisfactory work to the critic; like mathematics, it is tautological, and cannot well give us, like fresh learning, the sense of creative activity.

But stop, someone will say; all this talk is of no practical use to us whatever; this criticism of yours is not what we have in our minds when we speak of criticism; when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day; when you offer to tell criticism of its function, it is to this criticism that we expect you to address yourself. I am sorry for it for I am afraid I must disappoint these expectations. I am bound by my own definition of criticism: *a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world*. How much of current English literature comes into this "best that is known and thought in the world"? Not very much, I fear; certainly less, at this moment, than of the current literature of France or Germany. Well, then, am I to alter my definition of criticism, in order to meet the requirements of a number of practising English critics, who, after all, are

free in their choice of a business? that would be making criticism lend itself to one of those alien practical considerations, which, I have said, are so fatal to it. One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass — so much better disregarded — of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavor, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world: one may say, that to get anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own; and the more unlike his own, the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with — the criticism which alone can much help us for the future, the criticism which, throughout Europe, is at the present moment meant, when so much stress is laid on the importance of criticism and the critical spirit — is a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?

There is so much inviting us! — what are we to take? what will nourish us in growth towards perfection? That is the question which, with the immense field of life and literature lying before him, the critic has to answer: for himself first, afterwards for others. In this idea of the critic's business the essays brought together in the following pages have had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning: to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive, and it is not denied to criticism to have it; but then criticism must be sincere,

simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity; a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to what he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible.

Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The epochs of Æschylus and Shakespeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is, no doubt, the true life of literature; there is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness: but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries; it will certainly be the best title to esteem with posterity.

Sweetness and Light

1867

The opening chapter of *Culture and Anarchy: an essay in Political and Social Criticism*, first published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1867-68, and in book form in 1869. The chapter-title is an expression taken from Swift, meaning Beauty and Intelligence. Here Arnold continues the argument, advanced in the preceding essay, for the pursuit of perfection through intellectual progress.

The disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people

who have not got it. No serious man would call this *culture*, or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very different estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word *curiosity* gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity. In the *Quarterly Review*, some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte-Beuve,¹ and a very inadequate estimate it in my judgment was. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this: that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word *curiosity*, thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte-Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praiseworthy and not blameworthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For, as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity — a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are — which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable. Nay, and the very desire to see things as they are implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame curiosity. Montesquieu says: "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to

¹ Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve (1804-69) French critic whom Arnold made in a sense his model.

augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term *curiosity* stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it — motives eminently such as are called social — come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and preeminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a *study of perfection*. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As, in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's¹ words: "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson:² "To make reason and the will of God prevail!"

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be over-hasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy no-

tions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other, which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardor, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all around us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adapting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened reason and the will of God, in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine — social, political, religious — has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should underrate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclu-

¹ Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (i68(?) 1755), author of *l'Esprit des lois*.

² Thomas Wilson (died 1755), author of *Maxims*, frequently praised by Arnold.

sion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to — to learn, in short, the will of God — the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavor to *see* and *learn* this, but as the endeavor, also, to make it *prevail*, the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere endeavor to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavor of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself — religion, that voice of the deepest human experience — does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture — culture seeking the determination of this question through *all* the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution — likewise reaches. Religion says: *The kingdom of God is within you*; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an *internal* condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. It

places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture." Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a *general* expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

But, finally, perfection — as culture from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it — is a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the

mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances — it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright,¹ and Mr. Frederic Harrison,² and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilization is, to a much greater degree than the civilization of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that mechanical character, which civilization tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an *inward* condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a *general* expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality, our maxim of "every man for himself." Above all, the idea of perfection as a *harmonious* expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely long to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. And, meanwhile, the mode of

action they have to pursue, and the sort of habits they must fight against, ought to be made quite clear for every one to see, who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve, but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's stock argument for proving the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and for quite stopping the mouths of all gain-sayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing it. "May not every man in England say what he likes?" —Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying — has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the *Times*, replying to some foreign strictures on the dress, looks, and behavior of the English abroad, urge that the English ideal is that every one should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like the rule by which he fashions himself, but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Every one must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure

¹John Bright (1811-89), a British statesman who took a leading part in the repeal of the Corn Laws and other Liberal measures.

²Frederic Harrison (1831-1925), an essayist on religious, literary, and social subjects, leader in the movement to establish a religion on the basis of science, called Positivism.

of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what is greatness? — culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration. If England were swallowed up by the sea to-morrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind — would most, therefore, show the evidences of having possessed greatness — the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depending on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they ate, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth, again, that end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed — the commonest of commonplaces tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe anything more firmly than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines. The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being very rich, and who most give

their lives and thoughts to becoming rich, are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigor, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresh from reading certain articles of the *Times* on the Registrar-General's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigor, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition, and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarizing a worship as that is. Every

one with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigor and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the author of the Epistle to Timothy. And the utilitarian Franldin says just as explicitly: "Eat and drink such an exact quantity as suits the constitution of thy body, in reference to the services of the mind." But the point of view of culture, keeping the mark of human perfection simply and broadly in view, and not assigning to this perfection, as religion or utilitarianism assigns to it, a special and limited character, this point of view, I say, of culture is best given by these words of Epictetus: "It is a sign of *aōvia*," says he — that is, of a nature not finely tempered — "to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way: the formation of the spirit and character must be our real concern." This is admirable; and, indeed, the Greek word *evōvla*, a finely tempered nature, gives exactly the notion of perfection as culture brings us to conceive it: a harmonious perfection, a perfection in which the characters of beauty and intelligence are both present, which unites "the two noblest of things" — as Swift, who of one of the two, at any rate, had fiimself all too little, most happily calls them in his *Battle of the Books* — "the two noblest of things, *sweetness and light*." The *eixivrvjs* is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the *aōvns*, on the other hand, is our Philistine. The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it.

In thus making sweetness and light to be

characters of perfection, culture is of like spirit with poetry, follows one law with poetry. Far more than on our freedom, our population, and our industrialism, many amongst us rely upon our religious organizations to save us. I have called religion a yet more important manifestation of human nature than poetry, because it has worked on a broader scale for perfection, and with greater masses of men. But the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all its sides, which is the dominant idea of poetry, is a true and invaluable idea, though it has not yet had the success that the idea of conquering the obvious faults of our animality, and of a human nature perfect on the moral side — which is the dominant idea of religion — has been enabled to have; and it is destined, adding to itself the religious idea of a devout energy, to transform and govern the other.

The best art and poetry of the Greeks, in which religion and poetry are one, in which the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides adds to itself a religious and devout energy, and works in the strength of that, is on this account of such surpassing interest and instructiveness for us, though it was — as, having regard to the human race in general, and, indeed, having regard to the Greeks themselves, we must own — a premature attempt, an attempt which for success needed the moral and religious fibre in humanity to be more braced and developed than it had yet been. But Greece did not err in having the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, so present and paramount. It is impossible to have this idea too present and paramount; only, the moral fibre must be braced too. And we, because we have braced the moral fibre, are not on that account in the right way, if at the same time the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, is wanting or misapprehended amongst us; and evidently it is wanting or misapprehended at present. And when we rely as we do on our religious organizations, which in themselves do not and cannot give us this idea, and think we have done enough if we make them spread and prevail, then, I say, we fall into our common fault of overvaluing machinery.

Nothing is more common than for people to confound the inward peace and satisfaction which follows the subduing of the obvious faults of our animality with what I may call absolute inward peace and satisfaction — the peace and satisfaction which are reached as we draw near to complete spiritual perfection, and not merely to moral perfection, or rather to relative moral perfection. No people in the world have done more and struggled more to attain this relative moral perfection than our English race has. For no people in the world has the command to *resist the devil, to overcome the wicked one*, in the nearest and most obvious sense of those words, had such a pressing force and reality. And we have had our reward, not only in the great worldly prosperity which our obedience to this command has brought us, but also, and far more, in great inward peace and satisfaction. But to me few things are more pathetic than to see people, on the strength of the inward peace and satisfaction which their rudimentary efforts towards perfection have brought them, employ, concerning their incomplete perfection and the religious organizations within which they have found it, language which properly applies only to complete perfection, and is a far-off echo of the human soul's prophecy of it. Religion itself, I need hardly say, supplies them in abundance with this grand language. And very freely do they use it; yet it is really the severest possible criticism of such an incomplete perfection as alone we have yet reached through our religious organizations.

The impulse of the English race towards moral development and self-conquest has nowhere so powerfully manifested itself as in Puritanism. Nowhere has Puritanism found so adequate an expression as in the religious organization of the Independents. The modern Independents have a newspaper, the *Non-conformist*, written with great sincerity and ability. The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." There is sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human per-

fection! One need not go to culture and poetry to find language to judge it. Religion, with its instinct for perfection, supplies language to judge it — language, too, which is in our mouths every day. "Finally, be of one mind, united in feeling," says St. Peter. There is an ideal which judges the Puritan ideal: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion!" And religious organizations like this are what people believe in, rest in, would give their lives for! Such, I say, is the wonderful virtue of even the beginnings of perfection, of having conquered even the plain faults of our animality, that the religious organization which has helped us to do it can seem to us something precious, salutary, and to be propagated, even when it wears such a brand of imperfection on its forehead as this. And men have got such a habit of giving to the language of religion a special application, of making it a mere jargon, that for the condemnation which religion itself passes on the shortcomings of their religious organizations they have no ear; they are sure to cheat themselves and to explain this condemnation away. They can only be reached by the criticism which culture, like poetry, speaking a language not to be sophisticated, and resolutely testing these organizations by the ideal of a human perfection complete on all sides, applies to them.

But men of culture and poetry, it will be said, are again and again failing, and failing conspicuously, in the necessary first stage to a harmonious perfection, in the subduing of the great obvious faults of our animality, which it is the glory of these religious organizations to have helped us to subdue. True, they do often so fail. They have often been without the virtues as well as the faults of the Puritan; it has been one of their dangers that they so felt the Puritan's faults that they too much neglected the practice of his virtues. I will not, however, exculpate them at the Puritan's expense. They have often failed in morality, and morality is indispensable. And they have been punished for their failure, as the Puritan has been rewarded for his performance. They have been punished wherein they erred; but their ideal of beauty, of sweetness and light, and

a human nature complete on all its sides, remains the true ideal of perfection still; just as the Puritan's ideal of perfection remains narrow and inadequate, although for what he did well he has been richly rewarded. 5 Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage, they and their standard of perfection are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil — souls in whom sweetness and light, 10 and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent — accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them! In the same way let us judge the religious organizations which we see all around 15 us. Do not let us deny the good and the happiness which they have accomplished; but do not let us fail to see clearly that their idea of human perfection is narrow and inadequate, and that the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion will never bring humanity to its true 20 goal. As I said with regard to wealth: Let us look at the life of those who live in and for it — so I say with regard to the religious organizations. Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the *Nonconformist* — a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a human life completing itself on all sides, and aspiring with all its organs after sweetness, 25 light, and perfection!

Another newspaper, representing, like the *Nonconformist*, one of the religious organizations of this country, was a short time ago giving an account of the crowd at Epsom on the Derby day, and of all the vice and hideousness which was to be seen in that crowd; 30 and then the writer turned suddenly round upon Professor Huxley, and asked him how he proposed to cure all this vice and hideousness without religion. I confess I felt disposed to ask the asker this question: and how 35 do you propose to cure it with such a religion as yours? How is the ideal of a life so unlovely, so unattractive, so incomplete, so narrow, so far removed from a true and satisfying ideal of human perfection, as is the life of your religious organization as you your-

self reflect it, to conquer and transform all this vice and hideousness? Indeed, the strongest plea for the study of perfection as pursued by culture, the clearest proof of the actual inadequacy of the idea of perfection 5 held by the religious organizations — expressing, as I have said, the most widespread effort which the human race has yet made after perfection — is to be found in the state of our life and society with these in 10 possession of it, and having been in possession of it I know not how many hundred years. We are all of us included in some religious organization or other; we all call 15 ourselves, in the sublime and aspiring language of religion which I have before noticed, *children of God*. Children of God; — it is an immense pretension! — and how are we to justify it? By the works which we do, and 20 the words which we speak. And the work which we collective children of God do, our grand centre of life, our city which we have builded for us to dwell in, is London! London, with its unutterable external hideousness, and with its internal canker of *-publics* 25 *egestas, privatim opulentia*¹ — to use the words which Sallust² puts into Cato's mouth about Rome — unequalled in the world! The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, 30 the newspaper with the largest circulation in England, nay, with the largest circulation in the whole world, is the *Daily Telegraph*! I say that when our religious organizations — which I admit to express the most considerable effort after perfection that our race has yet made — land us in no better result than 35 this, it is high time to examine carefully their idea of perfection, to see whether it does not leave out of account sides and forces of human nature which we might turn to great use, whether it would not be more operative if it were more complete. And I say that the English reliance on our religious organiza-

¹ "Poverty widespread, opulence among individuals." (From Sallust's *Catiline*, 52.)

² Caius Sallustius Crispus (86-34 B.C.): a Roman historian of the conspiracy of Catiline.

Marcus Porcius Cato (95-46 B.C.), great-grandson of Cato the Censor. He put himself to death rather than live to witness the subversion of the constitution by Caesar.

tions and on their ideas of human perfection just as they stand, is like our reliance on freedom, on muscular Christianity, on population, on coal, on wealth — mere belief in machinery, and unfruitful; and that it is wholesomely counteracted by culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and on drawing the human race onwards to a more complete, a harmonious perfection——

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater! — the passion for making them *pre-
vatl*. It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a *national* glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be *real* thought and *real* beauty; *real* sweetness and *real* light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an

example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way: but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely — nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the *social idea*; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive, to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard¹ in the Middle Ages, in spire of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing² and Herder³ in Germany, at the end of the last century, and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they *humanized* knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With

¹ Peter Abelard (1079-1142), a French scholastic, upholder of free speculation in theology.

² Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81), German dramatist and critic.

³ Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), German poet and critic, a propounder of the doctrine of culture

Saint Augustine they said: "Let us not leave thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

Literature and Science

1882

Huxley's address at the opening of Science College, published as *Science and Culture* (see p. 748), called forth a rejoinder from Matthew Arnold in defense of the claim that classical literature be retained in the chief place in education. He delivered the address which follows at Cambridge University in 1882, and included it among the lectures in the United States in 1883-84, published in *Discourses in America*. It will be seen that Arnold, like Newman, argues for a principle of unity in education. This unity he finds in literature — "the best that has been thought and said in the world" — rather than in theology. His opening remarks on Plato may be contrasted with Macaulay's scorn of that philosopher in his essay on Bacon (sec p. 433).

Practical people talk with a smile of Plato and of his absolute ideas; and it is impossible to deny that Plato's ideas do often seem unpractical and impracticable, and especially when one views them in connection with the life of a great work-a-day world like the United States. The necessary staple of the life of such a world Plato regards with disdain; handicraft and trade and the working professions he regards with disdain, but what becomes of the life of an industrial community if you take handicraft and trade and the working professions out of it? The base mechanic arts and handicrafts, says Plato, bring about a natural weakness in the principle of excellence in a man, so that he cannot

govern the ignoble growths in him, but nurses them, and cannot understand fostering any other. Those who exercise such arts and trades, as they have their bodies, he says, marred by their vulgar businesses, so they have their souls, too, bowed and broken by them. And if one of these uncomely people has a mind to seek self-culture and philosophy, Plato compares him to a bald little tinker, who has scraped together money, and has got his release from service, and has had a bath, and bought a new coat, and is rigged out like a bride-groom about to marry the daughter of his master who has fallen into poor and helpless estate.

Nor do the working professions fare any better than trade at the hands of Plato. He draws for us an inimitable picture of the working lawyer, and of his life of bondage; he shows how this bondage from his youth up has stunted and warped him, and made him small and crooked of soul, encompassing him with difficulties which he is not man enough to rely on justice and truth as means to encounter, but has recourse, for help out of them, to falsehood and wrong. And so, says Plato, this poor creature is bent and broken, and grows up from boy to man without a particle of soundness in him, although exceedingly smart and clever in his own esteem.

One cannot refuse to admire the artist who draws these pictures. But we say to ourselves that his ideas show the influence of a primitive and obsolete order of things, when the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone in honor, and the humble work of the world was done by slaves. We have now changed all that; the modern majority consists in work, as Emerson declares; and in work, we may add, principally of such plain and dusty kind as the work of cultivators of the ground, handicrafts-men, men of trade and business, men of the working professions. Above all is this true in a great industrious community such as that of the United States.

Now education, many people go on to say, is still mainly governed by the ideas of men like Plato, who lived when the warrior caste and the priestly or philosophical class were alone in honor, and the really useful part of

the community were slaves. It is an education fitted for persons of leisure in such a community. This education passed from Greece and Rome to the feudal communities of Europe, where also the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone held in honor, and where the really useful and working part of the community, though not nominally slaves as in the pagan world, were practically not much better off than slaves, and not more seriously regarded. And how absurd it is, people end by saying, to inflict this education upon an industrious modern community, where very few indeed are persons of leisure, and the mass to be considered has not leisure, but is bound, for its own great good, and for the great good of the world at large, to plain labor and to industrial pursuits, and the education in question tends necessarily to make men dissatisfied with these pursuits and unfitted for them!

That is what is said. So far I must defend Plato, as to plead that his view of education and studies is in the general, as it seems to me, sound enough, and fitted for all sorts and conditions of men, whatever their pursuits may be. "An intelligent man," says Plato, "will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others." I cannot consider *that* a bad description of the aim of education, and of the motives which should govern us in the choice of studies, whether we are preparing ourselves for a hereditary seat in the English House of Lords or for the pork trade in Chicago.

Still I admit that Plato's world was not ours, that his scorn of trade and handicraft is fantastic, that he had no conception of a great industrial community such as that of the United States, and that such a community must and will shape its education to suit its own needs. If the usual education handed down to it from the past does not suit it, it will certainly before long drop this and try another. The usual education in the past has been mainly literary. The question is whether the studies which were long supposed to be the best for all of us are practically the best now; whether others are not better. The tyranny of the past, many think, weighs

on us injuriously in the predominance given to letters in education. The question is raised whether, to meet the needs of our modern life, the predominance ought not now to pass from letters to science; and naturally the question is nowhere raised with more energy than here in the United States. The design of abasing what is called "mere literary instruction and education," and of exalting what is called "sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge," is, in this intensively modern world of the United States, even more perhaps than in Europe, a very popular design, and makes great and rapid progress.

I am going to ask whether the present movement for ousting letters from their old predominance in education, and for transferring the predominance in education to the natural sciences, whether this brisk and flourishing movement ought to prevail, and whether it is likely that in the end it really will prevail. An objection may be raised which I will anticipate. My own studies have been almost wholly in letters, and my visits to the field of the natural sciences have been very slight and inadequate, although those sciences have always strongly moved my curiosity. A man of letters, it will perhaps be said, is not competent to discuss the comparative merits of letters and natural science as means of education. To this objection I reply, first of all, that his incompetence, if he attempts the discussion but is really incompetent for it, will be abundantly visible; nobody will be taken in; he will have plenty of sharp observers and critics to save mankind from that danger. But the line I am going to follow is, as you will soon discover, so extremely simple, that perhaps it may be followed without failure even by one who for a more ambitious line of discussion would be quite incompetent.

Some of you may possibly remember a phrase of mine which has been the object of a good deal of comment; an observation to the effect that in our culture, the aim being *to know ourselves and the world*, we have, as the means to this end, *to know the best which has been thought and said in the world*. A man of science, who is also an excellent writer and the very

prince of debaters, Professor Huxley, in a discourse at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's college at Birmingham, laying hold of this phrase, expanded it by quoting some more words of mine, which are these: "The civilized world is to be regarded as now being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have for their proper outfit a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special local and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme."

Now on my phrase, thus enlarged, Professor Huxley remarks that when I speak of the above-mentioned knowledge as enabling us to know ourselves and the world, I assert *literature* to contain the materials which suffice for thus making us know ourselves and the world. But it is not by any means clear, says he, that after having learnt all which ancient and modern literatures have to tell us, we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life, that knowledge of ourselves and the world, which constitutes culture. On the contrary, Professor Huxley declares that he finds himself "wholly unable to admit that either nations or individuals will really advance, if their outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science. An army without weapons of precision, and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine, than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life."

This shows how needful it is for those who are to discuss any matter together, to have a common understanding as to the sense of the terms they employ — how needful, and how difficult. What Professor Huxley says, implies just the reproach which is so often brought against the study of *belles-lettres*, as they are called: that the study is an elegant one, but light and ineffectual; a smattering of Greek and Latin and other ornamental things,

of little use for any one whose object is to get at truth and to be a practical man. So, too, M. Renan¹ talks of the "superficial humanism" of a school-course which treats us as if we were all going to be poets, writers, preachers, orators, and he opposes this humanism to positive science, or the critical search after truth. And there is always a tendency in those who are remonstrating against the predominance of letters in education, to understand by letters *belles-lettres*, and by *belles-lettres* a superficial humanism the opposite of science or true knowledge.

But when we talk of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, for instance, which is the knowledge people have called the humanities, I for my part mean a knowledge which is something more than a superficial humanism, mainly decorative. "I call all teaching *scientific*" says Wolf,² the critic of Homer, "which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources. For example: a knowledge of classical antiquity is scientific when the remains of classical antiquity are correctly studied in the original languages." There can be no doubt that Wolf is perfectly right; that all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources, and that a genuine humanism is scientific.

When I speak of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, therefore, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, I mean more than a knowledge of so much vocabulary, so much grammar, so many portions of authors in the Greek and Latin languages, I mean knowing the Greeks and Romans, and their life and genius, and what they were, and did in the world; what we get from them, and what is its value. That, at least, is the ideal; and when we talk of endeavoring to know Greek and Roman antiquity, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, we mean endeavoring so to know them as to satisfy this ideal, however much we may still fall short of it.

The same also as to knowing our own and other modern nations, with the like aim of

¹ See p. 696.

² Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824), a German scholar, founder of the science of classical philology.

getting to understand ourselves and the world. To know the best that has been thought and said by the modern nations, is to know, says Professor Huxley, "only what modern *literatures* have to tell us; it is the criticism of life contained in modern literature." And yet "the distinctive character of our times," he urges, "lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge." And how, therefore, can a man, devoid of knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, enter hopefully upon a criticism of modern life?

Let us, I say, be agreed about the meaning of the terms we are using. I talk of knowing the best which has been thought and uttered in the world: Professor Huxley says this means knowing *literature*. Literature is a large word; it may mean everything written with letters or printed in a book. Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia* are thus literature. All knowledge that reaches us through books is literature. But by literature Professor Huxley means *belles-lettres*. He means to make me say, that knowing the best which has been thought and said by the modern nations is knowing their *belles-lettres* and no more. And this is no sufficient equipment, he argues, for a criticism of modern life. But as I do not mean, by knowing ancient Rome, knowing merely more or less of Latin *belles-lettres*, and taking no account of Rome's military, and political, and legal, and administrative work in the world; and as, by knowing ancient Greece, I understand knowing her as the giver of Greek art, and the guide to a free and right use of reason and to scientific method, and the founder of our mathematics and physics and astronomy and biology — I understand knowing her as all this, and not merely knowing certain Greek poems, and histories, and treatises, and speeches — so as to the knowledge of modern nations also. By knowing modern nations, I mean not merely knowing their *belles-lettres*, but knowing also what has been done by such men as Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Darwin. "Our ancestors learned," says Professor Huxley, "that the earth is the centre of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial; and more espe-

cially was it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered." But for us now, continues Professor Huxley, "the notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that Nature is the expression of a definite order, with which nothing interferes." "And yet," he cries, "the purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the humanists in our day gives no inkling of all this!"

In due place and time I will just touch upon that vexed question of classical education; but at present the question is as to what is meant by knowing the best which modern nations have thought and said. It is not knowing their *belles-lettres* merely which is meant. To know Italian *belles-lettres*, is not to know Italy, and to know English *belles-lettres* is not to know England. Into knowing Italy and England there comes a great deal more, Galileo and Newton amongst it. The reproach of being a superficial humanism, a tincture of *belles-lettres*, may attach rightly enough to some other disciplines, but to the particular discipline recommended when I proposed knowing the best that has been thought and said in the world, it does not apply. In that best I certainly include what in modern times has been thought and said by the great observers and knowers of nature.

There is, therefore, really no question between Professor Huxley and me as to whether knowing the great results of the modern scientific study of nature is not required as a part of our culture, as well as knowing the products of literature and art. But to follow the processes by which those results are reached, ought, say the friends of physical science, to be made the staple of education for the bulk of mankind. And here there does arise a question between those whom Professor Huxley calls with playful sarcasm "the Levites of culture," and those whom the poor humanist is sometimes apt to regard as its Nebuchadnezzars.

The great results of the scientific investigation of nature we are agreed upon knowing, but how much of our study are we bound to give to the processes by which those results are reached? The results have their visible bearing on human life. But all the processes, too, all the items of fact, by which those results are reached and established, are interesting. All knowledge is interesting to a wise man, and the knowledge of nature is interesting to all men. It is very interesting to know, that, from the albuminous white of the egg, the chick in the egg gets the materials for its flesh, bones, blood, and feathers; while from the fatty yolk of the egg, it gets the heat and energy which enable it at length to break its shell and begin the world. It is less interesting, perhaps, but still it is interesting, to know that when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water. Moreover, it is quite true that the habit of dealing with facts, which is given by the study of nature, is, as the friends of physical science praise it for being, an excellent discipline. The appeal, in the study of nature, is constantly to observation and experiment; not only is it said that the thing is so, but we can be made to see that it is so. Not only does a man tell us that when a taper burns the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, as a man may tell us, if he likes, that Charon is punting his ferry-boat on the river Styx, or that Victor Hugo is a sublime poet, or Mr. Gladstone the most admirable of statesmen; but we are made to see that the conversion into carbonic acid and water does actually happen. This reality of natural knowledge it is, which makes the friends of physical science contrast it, as a knowledge of things, with the humanist's knowledge, which is, say they, a knowledge of words. And hence Professor Huxley is moved to lay it down that, "for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education." And a certain President of the Section for Mechanical Science in the British Association is, in Scripture phrase, "very bold," and declares that if a man, in his mental training, "has substituted literature and history for natural science, he has

chosen the less useful alternative." But whether we go these lengths or not, we must all admit that in natural science the habit gained of dealing with facts is a most valuable discipline, and that every one should have some experience of it.

More than this, however, is demanded by the reformers. It is proposed to make the training in natural science the main part of education, for the great majority of mankind at any rate. And here, I confess, I part company with the friends of physical science, with whom up to this point I have been agreeing. In differing from them, however, I wish to proceed with the utmost caution and diffidence. The smallness of my own acquaintance with the disciplines of natural science is ever before my mind, and I am fearful of doing these disciplines an injustice. The ability and pugnacity of the partisans of natural science make them formidable persons to contradict. The tone of tentative inquiry, which befits a being of dim faculties and bounded knowledge, is the tone I would wish to take and not to depart from. At present it seems to me, that those who are for giving to natural knowledge, as they call it, the chief place in the education of the majority of mankind, leave one important thing out of their account: the constitution of human nature. But I put this forward on the strength of some facts not at all recondite, very far from it; facts capable of being stated in the simplest possible fashion, and to which, if I so state them, the man of science will, I am sure, be willing to allow their due weight.

Deny the facts altogether, I think, he hardly can. He can hardly deny, that when we set ourselves to enumerate the powers which go to the building up of human life, and say that they are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners—he can hardly deny that this scheme, though drawn in rough and plain lines enough, and not pretending to scientific exactness, does yet give a fairly true representation of the matter. Human nature is built up by these powers; we have the need for them all. When we have rightly met and adjusted the claims of them all, we shall then

be in a fair way for getting soberness, and righteousness with wisdom. This is evident enough, and the friends of physical science would admit it.

But perhaps they may not have sufficiently observed another thing: namely, that the several powers just mentioned are not isolated, but there is, in the generality of mankind, a perpetual tendency to relate them one to another in divers ways. With one such way of relating them I am particularly concerned now. Following our instinct for intellect and knowledge, we acquire pieces of knowledge; and presently in the generality of men, there arises the desire to relate these pieces of knowledge to our sense for conduct, to our sense for beauty — and there is weariness and dissatisfaction if the desire is balked. Now in this desire lies, I think, the strength of that hold which letters have upon us.

All knowledge is, as I said just now, interesting; and even items of knowledge which from the nature of the case cannot well be related, but must stand isolated in our thoughts, have their interest. Even lists of exceptions have their interest. If we are studying Greek accents it is interesting to know that *pats* and *pas*, and some other monosyllables of the same form of declension, do not take the circumflex upon the last syllable of the genitive plural, but vary, in this respect, from the common rule. If we are studying physiology, it is interesting to know that the pulmonary artery carries dark blood and the pulmonary vein carries bright blood, departing in this respect from the common rule for the division of labor between the veins and the arteries. But every one knows how we seek naturally to combine the pieces of our knowledge together, to bring them under general rules, to relate them to principles; and how unsatisfactory and tiresome it would be to go on forever learning lists of exceptions, or accumulating items of fact which must stand isolated.

Well, that same need of relating our knowledge, which operates here within the sphere of our knowledge itself, we shall find operating, also, outside that sphere. We experience, as we go on learning and knowing — the vast majority of us experience — the need of re-

lating what we have learnt and known to the sense which we have in us for conduct, to the sense which we have in us for beauty.

A certain Greek prophetess of Mantinea, in Arcadia, Diotima by name, once explained to the philosopher Socrates that love, and impulse, and bent of all kinds, is, in fact, nothing else but the desire in men that good should forever be present to them. This desire for good, Diotima assured Socrates, is our fundamental desire, of which fundamental desire every impulse in us is only some one particular form. And therefore this fundamental desire it is, I suppose — this desire in men that good should be forever present to them — which acts in us when we feel the impulse for relating our knowledge to our sense for conduct and to our sense for beauty. At any rate, with men in general the instinct exists. Such is human nature. And the instinct, it will be admitted, is innocent, and human nature is preserved by our following the lead of its innocent instincts. Therefore, in seeking to gratify this instinct in question, we are following the instinct of self-preservation in humanity.

But, no doubt, some kinds of knowledge cannot be made to directly serve the instinct in question, cannot be directly related to the sense for beauty, to the sense for conduct. These are instrument-knowledges; they lead on to other knowledges, which can. A man who passes his life in instrument-knowledge is a specialist. They may be invaluable as instruments to something beyond, for those who have the gift thus to employ them; and they may be disciplines in themselves wherein it is useful for every one to have some schooling. But it is inconceivable that the generality of men should pass all their mental life with Greek accents or with formal logic. My friend Professor Sylvester,¹ who is one of the first mathematicians in the world, holds transcendental doctrines as to the virtue of mathematics, but those doctrines are not for common men. In the very Senate House and

¹ James Joseph Sylvester (1814-97) was professor of mathematics at Johns Hopkins University, later Savilian Professor of Geometry at Oxford.

heart of our English Cambridge I once ventured, though not without an apology for my profaneness, to hazard the opinion that for the majority of mankind a little of mathematics, even, goes a long way. Of course this is quite consistent with their being of immense importance as an instrument to something else; but it is the few who have the aptitude for thus using them, not the bulk of mankind.

The natural sciences do not, however, stand on the same footing with these instrument-knowledges. Experience shows us that the generality of men will find more interest in learning that, when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, or in learning the explanation of the phenomenon of dew, or in learning how the circulation of the blood is carried on, than they find in learning that the genitive plural of *pats* and *pas* does not take the circumflex on the termination. And one piece of natural knowledge is added to another, and others are added to that, and at last we come to propositions so interesting as Mr. Darwin's famous proposition that "our ancestor was a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits." Or we come to propositions of such reach and magnitude as those which Professor Huxley delivers, when he says that the notions of our forefathers about the beginning and the end of the world were all wrong, and that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes.

Interesting, indeed, these results of science are, important they are, and we should all of us be acquainted with them. But what I now wish you to mark is, that we are still, when they are propounded to us and we receive them, we are still in the sphere of intellect and knowledge. And for the generality of men there will be found, I say, to arise, when they have duly taken in the proposition that their ancestor was ⁴¹a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits," there will be found to arise an invincible desire to relate this proposition to the sense in us for conduct, and to the sense in us for beauty. But this the men of science will not do for us, and will

hardly even profess to do. They will give us other pieces of knowledge, other facts, about other animals and their ancestors, or about plants, or about stones, or about stars; and they may finally bring us to those great "general conceptions of the universe, which are forced upon us all," says Professor Huxley,⁴² "by the progress of physical science." But still it will be *knowledge* only which they give us; knowledge not put for us into relation with our sense for conduct, our sense for beauty, and touched with emotion by being so put; not thus put for us, and therefore, to the majority of mankind, after a certain while, unsatisfying, wearying.

Not to the born naturalist, I admit. But what do we mean by a born naturalist? We mean a man in whom the zeal for observing nature is so uncommonly strong and eminent, that it marks him off from the bulk of mankind. Such a man will pass his life happily in collecting natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and will ask for nothing, or hardly anything, more. I have heard it said that the sagacious and admirable naturalist whom we lost not very long ago, Mr. Darwin, once owned to a friend that for his part he did not experience the necessity for two things which most men find so necessary to them — religion and poetry; science and the domestic affections, he thought, were enough. To a born naturalist, I can well understand that this should seem so. So absorbing is his occupation with nature, so strong his love for his occupation, that he goes on acquiring natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and has little time or inclination for thinking about getting it related to the desire in man for conduct, the desire in man for beauty. He relates it to them for himself, as he goes along, so far as he feels the need; and he draws from the domestic affections all the additional solace necessary. But then Darwins are extremely rare. Another great and admirable master of natural knowledge, Faraday,¹ was a Sandemanian. That is to say, he related his knowledge to his instinct for conduct and to his instinct for beauty, by the aid of that respect-

¹ David Faraday (1791-1867), a physician and authority on chemistry.

able Scottish sectary, Robert Sandeman.¹ And so strong, in general, is the demand of religion and poetry to have their share in a man, to associate themselves with his knowing, and to relieve and rejoice it, that, probably, for one man amongst us with the disposition to do as Darwin did in this respect, there are at least fifty with the disposition to do as Faraday.

Education lays hold upon us, in fact, by satisfying this demand. Professor Huxley holds up to scorn medieval education, with its neglect of the knowledge of nature, its poverty even of literary studies, its formal logic devoted to "showing how and why that which the Church said was true must be true." But the great medieval Universities were not brought into being, we may be sure, by the zeal for giving a jejune and contemptible education. Kings have been their nursing fathers, and queens have been their nursing mothers, but not for this. The medieval Universities came into being, because the supposed knowledge, delivered by Scripture and the Church, so deeply engaged men's hearts, by so simply, easily, and powerfully relating itself to their desire for conduct, their desire for beauty. All other knowledge was dominated by this supposed knowledge and was subordinated to it, because of the surpassing strength of the hold which it gained upon the affections of men, by allying itself profoundly with their sense for conduct, their sense for beauty.

But now, says Professor Huxley, conceptions of the universe fatal to the notions held by our forefathers have been forced upon us by physical science. Grant to him that they are thus fatal, that the new conceptions must and will soon become current everywhere, and that every one will finally perceive them to be fatal to the beliefs of our forefathers. The need of humane letters, as they are truly called, because they serve the paramount desire in men that good should be forever present to them — the need of humane letters, to establish a relation between the new conceptions, and our instinct for beauty, our instinct for conduct, is only the more visible.

¹ Robert Sandeman (1718-71), a religious enthusiast, founder of a small sect.

The Middle Age could do without humane letters, as it could do without the study of nature, because its supposed knowledge was made to engage its emotions so powerfully. Grant that the supposed knowledge disappears, its power of being made to engage the emotions will of course disappear along with it — but the emotions themselves, and their claim to be engaged and satisfied, will remain. Now if we find by experience that humane letters have an undeniable power of engaging the emotions, the importance of humane letters in a man's training becomes not less, but greater, in proportion to the success of modern science in extirpating what it calls "medieval thinking."

Have humane letters, then, have poetry and eloquence, the power here attributed to them of engaging the emotions, and do they exercise it? And if they have it and exercise it, how do they exercise it, so as to exert an influence upon man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? Finally, even if they both can and do exert an influence upon the senses in question, how are they to relate to them the results — the modern results — of natural science? All these questions may be asked. First, have poetry and eloquence the power of calling out the emotions? The appeal is to experience. Experience shows that for the vast majority of men, for mankind in general, they have the power. Next, do they exercise it? They do. But then, how do they exercise it so as to affect man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? And this is perhaps a case for applying the Preacher's words: "Though a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it." Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say, "Patience is a virtue," and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with Homer,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαι ἀνθρώποις—

"for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men"? Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the philosopher Spinoza,¹

¹ Baruch Spinoza (1632-77), a famous Dutch metaphysician, whose *Ethics* exerted great influence on later philosophers.

Felicitas in ea consistit quod homo suum esse conservare potest— "Man's happiness consists in his being able to preserve his own essence," and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the Gospel, "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, forfeit himself"? How does this difference of effect arise? I cannot tell, and I am not much concerned to know; the important thing is that it does arise, and that we can profit by it. But how, finally, are poetry and eloquence to exercise the power of relating the modern results of natural science to man's instinct for conduct, his instinct for beauty? And here again I answer that I do not know how they will exercise it, but that they can and will exercise it I am sure. I do not mean that modern philosophical poets and modern philosophical moralists are to come and relate for us, in express terms, the results of modern scientific research to our instinct for conduct, our instinct for beauty. But I mean that we shall find, as a matter of experience, if we know the best that has been thought and uttered in the world, we shall find that the art and poetry and eloquence of men who lived, perhaps, long ago, who had the most limited natural knowledge, who had the most erroneous conceptions about many important matters, we shall find that this art, and poetry, and eloquence, have in fact not only the power of refreshing and delighting us, they have also the power — such is the strength and worth, in essentials, of their authors' criticism of life — they have a fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty. Homer's conceptions of the physical universe were, I imagine, grotesque; but really, under the shock of hearing from modern science that "the world is not subordinated to man's use, and that man is not the cynosure of things terrestrial," I could, for my own part, desire no better comfort than Homer's line which I quoted just now,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν—

"for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men!"

And the more that men's minds are cleared, the more that the results of science are frankly accepted, the more that poetry and eloquence come to be received and studied as what in truth they really are — the criticism of life by gifted men, alive and active with extraordinary power at an unusual number of points; — so much the more will the value of humane letters, and of art also, which is an utterance having a like kind of power with theirs, be felt and acknowledged, and their place in education be secured.

Let us, therefore, all of us, avoid indeed as much as possible any invidious comparison between the merits of humane letters, as means of education, and the merits of the natural sciences. But when some President of a Section for Mechanical Science insists on making the comparison, and tells us that "he who in his training has substituted literature and history for natural science has chosen the less useful alternative," let us make answer to him that the student of humane letters only, will, at least, know also the great general conceptions brought in by modern physical science: for science, as Professor Huxley says, forces them upon us all. But the student of the natural sciences only, will, by our very hypothesis, know nothing of humane letters; not to mention that in setting himself to be perpetually accumulating natural knowledge, he sets himself to do what only specialists have in general the gift for doing genially. And so he will probably be unsatisfied, or at any rate incomplete, and even more incomplete than the student of humane letters only.

I once mentioned in a school report, how a young man in one of our English training colleges, having to paraphrase the passage in *Macbeth* beginning,

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

turned this line into, "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" And I remarked what a curious state of things it would be, if every pupil of our national schools knew, let us say, that the moon is two thousand one hundred and sixty miles in diameter, and thought at the same time that a good paraphrase for

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

was, "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" If one is driven to choose, I think I would rather have a young person ignorant about the moon's diameter, but aware that "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" is bad, than a young person whose education had been such as to imagine things the other way.

Or to go higher than the pupils of our national schools. I have in my mind's eye a member of our British Parliament who comes to travel here in America, who afterwards relates his travels, and who shows a really masterly knowledge of the geology of this great country and of its mining capabilities, but who ends by gravely suggesting that the United States should borrow a prince from our Royal Family, and should make him their king, and should create a House of Lords of great landed proprietors after the pattern of ours; and then America, he thinks, would have her future happily and perfectly secured. Surely, in this case, the President of the Section for Mechanical Science would himself hardly say that our member of Parliament, by concentrating himself upon geology and mineralogy, and so on, and not attending to literature and history, had "chosen the more useful alternative."

If then there is to be separation and option between humane letters on the one hand, and the natural sciences on the other, the great majority of mankind, all who have not exceptional and overpowering aptitudes for the study of nature, would do well, I cannot but think, to choose to be educated in humane letters rather than in the natural sciences. Letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more.

I said that before I ended I would just touch on the question of classical education, and I will keep my word. Even if literature is to retain a large place in our education, yet Latin and Greek, say the friends of progress, will certainly have to go. Greek is the grand offender in the eyes of these gentlemen. The attackers of the established course of study think that against Greek, at any rate, they have irresistible arguments. Literature may perhaps be needed in education, they say; but why on earth should it be Greek literature? Why not French or German? Nay, "has not

an Englishman models in his own literature of every kind of excellence?" As before, it is not on any weak pleadings of my own that I rely for convincing the gainsayers; it is on the constitution of human nature itself, and on the instinct of self-preservation in humanity. The instinct for beauty is set in human nature, as surely as the instinct for knowledge is set there, or the instinct for conduct. If the instinct for beauty is served by Greek literature and art as it is served by no other literature and art, we may trust to the instinct of self-preservation in humanity for keeping Greek as part of our culture. We may trust to it for even making the study of Greek more prevalent than it is now. Greek will come, I hope, some day to be studied more rationally than at present; but it will be increasingly studied as men increasingly feel the need in them for beauty, and how powerfully Greek art and Greek literature can serve this need. Women will again study Greek, as Lady Jane Grey did; I believe that in that chain of forts, with which the fair host of the Amazons are now engirdling our English universities, I find that here in America, in colleges like Smith College in Massachusetts, and Vassar College in the State of New York, and in the happy families of the mixed universities out West, they are studying it already.

Defuit una mihi symmetria prisca—"The antique symmetry was the one thing wanting to me," said Leonardo da Vinci; and he was an Italian. I will not presume to speak for the Americans, but I am sure that, in the Englishman, the want of this admirable symmetry of the Greeks is a thousand times more great and crying than in any Italian. The results of the want show themselves most glaringly, perhaps, in our architecture, but they show themselves, also, in all our art. *Fit details strictly combined, in view of a large general result nobly conceived*; that is just the beautiful *symmetria prisca* of the Greeks, and it is just where the English fail, where all our art fails. Striking ideas we have, and well executed details we have; but that high symmetry which, with satisfying and delightful effect, combines them, we seldom or never have. The glorious beauty of the Acropolis

at Athens did not come from single fine things stuck about on that hill, a statue here, a gateway there; — no, it arose from all things being perfectly combined for a supreme total effect. What must not an Englishman feel about our deficiencies in this respect, as the sense for beauty, whereof this symmetry is an essential element, awakens and strengthens within him! what will not one day be his respect and desire for Greece and its *symmetria* 5
prisca, when the scales drop from his eyes as he walks the London streets, and he sees such a lesson in meanness, as the Strand, for instance, in its true deformity! But here we are coming to our friend Mr. Ruskin's province, 15 and I will not intrude upon it, for he is its very sufficient guardian.

And so we at last find, it seems, we find flowing in favor of the humanities the natural and necessary stream of things, which 20 seemed against them when we started. The "hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits," this good fellow carried hidden in his nature, apparently, something destined to develop 25 into a necessity for humane letters. Nay, more; we seem finally to be even led to the further conclusion that our hairy ancestor carried in his nature, also, a necessity for Greek. 30

And, therefore, to say the truth, I cannot really think that humane letters are in much actual danger of being thrust out from their

leading place in education, in spite of the array of authorities against them at this moment. So long as human nature is what it is, their attractions will remain irresistible. As with Greek, so with letters generally: they will some day come, we may hope, to be studied more rationally, but they will not lose their place. What will happen will rather be that there will be crowded into education other matters besides, far too many; there will be, perhaps, a period of unsettlement and confusion and false tendency; but letters will not in the end lose their leading place. If they lose it for a time, they will get it back again. We shall be brought back to them by our wants and aspirations. And a poor humanist may possess his soul in patience, neither strive nor cry, admit the energy and brilliancy of the partisans of physical science, and their present favor with the public, to be far greater than his own, and still have a happy faith that the nature of things works silently on behalf of the studies which he loves, and that, while we shall all have to acquaint ourselves with the great results reached by modern science, and to give ourselves as much training in its disciplines as we can conveniently carry, yet the majority of men will always require humane letters, and so much the more, as they have the more and the greater results of science to relate to the need in man for conduct, and to the need in him for beauty.

Thomas Henry Huxley • 1815-1895

The chief representative of the scientific movement among men of letters is Thomas Henry Huxley. The influence of scientific training is seen, not only in his thought, but also in his style. His *Autobiography* is the plain unvarnished tale of a practical man, concerned with stating the necessary facts in the simplest form, yet in the absence of the more appealing literary graces of Newman's *Apologia*, Carlyle's *Sartor*, or Ruskin's *Praetenta* it has a charm of its own. Although Huxley's formal education was entirely scientific, he acquainted himself with literature, modern and ancient, and with fields of scholarship apparently remote from his calling as a professor of physiology. As a writer and speaker, he used English with exactness, directness, and force. He was a man of culture in Matthew Arnold's sense, though he asserted that an education through experience with things was more necessary than an education through books.

Born at Baling, May 4, 1815, Huxley was graduated in medicine from London University, and from 1846 to 1850 was employed as naturalist on a scientific expedition to the South Seas. So much he tells us in his *Autobiography*, which unfortunately ends before his dramatic entry on the scene of the greatest controversy of the century. The idea that all life on the planet was connected in origin — one species developing out of another instead of being called forth by a special act of creation — had long been gaining ground. In 1859 Charles Darwin put forward a hypothesis to explain this process of evolution. All forms of life are engaged in a struggle, in which only the fittest survive. As individuals vary slightly from one another, certain variations tend better to equip one or another for the struggle, and are passed on to descendants. This theory, supported by a great mass of evidence, was published in *The Origin of Species* in 1859, and became the chief subject of discussion at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Oxford in the next year. Huxley stood forth as the chief advocate of Darwin's theory. The opposition concentrated its forces to defend the position that man at least must be regarded as an object of special creation, not a product of evolution from lower animals. Darwin himself was not inclined to argue this point, but Huxley forced the fighting. When the Bishop of Oxford sarcastically inquired whether he thought his ape ancestor was on his father's or his mother's side, Huxley replied that he preferred as ancestors apes rather than bishops.

From this time forth Huxley was a leader of scientific thought in England. As a teacher he trained his pupils in the scientific method, and as a lecturer and writer he tried to acquaint his generation with the discoveries of science, especially the Darwinian hypothesis. He wrote in his *Autobiography*: "I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me — what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business." As a general, he conducted a campaign to develop the importance of the scientific attitude in human life, in ethics, government, religion, and especially in education. As a member of the London School Board, he fought for the admission and extension of scientific studies. Many of his lectures were delivered before workingmen's institutes; for like Ruskin and Morris he had lost faith in the middle class. He wrote: "I want the working classes to understand that Science and her ways are great facts for them — that physical virtue is the base of all others"; and again "I am sick of the dilettante middle class, and mean to try what I can do with these hard-handed fellows who live among facts." He believed in giving the same opportunities of education to women as to men, and in every way was an enlightened liberal.

One of Huxley's last controversies was with the defenders of Biblical revelation in regard to the term "agnostic," which he had invented to describe his attitude toward all questions that could not be answered by use of the physical senses, but which his opponents declared was a mere evasion for "atheist" or "infidel." Huxley refused either to affirm or deny what was beyond the scope of demonstration. He declined to call himself a materialist. Admitting that all knowledge is in our consciousness, he remained a sceptic in regard to the external world which, whatever its reality may be, is the condition of our existence. His intellectual ideal was furnished by the philosopher David Hume, whose life he wrote for the English Men of Letters series.

Like many scientists of the period, he was concerned to remove the fear that to deprive the world of faith in supernatural religion was to shake the foundations of human morality, and he joined Darwin, Spencer, Clifford, and others in showing that the moral sense was a part of man's natural development. This view was the subject of his Romanes Lecture on "Evolution and Ethics" three years before his death in 1895.

Huxley's writings are mostly occasional lectures and magazine articles. His essays are published in nine volumes (1893-94) of which the most important are: *Man's Place in Nature* (1863), *The Physical Basis of Life* (1868), *Essays upon Some Controverted Questions* (1891), *Evolution and Ethics* (1893). Selections are found in two volumes in Everyman's Library. His *Life and Letters* by his son Leonard Huxley appeared in 1900. Criticisms are found in Sir Leslie Stephen's *Studies of a Biographer* and J. G. Schurman's *Agnosticism and Religion*.

Autobiography

1889

And when I consider, in one view, the many things
...which I have upon my hands, I feel the burlesque
of being employed in this manner at my time of life.
But, in another view, and taking in all circumstances,
these things, as trilling as they may appear, no less than
things of greater importance, seem to be put upon
me to do.

BISHOP BUTLER to the DUCHESS OF SOMERSET

The "many things" to which the Duchess's correspondent here refers are the repairs and improvements of the episcopal seat at Auckland. I doubt if the great apologist, greater in nothing than in the simple dignity of his character, would have considered the writing an account of himself as a thing which could be put upon him to do whatever circumstances might be taken in. But the good bishop lived in an age when a man might write books and yet be permitted to keep his private existence to himself; in the pre-Boswelhan epoch, when the germ of the photographer lay concealed in the distant future, and the interviewer who pervades our age was an unforeseen, indeed unimaginable, birth of time.

At present, the most convinced believer in the aphorism "*Bene qui latuit, bene vixit*,"¹ is not always able to act up to it. An importunate person informs him that his portrait is about to be published and will be accompanied by a biography which the importunate person proposes to write. The sufferer knows what that means; either he undertakes to revise the "biography" or he does not. In the former case, he makes himself responsible; in the latter, he allows the publication of a mass of more or less fulsome inaccuracies for which he will be held responsible by those who are familiar with the

¹ "He who has well concealed himself has well lived."

prevalent art of self-advertisement. On the whole, it may be better to get over the "burlesque of being employed in this manner" and do the thing himself.

It was by reflections of this kind that, some years ago, I was led to write and permit the publication of the subjoined sketch.

I was born about eight o'clock in the morning on the 4th of May, 1815, at Baling, which was, at that time, as quiet a little country village as could be found within half-a-dozen miles of Hyde Park Corner. Now it is a suburb of London with, I believe, 30,000 inhabitants. My father was one of the masters in a large semi-public school which at one time had a high reputation. I am not aware that any portents preceded my arrival in this world, but, in my childhood, I remember hearing a traditional account of the manner in which I lost the chance of an endowment of great practical value. The windows of my mother's room were open, in consequence of the unusual warmth of the weather. For the same reason, probably, a neighboring beehive had swarmed, and the new colony, pitching on the windowsill, was making its way into the room when the horrified nurse shut down the sash. If that well-meaning woman had only abstained from her ill-timed interference, the swarm might have settled on my lips, and I should have been endowed with that mellifluous eloquence which, in this country, leads far more surely than worth, capacity, or honest work, to the highest places in Church and State. But the opportunity was lost, and I have been obliged to content myself through life with saying what I mean in the plainest of plain language, than which, I suppose, there is no habit more ruinous to a man's prospects of advancement.

Why I was christened Thomas Henry I do not know; but it is a curious chance that my parents should have fixed for my usual denomination upon the name of that particular Apostle with whom I have always felt most sympathy.¹ Physically and mentally I am the son of my mother so completely—even down to peculiar movements of the hands, which made their appearance in me as I reached the age she had when I noticed them—that I can hardly find any trace of my father in myself, except an inborn faculty for drawing, which unfortunately, in my case, has never been cultivated, a hot temper, and that amount of tenacity of purpose which unfriendly observers sometimes call obstinacy.

My mother was a slender brunette, of an emotional and energetic temperament, and possessed of the most piercing black eyes I ever saw in a woman's head. With no more education than other women of the middle classes in her day, she had an excellent mental capacity. Her most distinguishing characteristic, however, was rapidity of thought. If one ventured to suggest she had not taken much time to arrive at any conclusion, she would say, "I cannot help it, things flash across me." That peculiarity has been passed on to me in full strength, it has often stood me in good stead, it has sometimes played me sad tricks, and it has always been a danger. But, after all, if my time were to come over again, there is nothing I would less willingly part with than my inheritance of mother wit.

I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks. In fact, I have a distinct recollection of certain curls of which I was vain, and of a conviction that I closely resembled that handsome, courtly gentleman, Sir Herbert Oakley, who was vicar of our parish, and who was as a god to us country folk, because he was occasionally visited by the then Prince George of Cam-

bridge. I remember turning my pinafore wrong side forwards in order to represent a surplice, and preaching to my mother's maids in the kitchen as nearly as possible in Sir Herbert's manner, one Sunday morning when the rest of the family were at church. That is the earliest indication I can call to mind of the strong clerical affinities which my friend Mr. Herbert Spencer has always ascribed to me, though I fancy they have for the most part remained in a latent state.

My regular school training was of the briefest, perhaps fortunately, for though my way of has made me acquainted with all sorts and conditions of men, from the highest to the lowest, I deliberately affirm that the society I fell into at school was the worst I have ever known. We boys were average lads, with much the same inherent capacity for good and evil as any others; but the people who were set over us cared about as much for our intellectual and moral welfare as if they were baby-farmers. We were left to the operation of the struggle for existence among ourselves, and bullying was the least of the ill practices current among us. Almost the only cheerful reminiscence in connection with the place which arises in my mind is that of a battle I had with one of my classmates who had bullied me until I could stand it no longer. I was a very slight lad, but there was a wild-cat element in me which, when roused, made up for lack of weight, and I licked my adversary effectually. However, one of my first experiences of the extremely rough-and-ready nature of justice, as exhibited by the course of things in general, arose out of the fact that I—the victor—had a black eye, while he—the vanquished—had none, so that I got into disgrace and he did not. We made it up, and thereafter I was unmolested. One of the greatest shocks I ever received in my life was to be told a dozen years afterwards by the groom who brought me my horse in a stable-yard in Sydney that he was my quondam antagonist. He had a long story of family misfortune to account for his position, but at that time it was necessary to deal very cautiously with mysterious strangers in New South Wales, and on inquiry I found that the

¹ See St. John xx, 24-25.

unfortunate young man had not only been "sent out,"¹ but had undergone more than one colonial conviction.

As I grew older, my great desire was to be a mechanical engineer, but the fates were against this and, while very young, I commenced the study of medicine under a medical brother-in-law. But, though the Institute of Mechanical Engineers would certainly not own me, I am not sure that I have not all along been a sort of mechanical engineer *in partibus infidelium*. I am now occasionally horrified to think how very little I ever knew or cared about medicine as the art of healing. The only part of my professional course which really and deeply interested me was physiology, which is the mechanical engineering of living machines; and, notwithstanding that natural science has been my proper business, I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me. I never collected anything, and species work was always a burden to me; what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business, the working out of the wonderful unity of plan in the thousands and thousands of diverse living constructions, and the modifications of similar apparatuses to serve diverse ends. The extraordinary attraction I felt towards the study of the intricacies of living structure nearly proved fatal to me at the outset. I was a mere boy — I think between thirteen and fourteen years of age — when I was taken by some older student friends of mine to the first *post mortem* examination I ever attended. All my life I have been most unfortunately sensitive to the disagreeables which attend anatomical pursuits, but on this occasion my curiosity overpowered all other feelings, and I spent two or three hours in gratifying it. I did not cut myself, and none of the ordinary symptoms of dissection-poison supervened, but poisoned I was somehow, and I remember sinking into a strange state of apathy. By way of a last chance, I was sent to the care of some good, kind people, friends of my father's, who lived in a farmhouse in the heart of Warwickshire. I remember stag-

gering from my bed to the window on the bright spring morning after my arrival, and throwing open the casement. Life seemed to come back on the wings of the breeze, and to this day the faint odor of wood-smoke, like that which floated across the farm-yard in the early morning, is as good to me as the "sweet south upon a bed of violets." I soon recovered, but for years I suffered from occasional paroxysms of internal pain, and from that time my constant friend, hypochondriacal dyspepsia, commenced his half century of co-tenancy of my fleshly tabernacle.

Looking back on my *Lehrjahre* I am sorry to say that I do not think that any account of my doings as a student would tend to edification. In fact, I should distinctly warn ingenuous youth to avoid imitating my example. I worked extremely hard when it pleased me, and when it did not — which was a very frequent case — I was extremely idle (unless making caricatures of one's pastors and masters is to be called a branch of industry) — or else wasted my energies in wrong directions. I read everything I could lay hands upon, including novels, and took up all sorts of pursuits to drop them again quite as speedily. No doubt it was very largely my own fault, but the only instruction from which I ever obtained the proper effect of education was that which I received from Mr. Wharton Jones, who was the lecturer on physiology at the Charing Cross School of Medicine. The extent and precision of his knowledge impressed me greatly, and the severe exactness of his method of lecturing was quite to my taste. I do not know that I have ever felt so much respect for anybody as a teacher before or since. I worked hard to obtain his approbation, and he was extremely kind and helpful to the youngster who, I am afraid, took up more of his time than he had any right to do. It was he who suggested the publication of my first scientific paper — a very little one — in the *Medical Gazette* of 1845, and most kindly corrected the literary faults which abounded in it, short as it was; for at that time, and for many years afterwards, I detested the trouble of writing, and would take no pains over it.

¹ exiled (under criminal sentence).

^a in the land of the heathen.

¹ student-years.

It was in the early spring of 1846 that, having finished my obligatory medical studies and passed the first M.D. examination at the London University, — though I was still too young to qualify at the College of Surgeons, — I was talking to a fellow-student (the present eminent physician, Sir Joseph Fayrer), and wondering what I should do to meet the imperative necessity for earning my own bread, when my friend suggested that I should write to Sir William Burnett, at that time Director-General for the Medical Service of the Navy, for an appointment. I thought this rather a strong thing to do, as Sir William was personally unknown to me, but my cheery friend would not listen to my scruples, so I went to my lodgings and wrote the best letter I could devise. A few days afterwards I received the usual official circular acknowledgment, but at the bottom there was written an instruction to call at Somerset House on such a day. I thought that looked like business, so at the appointed time I called and sent in my card, while I waited in Sir William's ante-room. He was a tall, shrewd-looking old gentleman, with a broad Scotch accent — and I think I see him now as he entered with my card in his hand. The first thing he did was to return it, with the frugal reminder that I should probably find it useful on some other occasion. The second was to ask whether I was an Irishman. I suppose the air of modesty about my appeal must have struck him. I satisfied the Director-General that I was English to the backbone, and he made some inquiries as to my student career, finally desiring me to hold myself ready for examination. Having passed this, I was in Her Majesty's Service, and entered on the books of Nelson's old ship, the *Victory*, for duty at Haslar Hospital, about a couple of months after I made my application.

My official chief at Haslar was a very remarkable person, the late Sir John Richardson,¹ an excellent naturalist, and far-famed as an indomitable Arctic traveller. He was a silent, reserved man, outside the circle of his family and intimates; and, having a full

share of youthful vanity, I was extremely disgusted to find that "Old John," as we irreverent youngsters called him, took not the slightest notice of my worshipful self either the first time I attended him, as it was my duty to do, or for some weeks afterwards. I am afraid to think of the lengths to which my tongue may have run on the subject of the churlishness of the chief, who was, in truth, one of the kindest-hearted and most considerate of men. But one day, as I was crossing the hospital square, Sir John stopped me, and heaped coals of fire on my head by telling me that he had tried to get me one of the resident appointments, much coveted by the assistant surgeons, but that the Admiralty had put in another man. "However," said he, "I mean to keep you here till I can get you something you will like," and turned upon his heel without waiting for the thanks I stammered out. That explained how it was I had not been packed off to the West Coast of Africa, like some of my juniors, and why, eventually, I remained altogether seven months at Haslar.

After a long interval, during which "Old John" ignored my existence almost as completely as before, he stopped me again as we met in a casual way, and, describing the service on which the *Rattlesnake* was likely to be employed, said that Captain Owen Stanley, who was to command the ship, had asked him to recommend an assistant surgeon who knew something of science; would I like that? Of course I jumped at the offer. "Very well, I give you leave, go to London at once and see Captain Stanley." I went, saw my future commander, who was very civil to me, and promised to ask that I should be appointed to his ship, as in due time I was. It is a singular thing that, during the few months of my stay at Haslar, I had among my messmates two future Directors-General of the Medical Service of the Navy (Sir Alexander Armstrong and Sir John Watt-Reid), with the present President of the College of Physicians and my kindest of doctors, Sir Andrew Clark.

Life on board Her Majesty's ship in those days was a very different affair from what it is now, and ours was exceptionally rough, as

¹ Born 1787; died 1865. He took part in the Arctic expeditions of Parry and Franklin.

we were often many months without receiving letters or seeing any civilized people but ourselves. In exchange, we had the interest of being about the last voyagers, I suppose, to whom it could be possible to meet with people who knew nothing of fire-arms — as we did on the south coast of New Guinea — and of making acquaintance with a variety of interesting savage and semi-civilized people. But, apart from experience of this kind and the opportunities offered for scientific work, to me, personally, the cruise was extremely valuable. It was good for me to live under sharp discipline; to be down on the realities of existence by living on bare necessities; to find out how extremely well worth living life seemed to be when one woke up from a night's rest on a soft plank, with the sky for canopy and cocoa and weevilly biscuit the sole prospect for breakfast; and, more especially, to learn to work for the sake of what I got for myself out of it, even if it all went to the bottom and I along with it. My brother officers were as good fellows as sailors ought to be and generally are, but, naturally, they neither knew nor cared anything about my pursuits, nor understood why I should be so zealous in pursuit of the objects which my friends, the middies, christened "Buffons," after the title conspicuous on a volume of the *Suites à Buffon*,¹ which stood on my shelf in the chart room.

During the four years of our absence, I sent home communication after communication to the "Linnean Society,"² with the same result as that obtained by Noah when he sent the raven out of his ark. Tired at last of hearing nothing about them, I determined to do or die, and in 1849 I drew up a more elaborate paper and forwarded it to the Royal Society. This was my dove, if I had only known it. But owing to the movements of the ship, I heard nothing of that either until my return to England in the latter end of the year 1850, when I found that it was printed and published, and that a huge packet of separate copies awaited me. When

I hear some of my young friends complain of want of sympathy and encouragement, I am inclined to think that my naval life was not the least valuable part of my education.

Three years after my return were occupied by a battle between my scientific friends on the one hand and the Admiralty on the other, as to whether the latter ought, or ought not, to act up to the spirit of a pledge they had given to encourage officers who had done scientific work by contributing to the expense of publishing mine. At last the Admiralty, getting tired, I suppose, cut short the discussion by ordering me to join a ship, which thing I declined to do, and as Rastignac, in the *Père Goriot*¹ says to Paris, I said to London, " *nous deux*."² I desired to obtain a Professorship of either Physiology or Comparative Anatomy, and as vacancies occurred I applied, but in vain. My friend, Professor Tyndall,³ and I were candidates at the same time, he for the Chair of Physics, and I for that of Natural History in the University of Toronto, which, fortunately, as it turned out, would not look at either of us. I say fortunately, not from any lack of respect for Toronto, but because I soon made up my mind that London was the place for me, and hence I have steadily declined the inducements to leave it, which have at various times been offered. At last, in 1854, on the translation of my warm friend Edward Forbes,⁴ to Edinburgh, Sir Henry de la Beche, the Director-General of the Geological Survey, offered me the post Forbes vacated of Paleontologist and Lecturer on Natural History. I refused the former point blank, and accepted the latter only provisionally, telling Sir Henry that I did not care for fossils, and that I should give up Natural History as soon as I could get a physiological post. But I held the office for thirty-one years, and a large part of my work has been paleontological.

At that time I disliked public speaking, and had a firm conviction that I should break down every time I opened my mouth. I

¹ Supplements to Buffon — the French naturalist (1707-88).

² A society named after Karl von Linné, or Linnaeus (1707-78), the Swedish botanist.

¹ A novel by Balzac (1835).

³ "We have a score to settle."

³ John Tyndall (1820-93), whose distinction as an advocate of science is only second to Huxley's.

A distinguished paleontologist (1815-54).

believe I had every fault a speaker could have (except talking at random or indulging in rhetoric), when I spoke to the first important audience I ever addressed, on a Friday evening at the Royal Institution, in 1851. Yet, I must confess to having been guilty, *malgré moi*,¹ of as much public speaking as most of my contemporaries, and for the last ten years it ceased to be so much of a bugbear to me. I used to pity myself for having to go through this training, but I am now more disposed to compassionate the unfortunate audiences, especially my ever friendly hearers at the Royal Institution, who were the subjects of my oratorical experiments.

The last thing that it would be proper for me to do would be to speak of the work of my life, or to say at the end of the day whether I think I have earned my wages or not. Men are said to be partial judges of themselves. Young men may be, I doubt if old men are. Life seems terribly foreshortened as they look back, and the mountain they set themselves to climb in youth turns out to be a mere spur of immeasurably higher ranges when, by failing breath, they reach the top. But if I may speak of the objects I have had more or less definitely in view since I began the ascent of my hillock, they are briefly these: To promote the increase of natural knowledge and to forward the application of scientific methods of investigation to all the problems of life to the best of my ability, in the conviction which has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, that there is no alleviation for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world as it is when the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features is stripped off.

It is with this intent that I have subordinated any reasonable, or unreasonable, ambition for scientific fame which I may have permitted myself to entertain to other ends; to the popularization of science; to the development and organization of scientific education; to the endless series of battles and skirmishes over evolution; and to untiring

ing opposition to that ecclesiastical spirit, that clericalism, which in England, as everywhere else, and to whatever denomination it may belong, is the deadly enemy of science.

In striving for the attainment of these objects, I have been but one among many, and I shall be well content to be remembered, or even not remembered, as such. Circumstances, among which I am proud to reckon the devoted kindness of many friends, have led to my occupation of various prominent positions, among which the Presidency of the Royal Society is the highest. It would be mock modesty on my part, with these and other scientific honors which have been bestowed upon me, to pretend that I have not succeeded in the career which I have followed, rather because I was driven into it than of my own free will; but I am afraid I should not count even these things as marks of success if I could not hope that I had somewhat helped that movement of opinion which has been called the New Reformation.

On the Advisableness of Improving Natural Knowledge 1866

A lay sermon, delivered at St. Martin's Hall, on Sunday, January 7, 1866. Published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley's view of the importance of "Natural Knowledge" may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon*.

This time two hundred years ago — in the beginning of January, 1666 — those of our forefathers who inhabited this great and ancient city, took breath between the shocks of two fearful calamities, one not quite past, although its fury had abated; the other to come.

Within a few yards of the very spot on which we are assembled, so the tradition runs, that painful and deadly malady, the plague, appeared in the latter months of 1664; and, though no new visitor, smote the people of England, and especially of her capital, with a violence unknown before, in the course of the following year. The hand of a master has pictured what happened in those dismal months; and in that truest of

¹ in spite of myself.

fictions, *The History of the Plague Year*, Defoe shows death, with every accompaniment of pain and terror, stalking through the narrow streets of old London, and changing their busy hum into a silence broken only by the wailing of the mourners of fifty thousand dead; by the woeful denunciations and mad prayers of fanatics; and by the madder yells of despairing profligates.

But, about this time in 1666, the death rate had sunk to nearly its ordinary amount; a case of plague occurred only here and there, and the richer citizens who had flown from the pest had returned to their dwellings. The remnant of the people began to toil at the accustomed round of duty, or of pleasure; and the stream of city life bid fair to flow back along its old bed, with renewed and uninterrupted vigor.

The newly kindled hope was deceitful. The great plague, indeed, returned no more; but what it had done for the Londoners, the great fire, which broke out in the autumn of 1666, did for London; and, in September of that year, a heap of ashes and the indelible energy of the people were all that remained of the glory of five sixths of the city within the walls.

Our forefathers had their own ways of accounting for each of these calamities. They submitted to the plague in humility and in penitence, for they believed it to be the judgment of God. But towards the fire they were furiously indignant, interpreting it as the effect of the malice of man — as the work of the Republicans, or of the Papists, according as their prepossessions ran in favor of loyalty or of Puritanism.

It would, I fancy, have fared but ill with one who, standing where I now stand, in what was then a thickly-peopled and fashionable part of London, should have broached to our ancestors the doctrine which I now propound to you — that all their hypotheses were alike wrong; that the plague was no more, in their sense, a Divine judgment, than the fire was the work of any political, or of any religious, sect; but that they were themselves the authors of both plague and fire, and that they must look to themselves

to prevent the recurrence of calamities, to all appearance so peculiarly beyond the reach of human control — so evidently the result of the wrath of God, or of the craft and subtlety of an enemy.

And one may picture to oneself how harmoniously the holy cursing of the Puritan of that day would have chimed in with the unholy cursing and the crackling wit of the Rochesters and Sedleys,¹ and with the revilings of the political fanatics, if my imaginary plain dealer had gone on to say that, if the return of such misfortunes were ever rendered impossible, it would not be in virtue of the victory of the faith of Laud, or of that of Milton; and, as little, by the triumph of republicanism, as by that of monarchy. But that the one thing needful for compassing this end was, that the people of England should second the efforts of an insignificant corporation, the establishment of which, a few years before the epoch of the great plague and the great fire, had been as little noticed, as they were conspicuous.

Some twenty years before the outbreak of the plague a few calm and thoughtful students banded themselves together for the purpose, as they phrased it, of "improving natural knowledge." The ends they proposed to attain cannot be stated more clearly than in the words of one of the founders of the organization:

"Our business was (precluding matters of theology and state affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries, and such as related thereunto: as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Staticks, Magneticks, Chymicks, Mcchanicks, and Natural Experiments; with the state of these studies and their cultivation at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the veins, the vena: lacteas, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape (as it then appeared) of Saturn, the spots on the sun and its turning

¹John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-80), and Sir Charles Sedley (1639-1701), famous poets and courtiers of the Restoration.

on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes and grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities and nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian¹ experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, with divers other things of like nature, some of which were then but new discoveries, and others not so generally known and embraced as now they are; with other things appertaining to what hath been called the New Philosophy, which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England."

The learned Dr. Wallis,² writing in 1696, narrates in these words, what happened half a century before, or about 1645. The associates met at Oxford, in the rooms of Dr. Wilkins,³ who was destined to become a bishop; and subsequently coming together in London, they attracted the notice of the king. And it is a strange evidence of the taste for knowledge which the most obviously worthless of the Stuarts shared with his father and grandfather, that Charles the Second was not content with saying witty things about his philosophers, but did wise things with regard to them. For he not only bestowed upon them such attention as he could spare from his poodles and his mistresses, but, being in his usual state of impecuniosity, begged for them of the Duke of Ormond; and, that step being without effect, gave them Chelsea College, a charter, and a mace: crowning his favors in the best way they could be crowned, by burdening them no further with royal patronage or state interference.

Thus it was that the half-dozen young men, studious of the "New Philosophy,"

¹ The experiment of Torricelli (1608-47) in which he produced a vacuum by the contraction of mercury in a sealed tube.

² John Wallis (1616-1703), Professor of Mathematics at Oxford.

³ John Wilkins (1614-72), a clergyman and scientist, Bishop of Chester.

who met in one another's lodgings in Oxford or in London, in the middle of the seventeenth century, grew in numerical and in real strength, until, in its latter part, the "Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge" had already become famous, and had acquired a claim upon the veneration of Englishmen, which it has ever since retained, as the principal focus of scientific activity in our islands, and the chief champion of the cause it was formed to support.

It was by the aid of the Royal Society that Newton published his *Principia*. If all the books in the world, except the *Philosophical Transactions*, were destroyed, it is safe to say that the foundations of physical science would remain unshaken, and that the vast intellectual progress of the last two centuries would be largely, though incompletely, recorded. Nor have any signs of halting or of decrepitude manifested themselves in our own times. As in Dr. Wallis's days, so in these, "our business is, precluding theology and state affairs, to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries." But our "Mathematick" is one which Newton would have to go to school to learn; our "Statics, Mechanics, Magneticks, Chymicks, and Natural Experiments" constitute a mass of physical and chemical knowledge, a glimpse at which would compensate Galileo for the doings of a score of inquisitorial cardinals; our "Physick" and "Anatomy" have embraced such infinite varieties of being, have laid open such new worlds in time and space, have grappled, not unsuccessfully, with such complex problems, that the eyes of Vesalius¹ and of Harvey² might be dazzled by the sight of the tree that has grown out of their grain of mustard seed.

The fact is perhaps rather too much, than too little, forced upon one's notice, nowadays, that all this marvellous intellectual growth has a no less wonderful expression in practical life; and that, in this respect, if in no other, the movement symbolized by the pro-

¹ Andreas Vesalius (1514-64), a Belgian anatomist, physician to Charles V.

² William Harvey (1578-1657), an English physician, discoverer of the circulation of the blood.

gress of the Royal Society stands without a parallel in the history of mankind.

A series of volumes as bulky as the *Transactions* of the Royal Society might possibly be filled with the subtle speculations of the schoolmen; not improbably, the obtaining a mastery over the products of medieval thought might necessitate an even greater expenditure of time and of energy than the acquirement of the "New Philosophy"; but though such work engrossed the best intellects of Europe for a longer time than has elapsed since the great fire, its effects were "writ in water," so far as our social state is concerned.

On the other hand, if the noble first President of the Royal Society could revisit the upper air and once more gladden his eyes with a sight of the familiar mace, he would find himself in the midst of a material civilization more different from that of his day, than that of the seventeenth, was from that of the first, century. And if Lord Brouncker's¹ native sagacity had not deserted his ghost, he would need no long reflection to discover that all these ships, these railways, these telegraphs, these factories, these printing presses, without which the whole fabric of modern English society would collapse into a mass of stagnant and starving pauperism — that all these pillars of our State are but the ripples and the bubbles upon the surface of that great spiritual stream, the springs of which, only, he and his fellows were privileged to see; and seeing, to recognize as that which it behoved them above all things to keep pure and undefiled.

It may not be too great a flight of imagination to conceive our noble *revenant* not forgetful of the great troubles of his own day, and anxious to know how often London had been burned down since his time, and how often the plague had carried off its thousands. He would have to learn that, although London contains tenfold the inflammable matter that it did in 1666; though, not content with filling our rooms with wood-

work and light draperies, we must needs lead inflammable and explosive gases into every corner of our streets and houses, we never allow even a street to burn down. And if he asked how this had come about, we should have to explain that the improvement of natural knowledge has furnished us with dozens of machines for throwing water upon fires, any one of which would have furnished the ingenious Mr. Hooke,¹ the first "curator and experimenter" of the Royal Society, with ample materials for discourse before half a dozen meetings of that body; and that, to say truth, except for the progress of natural knowledge, we should not have been able to make even the tools by which these machines are constructed. And, further, it would be necessary to add, that although severe fires sometimes occur and inflict great damage, the loss is very generally compensated by societies, the operations of which have been rendered possible only by the progress of natural knowledge in the direction of mathematics, and the accumulation of wealth in virtue of other natural knowledge.

But the plague? My Lord Brouncker's observation would not, I fear, lead him to think that Englishmen of the nineteenth century are purer in life, or more fervent in religious faith, than the generation which could produce a Boyle,² an Evelyn,³ and a Milton. He might find the mud of society at the bottom instead of at the top, but I fear that the sum total would be as deserving of swift judgment as at the time of the Restoration. And it would be our duty to explain once more, and this time not without shame, that we have no reason to believe that it is the improvement of our faith, nor that of our morals, which keeps the plague from our city; but, again, that it is the improvement of our natural knowledge.

We have learned that pestilences will only take up their abode among those who have prepared unswept and ungarnished residences for them. Their cities must have narrow,

¹ Robert Hooke (1635-1703), a naturalist and mathematician.

² Robert Boyle (1627-91), called "the father of chemistry."

³ John Evelyn (1620-1706), a naturalist and diarist.

¹ William Viscount Brouncker (1620-84), first president of the Royal Society. See Pcyp's reference to him, vol. I, p. 574.
ghost.

unwatered streets, foul with accumulated garbage. Their houses must be ill-drained, ill-lighted, ill-ventilated. Their subjects must be ill-washed, ill-fed, ill-clothed. The London of 1665 was such a city. The cities of the East, where plague has an enduring dwelling, are such cities. We, in later times, have learned somewhat of nature, and partly obey her. Because of this partial improvement of our natural knowledge and of that fractional obedience, we have no plague; because that knowledge is still very imperfect and that obedience yet incomplete, typhus is our companion and cholera our visitor; but it is not presumptuous to express the belief that, when our knowledge is more complete and our obedience the expression of our knowledge, London will count her centuries of freedom from typhus and cholera, as she now gratefully reckons her two hundred years of ignorance of that plague, which swooped upon her thrice in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Surely, there is nothing in these explanations which is not fully borne out by the facts? Surely, the principles involved in them are now admitted among the fixed beliefs of all thinking men? Surely, it is true that our countrymen are less subject to fire, famine, pestilence, and all the evils which result from a want of command over and due anticipation of the course of nature, than were the countrymen of Milton; and health, wealth, and well-being are more abundant with us than with them? But no less certainly is the difference due to the improvement of our knowledge of nature, and the extent to which that improved knowledge has been incorporated with the household words of men, and has supplied the springs of their daily actions.

Granting for a moment, then, the truth of that which the depredators of natural knowledge are so fond of urging, that its improvement can only add to the resources of our material civilization; admitting it to be possible that the founders of the Royal Society themselves looked for no other reward than this, I cannot confess that I was guilty of exaggeration when I hinted, that to him who had the gift of distinguishing between promi-

nent events and important events, the origin of a combined effort on the part of mankind to improve natural knowledge might have loomed larger than the Plague and have outshone the glare of the Fire; as a something fraught with a wealth of beneficence to mankind, in comparison with which the damage done by those ghastly evils would shrink into insignificance.

It is very certain that for every victim slain by the plague, hundreds of mankind exist and find a fair share of happiness in the world by the aid of the spinning jenny. And the great fire, at its worst, could not have burned the supply of coal, the daily working of which, in the bowels of the earth, made possible by the steam pump, gives rise to an amount of wealth to which the millions lost in old London are but as an old song.

But spinning jenny and steam pump are, after all, but toys, possessing an accidental value; and natural knowledge creates multitudes of more subtle contrivances, the praises of which do not happen to be sung because they are not directly convertible into instruments for creating wealth. When I contemplate natural knowledge squandering such gifts among men, the only appropriate comparison I can find for her is, to liken her to such a peasant woman as one sees in the Alps, striding ever upward, heavily burdened, and with mind bent only on her home; but yet, without effort and without thought, knitting for her children. Now stockings are good and comfortable things, and the children will undoubtedly be much the better for them; but surely it would be shortsighted, to say the least of it, to depreciate this toiling mother as a mere stocking-machine — a mere provider of physical comforts?

However, there are blind leaders of the blind, and not a few of them, who take this view of natural knowledge, and can see nothing in the bountiful mother of humanity but a sort of comfort-grinding machine. According to them, the improvement of natural knowledge always has been, and always must be, synonymous with no more than the improvement of the material re-

sources and the increase of the gratifications of men.

Natural knowledge is, in their eyes, no real mother of mankind, bringing them up with kindness, and, if need be, with sternness, in the way they should go, and instructing them in all things needful for their welfare; but a sort of fairy god-mother, ready to furnish her pets with shoes of swiftness, swords of sharpness, and omnipotent Aladdin's lamps, so that they may have telegraphs to Saturn, and see the other side of the moon, and thank God they are better than their benighted ancestors.

If this talk were true, I, for one, should not greatly care to toil in the service of natural knowledge. I think I would just as soon be quietly chipping my own flint axe, after the manner of my forefathers a few thousand years back, as be troubled with the endless malady of thought which now infests us all, for such reward. But I venture to say that such views are contrary alike to reason and to fact. Those who discourse in such fashion seem to me to be so intent upon trying to see what is above nature, or what is behind her, that they are blind to what stares them in the face, in her.

I should not venture to speak thus strongly if my justification were not to be found in the simplest and most obvious facts — if it needed more than an appeal to the most notorious truths to justify my assertion, that the improvement of natural knowledge, whatever direction it has taken, and however low the aims of those who may have commenced it — has not only conferred practical benefits on men, but, in so doing, has effected a revolution in their conceptions of the universe and of themselves, and has profoundly altered their modes of thinking and their views of right and wrong. I say that natural knowledge, seeking to satisfy natural wants, has found the ideas which can alone still spiritual cravings. I say that natural knowledge, in desiring to ascertain the laws of comfort, has been driven to discover those of conduct, and to lay the foundations of a new morality.

first, what great ideas has natural knowledge introduced into men's minds?

I cannot but think that the foundations of all natural knowledge were laid when the reason of man first came face to face with the facts of nature; when the savage first learned that the fingers of one hand are fewer than those of both; that it is shorter to cross a stream than to head it; that a stone stops where it is unless it be moved, and that it drops from the hand which lets it go; that light and heat come and go with the sun; that sticks burn away in a fire; that plants and animals grow and die; that if he struck his fellow savage a blow he would make him angry, and perhaps get a blow in return; while if he offered him a fruit he would please him, and perhaps receive a fish in exchange. When men had acquired this much knowledge, the outlines, rude though they were, of mathematics, of physics, of chemistry, of biology, of moral, economical, and political science, were sketched. Nor did the germ of religion fail when science began to bud. Listen to words which, though new, are yet three thousand years old:

... When in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart.¹

But if the half-savage Greek could share our feelings thus far, it is irrational to doubt that he went further, to find, as we do, that upon that brief gladness there follows a certain sorrow — the little light of awakened human intelligence shines so mere a spark amidst the abyss of the unknown and unknowable; seems so insufficient to do more than illuminate the imperfections that cannot be remedied, the aspirations that cannot be realized, of man's own nature. But in this sadness, this consciousness of the limitation of man, this sense of an open secret which he cannot penetrate, lies the essence of all religion; and the attempt to embody it in the forms furnished by the intellect is the origin of the higher theologies.

¹ Need it be said that this is Tennyson's English for Homer's Greek? (Huxley.)

Let us take these points separately; and,

Thus it seems impossible to imagine but that the foundations of all knowledge — secular or sacred — were laid when intelligence dawned, though the superstructure remained for long ages so slight and feeble as to be compatible with the existence of almost any general view respecting the mode of governance of the universe. No doubt, from the first, there were certain phenomena which, to the rudest mind, presented a constancy of occurrence, and suggested that a fixed order ruled, among them at any rate. I doubt if the grossest of Fetish worshippers ever imagined that a stone must have a god within it to make it fall, or that a fruit had a god within it to make it taste sweet. With regard to such matters as these, it is hardly questionable that mankind from the first took strictly positive and scientific views.

But, with respect to all the less familiar occurrences which present themselves, uncultured man, no doubt, has always taken himself as the standard of comparison, as the centre and measure of the world; nor could he well avoid doing so. And finding that his apparently uncaused will has a powerful effect in giving rise to many occurrences, he naturally enough ascribed other and greater events to other and greater volitions, and came to look upon the world and all that therein is, as the product of the volitions of persons like himself, but stronger, and capable of being appeased or angered, as he himself might be soothed or irritated. Through such conceptions of the plan and working of the universe all mankind have passed, or are passing. And we may now consider what has been the effect of the improvement of natural knowledge on the views of men who have reached this stage, and who have begun to cultivate natural knowledge with no desire but that of "increasing God's honor and bettering man's estate."

For example: what could seem wiser, from a mere material point of view, more innocent from a theological one, to an ancient people, than that they should learn the exact succession of the seasons, as warnings for their husbandmen; or the position of the stars, as guides to their rude navigators? But what has grown out of this search for natural

knowledge of so merely useful a character? You all know the reply. Astronomy — which of all sciences has filled men's minds with general ideas of a character most foreign to their daily experience, and has, more than any other, rendered it impossible for them to accept the beliefs of their fathers. Astronomy — which tells them that this so vast and seemingly solid earth is but an atom among atoms, whirling, no man knows whither, through illimitable space; which demonstrates that what we call the peaceful heaven above us, is but that space, filled by an infinitely subtle matter whose particles are seething and surging, like the waves of an angry sea; which opens up to us infinite regions where nothing is known, or ever seems to have been known, but matter and force, operating according to rigid rules; which leads us to contemplate phenomena the very nature of which demonstrates that they must have had a beginning, and that they must have an end, but the very nature of which also proves that the beginning was, to our conceptions of time, infinitely remote, and that the end is as immeasurably distant.

But it is not alone those who pursue astronomy who ask for bread and receive ideas. What more harmless than the attempt to lift and distribute water by pumping it; what more absolutely and grossly utilitarian? But out of pumps grew the discussions about nature's abhorrence of a vacuum; and then it was discovered that nature does not abhor a vacuum, but that air has weight; and that notion paved the way for the doctrine that all matter has weight, and that the force which produces weight is co-extensive with the universe — in short, to the theory of universal gravitation and endless force. And learning how to handle gases led to the discovery of oxygen and to modern chemistry, and to the notion of the indestructibility of matter.

Again, what simpler, or more absolutely practical, than the attempt to keep the axle of a wheel from heating when the wheel turns round very fast? How useful for carters and gig drivers to know something about this; and how good were it, if any ingenious person would find out the cause of such phe-

nomena, and thence educe a general remedy for them. Such an ingenious person was Count Rumford;¹ and he and his successors have landed us in the theory of the persistence or indestructibility of force. And in the infinitely minute, as in the infinitely great, the seekers after natural knowledge of the kinds called physical and chemical, have everywhere found a definite order and succession of events which seem never to be infringed.

And how has it fared with "Physick" and Anatomy? Have the anatomist, the physiologist, or the physician, whose business it has been to devote themselves assiduously to that eminently practical and direct end, the alleviation of the sufferings of mankind — have they been able to confine their vision more absolutely to the strictly useful? I fear they are the worst offenders of all. For if the astronomer has set before us the infinite magnitude of space, and the practical eternity of the duration of the universe; if the physical and chemical philosophers have demonstrated the infinite minuteness of its constituent parts, and the practical eternity of matter and of force; and if both have alike proclaimed the universality of a definite and predicable order and succession of events, the workers in biology have not only accepted all these, but have added more startling theses of their own. For, as the astronomers discover in the earth no centre of the universe, but an eccentric speck, so the naturalists find man to be no centre of the living world, but one amidst endless modifications of life; and as the astronomer observes the mark of practically endless time set upon the arrangements of the solar system, so the student of life finds the records of ancient forms of existence peopling the world for ages, which, in relation to human experience, are infinite.

Furthermore, the physiologist finds life to be as dependent for its manifestation on particular molecular arrangements as any physical or chemical phenomenon; and, wherever he extends his researches, fixed

order and unchanging causation reveal themselves, as plainly as in the rest of nature.

Nor can I find that any other fate has awaited the germ of Religion. Arising, like all other kinds of knowledge, out of the action and interaction of man's mind, with that which is not man's mind, it has taken the intellectual coverings of Fetishism or Polytheism; of Theism or Atheism; of Superstition or Rationalism. With these, and their relative merits and demerits, I have nothing to do; but this it is needful for my purpose to say, that if the religion of the present differs from that of the past, it is because the theology of the present has become more scientific than that of the past; because it has not only renounced idols of wood and idols of stone, but begins to see the necessity of breaking in pieces the idols built up of books and traditions and finespun ecclesiastical cobwebs: and of cherishing the noblest and most human of man's emotions, by worship "for the most part of the silent sort" at the altar of the Unknown and Unknowable.

Such are a few of the new conceptions implanted in our minds by the improvement of natural knowledge. Men have acquired the ideas of the practically infinite extent of the universe and of its practical eternity; they are familiar with the conception that our earth is but an infinitesimal fragment of that part of the universe which can be seen; and that, nevertheless, its duration is, as compared with our standards of time, infinite. They have further acquired the idea that man is but one of innumerable forms of life now existing on the globe, and that the present existences are but the last of an immeasurable series of predecessors. Furthermore, every step they have made in natural knowledge has tended to extend and rivet in their minds the conception of a definite order of the universe — which is embodied in what are called, by an unhappy metaphor, the laws of nature — and to narrow the range and loosen the force of men's belief in spontaneity, or in changes other than such as arise out of that definite order itself.

Whether these ideas are well or ill founded is not the question. No one can deny that they exist, and have been the inevitable

¹ Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford (1753-1814). From humble birth in Woburn, Massachusetts, he rose to high rank in the service of the King of Bavaria.

outgrowth of the improvement of natural knowledge. And if so, it cannot be doubted that they are changing the form of men's most cherished and most important convictions.

And as regards the second point — the extent to which the improvement of natural knowledge has remodelled and altered what may be termed the intellectual ethics of men — what are among the moral convictions most fondly held by barbarous and semi-barbarous people?

They are the convictions that authority is the soundest basis of belief; that merit attaches to a readiness to believe; that the doubting disposition is a bad one, and scepticism a sin; that when good authority has pronounced what is to be believed, and faith has accepted it, reason has no further duty. There are many excellent persons who yet hold by these principles, and it is not my present business, or intention, to discuss their views. All I wish to bring clearly before your minds is the unquestionable fact that the improvement of natural knowledge is affected by methods which directly give the lie to all these convictions, and assume the exact reverse of each to be true.

The improver of natural knowledge absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority, as such. For him, scepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith the one unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith; and the most ardent votary of science holds his firmest convictions, not because the men he most venerates hold them; not because their verity is testified by portents and wonders; but because his experience teaches him that whenever he chooses to bring these convictions into contact with their primary source, nature — whenever he thinks fit to test them by appealing to experiment and to observation — nature will confirm them. The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification.

Thus, without for a moment pretending to

despise the practical results of the improvement of natural knowledge, and its beneficial influence on material civilization, it must, I think, be admitted that the great ideas, some of which I have indicated, and the ethical spirit which I have endeavored to sketch, in the few moments which remained at my disposal, constitute the real and permanent significance of natural knowledge.

If these ideas be destined, as I believe they are, to be more and more firmly established as the world grows older, if that spirit be fated, as I believe it is, to extend itself into all departments of human thought, and to become co-extensive with the range of knowledge; if, as our race approaches its maturity, it discovers, as I believe it will, that there is but one kind of knowledge and but one method of acquiring it, then we, who are still children, may justly feel it our highest duty to recognize the advisableness of improving natural knowledge, and so to aid ourselves and our successors in our course towards the noble goal which lies before mankind.

A Liberal Education; and Where to Find It 1871

A lecture delivered at the South London Working Men's College, and published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. The concluding portion of the lecture deals with conditions peculiar to England in Huxley's day.

The business which the South London Working Men's College has undertaken is a great work; indeed, I might say, that Education, with which that college proposes to grapple, is the greatest work of all those which lie ready to a man's hand just at present.

And, at length, this fact is becoming generally recognized. You cannot go anywhere without hearing a buzz of more or less confused and contradictory talk on this subject — nor can you fail to notice that, in one point at any rate, there is a very decided advance upon like discussions in former days. Nobody outside the agricultural interest now dares to say that education is a bad thing.

If any representative of the once large and powerful party, which, in former days, proclaimed this opinion, still exists in a semi-fossil state, he keeps his thoughts to himself. In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost dis-
5 cussing in their harmony, raised in favor of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated.

The politicians tell us, "you must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for edu-
10 cation, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines,
20 cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us. And a few voices are lifted up in favor of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being,
25 doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now, as ever it was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.

These members of the minority, with
30 whom I confess I have a good deal of sympathy, are doubtful whether any of the other reasons urged in favor of the education of the people are of much value — whether, indeed, some of them are based upon either
35 wise or noble grounds of action. They question if it be wise to tell people that you will do for them, out of fear of their power, what you have left undone, so long as your only motive was compassion for their weakness
40 and their sorrows. And if ignorance of everything which it is needful a ruler should know is likely to do so much harm in the governing classes of the future, why is it, they ask reasonably enough, that such ignorance
45 in the governing classes of the past has not been viewed with equal horror?

Compare the average artisan and the average country squire, and it may be doubted if you will find a pin to choose between the
50 two in point of ignorance, class feeling, or

prejudice. It is true that the ignorance is of a different sort — that the class feeling is in favor of a different class — and that the prejudice has a distinct savor of wrong-headedness in each case — but it is question-
5 able if the one is either a bit better, or a bit worse, than the other. The old protectionist theory is the doctrine of trades unions as applied by the squires, and the modern trades unionism is the doctrine of the squires ap-
10 plied by the artisans. Why should we be worse off under one *rtgime* than under the other?

Again, this sceptical minority asks the
15 clergy to think whether it is really want of education which keeps the masses away from their ministrations — whether the most completely educated men are not as open to re-
20 proach on this score as the workmen; and whether, perchance, this may not indicate that it is not education which lies at the bottom of the matter?

Once more, these people, whom there is no pleasing, venture to doubt whether the
25 glory, which rests upon being able to undersell all the rest of the world, is a very safe kind of glory — whether we may not purchase it too dear; especially if we allow edu-
30 cation, which ought to be directed to the making of men, to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical in-
35 dustry, but good for nothing else.

And, finally, these people inquire whether
40 it is the masses alone who need a reformed and improved education. They ask whether the richest of our public schools might not well be made to supply knowledge, as well as gentlemanly habits, a strong class feeling,
45 and eminent proficiency in cricket. They seem to think that the noble foundations of our old universities are hardly fulfilling their functions in their present posture of half-
50 clerical seminaries, half racecourses, where men are trained to win a senior wranglership, or a double-first,¹ as horses are trained to win a cup, with as little reference to the needs of after-life in the case of the man as in that of the racer. And while as zealous for educa-

¹ These are the highest academic distinctions at Cambridge and Oxford respectively.

tion as the rest, they affirm that if the education of the richer classes were such as to fit them to be the leaders and the governors of the poorer; and if the education of the poorer classes were such as to enable them to appreciate really wise guidance and good governance, the politicians need not fear mob-law, nor the clergy lament their want of flocks, nor the capitalists prognosticate the annihilation of the prosperity of the country.

Such is the diversity of opinion upon the why and the wherefore of education. And my hearers will be prepared to expect that the practical recommendations which are put forward are not less discordant. There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the course of next session if there were the least probability that half a dozen leading statesmen of different parties would agree what that education should be.

Some hold that education without theology is worse than none. Others maintain, quite as strongly, that education with theology is in the same predicament. But this is certain, that those who hold the first opinion can by no means agree what theology should be taught; and that those who maintain the second are in a small minority.

At any rate "make people learn to read, write, and cipher," say a great many; and the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far as it goes. But, as has happened to me in former days, those who, in despair of getting anything better, advocate this measure, are met with the objection that it is very like making a child practise the use of a knife, fork, and spoon, without giving it a particle of meat. I really don't know what reply is to be made to such an objection.

But it would be unprofitable to spend more time in disentangling, or rather in showing up the knots in, the ravelled skeins of our neighbors. Much more to the purpose is it to ask if we possess any clue of our own which may guide us among these entanglements. And by way of a beginning, let us ask ourselves — What is education? Above

all things, what is our ideal of a thoroughly liberal education? — of that education which, if we could begin life again, we would give ourselves — of that education which, if we could mold the fates to our own will, we would give our children? Well, I know not what may be your conceptions upon this matter, but I will tell you mine, and I hope I shall find that our views are not very discrepant.

Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game at chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit, and a keen eye for all the means of giving and getting out of check? Do you not think that we should look with a disapprobation amounting to scorn, upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet, it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less, of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well, the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated — without haste, but without remorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Rctzsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for

his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel who is playing for love, as we say, and would rather lose than win — and I should accept it as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by Education is learning the rules of this mighty game. In other words, education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority or of numbers upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strictness, there is no such thing as an uneducated man. Take an extreme case. Suppose that an adult man, in the full vigor of his faculties, could be suddenly placed in the world, as Adam is said to have been, and then left to do as he best might. How long would he be left uneducated? Not five minutes. Nature would begin to teach him, through the eye, the ear, the touch, the properties of objects. Pain and pleasure would be at his elbow telling him to do this and avoid that; and by slow degrees the man would receive an education which, if narrow, would be thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys and woes, compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors, pleasure and pain; but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions; or, in other words, by the laws of the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long

before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past, for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members — Nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honors in Nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll,"¹ who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked; and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience — incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education — that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as artificial education — is to make good these defects in Nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal educa-

¹A university term, from *hoi polloi*, the many.

tion is an artificial education, which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience, who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter....

On the Physical Basis of Life

1868

A lecture delivered at Edinburgh, November 8, 1868, and printed in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1869, and in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley here defines the philosophy of science, and his own position as an agnostic, i.e., one who refuses to believe in anything that cannot be proved by scientific methods.

In order to make the title of this discourse generally intelligible, I have translated the term "Protoplasm," which is the scientific name of the substance of which I am about to speak, by the words "the physical basis of life." I suppose that, to many, the idea that

there is such a thing as a physical basis, or matter, of life may be novel — so widely spread is the conception of life as a something which works through matter, but is independent of it; and even those who are aware that matter and life are inseparably connected, may not be prepared for the conclusion plainly suggested by the phrase, "the physical basis or matter of life," that there is some one kind of matter which is common to all living beings, and that their endless diversities are bound together by a physical, as well as an ideal, unity. In fact, when first apprehended, such a doctrine as this appears almost shocking to common sense.

What, truly, can seem to be more obviously different from one another, in faculty, in form, and in substance, than the various kinds of living beings? What community of faculty can there be between the brightly-colored lichen, which so nearly resembles a mere mineral incrustation of the bare rock on which it grows, and the painter, to whom it is instinct with beauty, or the botanist, whom it feeds with knowledge?

Again, think of the microscopic fungus — a mere infinitesimal ovoid particle, which finds space and duration enough to multiply into countless millions in the body of a living fly; and then of the wealth of foliage, the luxuriance of flower and fruit, which lies between this bald sketch of a plant and the giant pine of California, towering to the dimensions of a cathedral spire, or the Indian fig, which covers acres with its profound shadow, and endures while nations and empires come and go around its vast circumference. Or, turning to the other half of the world of life, picture to yourselves the great Finner whale, hugest of beasts that live, or have lived, disporting his eighty or ninety feet of bone, muscle and blubber, with easy roll, among waves in which the stoutest ship that ever left dockyard would flounder hopelessly; and contrast him with the invisible animalcules — mere gelatinous specks, multitudes of which could, in fact, dance upon the point of a needle with the same ease as the angels of the Schoolmen could, in imagination. With these images before your minds, you may well ask, what community of form,

or structure, is there between the animalcule and the whale; or between the fungus and the fig-tree? And, *a fortiori*, between all four?

Finally, if we regard substance, or material composition, what hidden bond can connect the flower which a girl wears in her hair and the blood which courses through her youthful veins; or, what is there in common between the dense and resisting mass of the oak, or the strong fabric of the tortoise, and those broad disks of glassy jelly which may be seen pulsating through the waters of a calm sea, but which drain away to mere films in the hand which raises them out of their element?

Such objections as these must, I think, arise in the mind of every one who ponders, for the first time, upon the conception of a single physical basis of life underlying all the diversities of vital existence; but I propose to demonstrate to you that, notwithstanding these apparent difficulties, a threefold unity — namely, a unity of power or faculty, a unity of form, and a unity of substantial composition — does pervade the whole living world.

No very abstruse argumentation is needed, in the first place, to prove that the powers, or faculties, of all kinds of living matter, diverse as they may be in degree, are substantially similar in kind.

Goethe has condensed a survey of all powers of mankind into the well-known epigram:

Warun treibt sich das Volk so und schreit? Es will
sich ernahren,
Kinder zeugen, und die nahren so gut es vermag.
Welter bringt es kein Mensch, steW er sich wie er
auch will.²

In physiological language this means, that all the multifarious and complicated activities of man are comprehensible under three categories. Either they are immediately directed towards the maintenance and development of the body, or they effect transitory

changes in the relative positions of parts of the body, or they tend towards the continuance of the species. Even those manifestations of intellect, of feeling, and of will, which we rightly name the higher faculties, are not excluded from this classification, inasmuch as to every one but the subject of them, they are known only as transitory changes in the relative positions of parts of the body. Speech, gesture, and every other form of human action are, in the long run, resolvable into muscular contraction, and muscular contraction is but a transitory change in the relative positions of the parts of a muscle. But the scheme which is large enough to embrace the activities of the highest form of life, covers all those of the lower creatures. The lowest plant, or animalcule, feeds, grows, and reproduces its kind. In addition, all animals manifest those transitory changes of form which we class under irritability and contractility; and it is more than probable that when the vegetable world is thoroughly explored, we shall find all plants in possession of the same powers, at one time or other of their existence.

I am not now alluding to such phenomena, at once rare and conspicuous, as those exhibited by the leaflets of the sensitive plants, or the stamens of the barberry, but to much more widely spread, and at the same time, more subtle and hidden, manifestations of vegetable contractility. You are doubtless aware that the common nettle owes its stinging property to the innumerable stiff and needle-like, though exquisitely delicate, hairs which cover its surface. Each stinging-needle tapers from a broad base to a slender summit, which, though rounded at the end, is of such microscopic fineness that it readily penetrates, and breaks off in, the skin. The whole hair consists of a very delicate outer case of wood, closely applied to the inner surface of which is a layer of semifluid matter, full of innumerable granules of extreme minuteness. This semifluid lining is protoplasm, which thus constitutes a kind of bag, full of a limpid liquid, and roughly corresponding in form with the interior of the hair which it fills. When viewed with a sufficiently high magnifying power, the proto-

¹ so much the more.

² "Why does the mass of people so push and shout? They wish to acquire a living, bring forth children, and nurture them as well as they can.... No man can go further, no matter how he regards himself." (From the *Venetian Epigrams*.)

plasmic layer of the nettle hair is seen to be in a condition of unceasing activity. Local contractions of the whole thickness of its substance pass slowly and gradually from point to point, and give rise to the appearance of progressive waves, just as the bending of successive stalks of corn by a breeze produces the apparent billows of a cornfield.

But, in addition to these movements, and independently of them, the granules are driven, in relatively rapid streams, through channels in the protoplasm which seem to have a considerable amount of persistence. Most commonly, the currents in adjacent parts of the protoplasm take similar directions; and thus there is a general stream up one side of the hair and down the other. But this does not prevent the existence of partial currents which take different routes; and sometimes trains of granules may be seen coursing swiftly in opposite directions within a twenty-thousandth of an inch of one another; while, occasionally, opposite streams come into direct collision, and, after a longer or shorter struggle, one predominates. The cause of these currents seems to lie in contractions of the protoplasm which bounds the channels in which they flow, but which are so minute that the best microscopes show only their effects, and not themselves.

The spectacle afforded by the wonderful energies prisoned within the compass of the microscopic hair of a plant, which we commonly regard as a merely passive organism, is not easily forgotten by one who has watched its display, continued hour after hour, without pause or sign of weakening. The possible complexity of many other organic forms, seemingly as simple as the protoplasm of the nettle, dawns upon one; and the comparison of such a protoplasm to a body with an internal circulation, which has been put forward by an eminent physiologist, loses much of its startling character. Currents similar to those of the hairs of the nettle have been observed in a great multitude of very different plants, and weighty authorities have suggested that they probably occur, in more or less perfection, in all young vegetable cells. If such be the case, the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical

forest is, after all, due only to the dulcness of our hearing; and could our ears catch the murmur of these tiny Maelstroms, as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living cells which constitute each tree, we should be stunned, as with the roar of a great city.

Among the lower plants, it is the rule rather than the exception, that contractility should be still more openly manifested at some periods of their existence. The protoplasm of *Alga* and *Fungi* becomes, under many circumstances, partially, or completely, freed from its woody case, and exhibits movements of its whole mass, or is propelled by the contractility of one or more hair-like prolongations of its body, which are called vibratile cilia. And, so far as the conditions of the manifestation of the phenomena of contractility have yet been studied, they are the same for the plant as for the animal. Heat and electric shocks influence both, and in the same way, though it may be in different degrees. It is by no means my intention to suggest that there is no difference in faculty between the lowest plant and the highest, or between plants and animals. But the difference between the powers of the lowest plant, or animal, and those of the highest, is one of degree, not of kind, and depends, as Milne-Edwards¹ long ago so well pointed out, upon the extent to which the principle of the division of labor is carried out in the living economy. In the lowest organism all parts are competent to perform all functions, and one and the same portion of protoplasm may successfully take on the function of feeding, moving, or reproducing apparatus. In the highest, on the contrary, a great number of parts combine to perform each function, each part doing its allotted share of the work with great accuracy and efficiency, but being useless for any other purpose.

On the other hand, notwithstanding all the fundamental resemblances which exist between the powers of the protoplasm in plants and in animals, they present a striking difference (to which I shall advert more at length presently), in the fact that plants can

¹ Henri Milne-Edwards (1800-85), a Belgian zoologist.

manufacture fresh protoplasm out of mineral compounds, whereas animals are obliged to procure it ready made, and hence, in the long run, depend upon plants. Upon what condition this difference in the powers of the two great divisions of the world of life depends, nothing is at present known.

With such qualifications as arise out of the last-mentioned fact, it may be truly said that the acts of all living things are fundamentally one. Is any such unity predicable of their forms? Let us seek in easily verified facts for a reply to this question. If a drop of blood be drawn by pricking one's finger, and viewed with proper precautions, and under a sufficiently high microscopic power, there will be seen, among the innumerable multitude of little, circular, discoidal bodies, or corpuscles, which float in it and give it its color, a comparatively small number of colorless corpuscles, of somewhat larger size and very irregular shape. If the drop of blood be kept at the temperature of the body, these colorless corpuscles will be seen to exhibit a marvellous activity, changing their forms with great rapidity, drawing in and thrusting out prolongations of their substance, and creeping about as if they were independent organisms.

The substance which is thus active is a mass of protoplasm, and its activity differs in detail, rather than in principle, from that of the protoplasm of the nettle. Under sundry circumstances the corpuscle dies and becomes distended into a round mass, in the midst of which is seen a smaller spherical body, which existed, but was more or less hidden, in the living corpuscle, and is called its *nucleus*. Corpuscles of essentially similar structure are to be found in the skin, in the lining of the mouth, and scattered through the whole framework of the body. Nay, more; in the earliest condition of the human organism, in that state in which it has but just become distinguishable from the egg in which it arises, it is nothing but an aggregation of such corpuscles, and every organ of the body was, once, no more than such an aggregation.

Thus a nucleated mass of protoplasm turns out to be what may be termed the structural unit of the human body. As a matter of

fact, the body, in its earliest state, is a mere multiple of such units; and in its perfect condition, it is a multiple of such units, variously modified.

But does the formula which expresses the essential structural character of the highest animal cover all the rest, as the statement of its powers and faculties covered that of all others? Very nearly. Beast and fowl, reptile and fish, mollusk, worm, and polyp, are all composed of structural units of the same character, namely, masses of protoplasm with a nucleus. There are sundry very low animals, each of which, structurally, is a mere colorless blood-corpuscle, leading an independent life. But, at the very bottom of the animal scale, even this simplicity becomes simplified, and all the phenomena of life are manifested by a particle of protoplasm without a nucleus. Nor are such organisms insignificant by reason of their want of complexity. It is a fair question whether the protoplasm of those simplest forms of life which people an immense extent of the bottom of the sea, would not outweigh that of all the higher living beings which inhabit the land put together. And in ancient times, no less than at the present day, such living beings as these have been the greatest of rock builders.

What has been said of the animal world is no less true of plants. Imbedded in the protoplasm at the broad, or attached, end of the nettle hair, there lies a spheroidal nucleus. Careful examination further proves that the whole substance of the nettle is made up of a repetition of such masses of nucleated protoplasm, each contained in a wooden case, which is modified in form, sometimes into a woody fibre, sometimes into a duct or spiral vessel, sometimes into a pollen grain, or an ovule. Traced back to its earliest state, the nettle arises as the man does, in a particle of nucleated protoplasm. And in the lowest plants, as in the lowest animals, a single mass of such protoplasm may constitute the whole plant, or the protoplasm may exist without a nucleus.

Under these circumstances, it may well be asked, how is one mass of non-nucleated protoplasm to be distinguished from another?

why call one "plant" and the other "animal"?

The only reply is that, so far as form is concerned, plants and animals are not separable, and that, in many cases, it is a mere matter of convention whether we call a given organism an animal or a plant. There is a living body called *Ethaliu septicum*, which appears upon decaying vegetable substances, and, in one of its forms, is common upon the surfaces of tan-pits. In this condition it is, to all intents and purposes, a fungus, and formerly was always regarded as such; but the remarkable investigations of De Bary have shown that, in another condition, the *Aitkalium* is an actively locomotive creature, and takes in solid matters, upon which, apparently, it feeds, thus exhibiting the most characteristic feature of animality. Is this a plant; or is it an animal? Is it both; or is it neither? Some decide in favor of the last supposition, and establish an intermediate kingdom, a sort of biological No Man's Land for all these questionable forms. But, as it is admittedly impossible to draw any distinct boundary line between this no man's land and the vegetable world on the one hand, or the animal, on the other, it appears to me that this proceeding merely doubles the difficulty which before was single.

Protoplasm, simple or nucleated, is the formal basis of all life. It is the clay of the potter: which, bake it and paint it as he will, remains clay, separated by artifice, and not by nature, from the commonest brick or sun-dried clod.

Thus it becomes clear that all living powers are cognate, and that all living forms are fundamentally of one character. The researches of the chemist have revealed a no less striking uniformity of material composition in living matter.

In perfect strictness, it is true that chemical investigation can tell us little or nothing, directly, of the composition of living matter, inasmuch as such matter must needs die in the act of analysis — and upon this very obvious ground, objections, which I confess seem to me to be somewhat frivolous, have been raised to the drawing of any conclusions whatever respecting the composition of actually living matter, from that of the dead

matter of life, which alone is accessible to us. But objectors of this class do not seem to reflect that it is also, in strictness, true that we know nothing about the composition of any body whatever, as it is. The statement that a crystal of calc-spar consists of carbonate of lime, is quite true, if we only mean that, by appropriate processes, it may be resolved into carbonic acid and quicklime. If you pass the same carbonic acid over the very quicklime thus obtained, you will obtain carbonate of lime again; but it will not be calc-spar, nor anything like it. Can it, therefore, be said that chemical analysis teaches nothing about the chemical composition of calc-spar? Such a statement would be absurd; but it is hardly more so than the talk one occasionally hears about the uselessness of applying the results of chemical analysis to the living bodies which have yielded them.

One fact, at any rate, is out of reach of such refinements, and that is, that all the forms of protoplasm which have yet been examined contain the four elements, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, in very complex union, and that they behave similarly towards several reagents. To this complex combination, the nature of which has never been determined with exactness, the name of Protein has been applied. And if we use this term with such caution as may properly arise out of our comparative ignorance of the things for which it stands, it may be truly said that all protoplasm is proteinaceous; or, as the white, or albumen, of an egg is one of the commonest examples of a nearly pure protein matter, we may say that all living matter is more or less albuminoid.

Perhaps it would not yet be safe to say that all forms of protoplasm are affected by the direct action of electric shocks; and yet the number of cases in which the contraction of protoplasm is shown to be affected by this agency increases every day.

Nor can it be affirmed with perfect confidence, that all forms of protoplasm are liable to undergo that peculiar coagulation at a temperature of 40°-50° centigrade, which has been called "heat-stiffening," though Kiihne's beautiful researches have proved this

occurrence to take place in so many and such diverse living beings, that it is hardly rash to expect that the law holds good for all.

Enough has, perhaps, been said to prove the existence of a general uniformity in the character of the protoplasm, or physical basis, of life, in whatever group of living beings it may be studied. But it will be understood that this general uniformity by no means excludes any amount of special modifications of the fundamental substance. The mineral, carbonate of lime, assumes an immense diversity of characters, though no one doubts that, under all these Protean changes, it is one and the same thing.

And now, what is the ultimate fate, and what the origin, of the matter of life?

Is it, as some of the older naturalists supposed, diffused throughout the universe in molecules, which are indestructible and unchangeable in themselves, but, in endless transmigration, unite in innumerable permutations, into the diversified forms of life we know? Or, is the matter of life composed of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated? Is it built up of ordinary matter, and again resolved into ordinary matter when its work is done?

Modern science does not hesitate a moment between these alternatives. Physiology writes over the portals of life —

*Debemur morti nos nostraque,*¹

with a profounder meaning than the Roman poet attached to that melancholy line. Under whatever disguise it takes refuge, whether fungus or oak, worm or man, the living protoplasm not only ultimately dies and is resolved into its mineral and lifeless constituents, but is always dying, and, strange as the paradox may sound, could not live unless it died.

In the wonderful story of the *Peau de Chagrin*,¹ the hero becomes possessed of a magical wild ass's skin, which yields him the means of gratifying all his wishes. But its

¹ "Ourselves and what we have to death are due." (Horace.)

» *The Wild Ass's Skin*, by Balzac.

surface represents the duration of the proprietor's life; and for every satisfied desire the skin shrinks in proportion to the intensity of fruition, until at length life, and the last handbreadth of the *peau de chagrin*, disappear with the gratification of a last wish.

Balzac's studies had led him over a wide range of thought and speculation, and his shadowing forth of physiological truth in this strange story may have been intentional. At any rate, the matter of life is a veritable *peau de chagrin*, and for every vital act it is somewhat the smaller. All work implies waste, and the work of life results, directly or indirectly, in the waste of protoplasm.

Every word uttered by a speaker costs him some physical loss; and, in the strictest sense, he burns that others may have light — so much eloquence, so much of his body resolved into carbonic acid, water, and urea. It is clear that this process of expenditure cannot go on for ever. But, happily, the protoplasmic *peau de chagrin* differs from Balzac's in its capacity of being repaired, and brought back to its full size, after every exertion.

For example, this present lecture, whatever its intellectual worth to you, has a certain physical value to me, which is, conceivably, expressible by the number of grains of protoplasm and other bodily substance wasted in maintaining my vital processes during its delivery. My *peau de chagrin* will be distinctly smaller at the end of the discourse than it was at the beginning. By and by, I shall probably have recourse to the substance commonly called mutton, for the purpose of stretching it back to its original size. Now this mutton was once the living protoplasm, more or less modified, of another animal — a sheep. As I shall eat it, it is the same matter altered, not only by death, but by exposure to sundry artificial operations in the process of cooking.

But these changes, whatever be their extent, have not rendered it incompetent to resume its old functions as matter of life. A singular inward laboratory, which I possess, will dissolve a certain portion of the modified protoplasm; the solution so formed will pass into my veins; and the subtle in-

fluences to which it will then be subjected will convert the dead protoplasm into living protoplasm, and transubstantiate sheep into man.

Nor is this all. If digestion were a thing 5 to be trifled with, I might sup upon lobster, and the matter of life of the crustacean would undergo the same wonderful metamorphosis into humanity. And were I to return to my own place by sea, and undergo shipwreck, the 10 crustacean might, and probably would, return the compliment, and demonstrate our common nature by turning my protoplasm into living lobster. Or, if nothing better were to be had, I might supply my wants 15 with mere bread, and I should find the protoplasm of the wheat-plant to be convertible into man, with no more trouble than that of the sheep, and with far less, I fancy, than that of the lobster. 20

Hence it appears to be a matter of no great moment what animal, or what plant, I lay under contribution for protoplasm, and the fact speaks volumes for the general identity of that substance in all living beings. I share 25 this catholicity of assimilation with other animals, all of which, so far as we know, could thrive equally well on the protoplasm of any of their fellows, or of any plant; but here the assimilative powers of the animal 30 world cease. A solution of smelling-salts in water, with an infinitesimal proportion of some other saline matters, contains all the elementary bodies which enter into the composition of protoplasm; but, as I need hardly 35 say, a hogshead of that fluid would not keep a hungry man from starving, nor would it save any animal whatever from a like fate. An animal cannot make protoplasm, but must take it ready-made from some other 40 animal, or some plant — the animal's highest feat of constructive chemistry being to convert dead protoplasm into that living matter of life which is appropriate to itself.

Therefore, in seeking for the origin of 45 protoplasm, we must eventually turn to the vegetable world. A fluid containing carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts, which offers such a Barmecide feast¹ to the animal,

is a table richly spread to multitudes of plants; and, with a due supply of only such materials, many a plant will not only maintain itself in vigor, but grow and multiply until it has increased a million-fold, or a million million-fold, the quantity of protoplasm which it originally possessed; in this way building up the matter of life, to an indefinite extent, from the common matter of the universe.

Thus, the animal can only raise the complex substance of dead protoplasm to the higher power, as one may say, of living protoplasm; while the plant can raise the less complex substances — carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts — to the same stage of living protoplasm, if not to the same level. But the plant also has its limitations. Some of the fungi, for example, appear to need 20 higher compounds to start with; and no known plant can live upon the uncompounded elements of protoplasm. A plant supplied with pure carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, and the like, would as infallibly die as the animal in his bath of smelling-salts, though it would be surrounded by all the constituents of protoplasm. Nor, indeed, need the process of simplification of vegetable food be carried so far as this, in order to arrive at the limit of the plant's thaumaturgy. Let water, carbonic acid, and all the other needful constituents be supplied except nitrogenous salts, and an ordinary plant will still be unable to manufacture protoplasm. 35

Thus the matter of life, so far as we know it (and we have no right to speculate on any other), breaks up, in consequence of that continual death which is the condition of its manifesting vitality, into carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous compounds, which certainly possess no properties but those of ordinary matter. And out of these same forms of ordinary matter, and from none which are simpler, the vegetable world builds up all the protoplasm which keeps the animal world a-going. Plants are the accumulators of the power which animals distribute and disperse.

But it will be observed that the existence of the matter of life depends on the pre

¹ A mock feast, of empty dishes (from the story of the Barmecide family in the *Arabian Nights*).

existence of certain compounds; namely, carbonic acid, water, and certain nitrogenous bodies. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. They are as necessary to the protoplasm of the plant, as the protoplasm of the plant is to that of the animal. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of these, carbon and oxygen unite in certain proportions and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water; nitrogen and other elements give rise to nitrogenous salts. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together, under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life.

I see no break in this series of steps in molecular complication, and I am unable to understand why the language which is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used to any of the others. We think fit to call different kinds of matter carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and to speak of the various powers and activities of these substances as the properties of the matter of which they are composed.

When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in a certain proportion, and an electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water, equal in weight to the sum of their weights, appears in their place. There is not the slightest parity between the passive and active powers of the water and those of the oxygen and hydrogen which have given rise to it. At 32° Fahrenheit, and far below that temperature, oxygen and hydrogen are elastic gaseous bodies, whose particles tend to rush away from one another with great force. Water, at the same temperature, is a strong though brittle solid whose particles tend to cohere into definite geometrical shapes, and sometimes build up frosty imitations of the most complex forms of vegetable foliage.

Nevertheless we call these, and many other strange phenomena, the properties of the water, and we do not hesitate to believe that,

in some way or another, they result from the properties of the component elements of the water. We do not assume that a something called "aquosity" entered into and took possession of the oxidated hydrogen as soon as it was formed, and then guided the aqueous particles to their places in the facets of the crystal, or amongst the leaflets of the hoarfrost. On the contrary, we live in the hope and in the faith that, by the advance of molecular physics, we shall by and by be able to see our way as clearly from the constituents of water to the properties of water, as we are now able to deduce the operations of a watch from the form of its parts and the manner in which they are put together.

Is the case in any way changed when carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts disappear, and in their place, under the influence of pre-existing living protoplasm, an equivalent weight of the matter of life makes its appearance?

It is true that there is no sort of parity between the properties of the components and the properties of the resultant, but neither was there in the case of the water. It is also true that what I have spoken of as the influence of pre-existing living matter is something quite unintelligible; but does anybody quite comprehend the *modus operandi* of an electric spark, which traverses a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen?

What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no representative, or correlative, in the not living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has "vitality" than "aquosity"? And why should "vitality" hope for a better fate than the other "itys" which have disappeared since Martinus Scriblerus¹ accounted for the operation of the meat-jack by its inherent "meat-roasting quality," and scorned the "materialism" of those who explained the turning of the spit by a certain mechanism worked by the draught of the chimney?

If scientific language is to possess a definite

¹ A character invented by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, whose alleged *Memoirs* (published 1741) included various satiric attacks on the abuses of learning.

and constant signification whenever it is employed, it seems to me that we are logically bound to apply to the protoplasm, or physical basis of life, the same conceptions as those which are held to be legitimate elsewhere. If the phenomena exhibited by water are its properties, so are those presented by protoplasm, living or dead, its properties.

If the properties of water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its component molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of its molecules.

But I bid you beware that, in accepting these conclusions, you are placing your feet on the first rung of a ladder which, in most people's estimation, is the reverse of Jacob's, and leads to the antipodes of heaven. It may seem a small thing to admit that the dull vital actions of a fungus, or a foraminifer, are the properties of their protoplasm, and are the direct results of the nature of the matter of which they are composed. But if, as I have endeavored to prove to you, their protoplasm is essentially identical with, and most readily converted into, that of any animal, I can discover no logical halting-place between the admission that such is the case, and the further concession that all vital action may, with equal propriety, be said to be the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm which displays it. And if so, it must be true, in the same sense and to the same extent, that the thoughts to which I am now giving utterance, and your thoughts regarding them, are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena.

Past experience leads me to be tolerably certain that, when the propositions I have just placed before you are accessible to public comment and criticism, they will be condemned by many zealous persons, and perhaps by some few of the wise and thoughtful. I should not wonder if "gross and brute materialism" were the mildest phrase applied to them in certain quarters. And, most undoubtedly, the terms of the propositions are distinctly materialistic. Nevertheless two things are certain: the one, that I hold the

statements to be substantially true; the other, that I, individually, am no materialist, but, on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error—

What is the difference between the conception of life as the product of a certain disposition of material molecules, and the old notion of an Archæus¹ governing and directing blind matter within each living body, except this — that here, as elsewhere, matter and law have devoured spirit and spontaneity? And as surely as every future grows out of past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is co-extensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. The consciousness of this great truth weighs like a nightmare, I believe, upon many of the best minds of these days. They watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels, when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun. The advancing tide of matter threatens to drown their souls; the tightening grasp of law impedes their freedom; they are alarmed lest man's moral nature be debased by the increase of his wisdom.

If the "New Philosophy" be worthy of the reprobation with which it is visited, I confess their fears seem to me to be well founded. While, on the contrary, could David Hume² be consulted, I think he would smile at their perplexities, and chide them for doing even as the heathen, and falling down in terror before the hideous idols their own hands have raised.

For, after all, what do we know of this terrible "matter," except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness? And what do we know of that "spirit" over whose threatened extinction by matter a great lamentation is arising, like that which was heard at the death of Pan, except that it is also a name for an unknown and hypothetical cause, or

¹ According to the school of Paracelsus, the Archæus was an ethereal substance within the visible body of which it was the vital principle.

² David Hume (1711-76) was regarded by Huxley as the founder of the new sceptical philosophy, which refused belief in what could not be proved.

condition, of states of consciousness? In other words, matter and spirit are but names for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena.

And what is the dire necessity and "iron" law under which men groan? Truly, most gratuitously invented bugbears. I suppose if there be an "iron" law, it is that of gravitation; and if there be a physical necessity, it is that a stone, unsupported, must fall to the ground. But what is all we really know, and can know, about the latter phenomenon? Simply, that in all human experience stones have fallen to the ground under these conditions; that we have not the smallest reason for believing that any stone so circumstanced will not fall to the ground; and that we have, on the contrary, every reason to believe that it will so fall. It is very convenient to indicate that all the conditions of belief have been fulfilled in this case, by calling the statement that unsupported stones will fall to the ground, "a law of nature." But when, as commonly happens, we change *mil* into *must*, we introduce an idea of necessity which most assuredly does not lie in the observed facts, and has no warranty that I can discover elsewhere. For my part, I utterly repudiate and anathematize the intruder. Fact I know; and Law I know; but what is this Necessity, save an empty shadow of my own mind's throwing?

But, if it is certain that we can have no knowledge of the nature of either matter or spirit, and that the notion of necessity is something illegitimately thrust into the perfectly legitimate conception of law, the materialistic position that there is nothing in the world but matter, force, and necessity, is as utterly devoid of justification as the most baseless of theological dogmas. The fundamental doctrines of materialism, like those of spiritualism, and most other "isms," lie outside "the units of philosophical inquiry," and David Hume's great service to humanity is his irrefragable demonstration of what these limits are. Hume called himself a "sceptic," and therefore others cannot be blamed if they apply the same title to him; but that does not alter the fact that the name, with its existing implications, does him gross injustice.

If a man asks me what the politics of the inhabitants of the moon arc, and I reply that I do not know, that neither I nor any one else, have any means of knowing; and that, under these circumstances, I decline to trouble myself about the subject at all, I do not think he has any right to call me a sceptic. On the contrary, in replying thus, I conceive that I am simply honest and truthful, and show a proper regard for the economy of time. So Hume's strong and subtle intellect takes up a great many problems about which we are naturally curious, and shows us that they are essentially questions of lunar politics, in their essence incapable of being answered, and therefore not worth the attention of men who have work to do in the world. And he thus ends one of his essays:

"If we take in hand any volume of Divinity, or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."¹

Permit me to enforce this most wise advice. Why trouble ourselves about matters of which, however important they may be, we do know nothing, and can know nothing? We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. To do this effectually it is necessary to be fully possessed of only two beliefs: the first, that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited; the second, that our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events.

Each of these beliefs can be verified experimentally, as often as we like to try. Each, therefore, stands upon the strongest foundation upon which any belief can rest, and forms one of our highest truths. If we find that the ascertainment of the order of nature is facilitated by using one terminol-

¹ Hume's *Essay Of the Academical or Sceptical Philosophy*, in the *Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*.

ogy, or one set of symbols, rather than another, it is our clear duty to use the former; and no harm can accrue, so long as we bear in mind that we are dealing merely with terms and symbols. In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter: matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of matter — each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred. For it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, and suggests inquiry into the nature of those physical conditions, or concomitants of thought, which are more or less accessible to us, and a knowledge of which may, in future, help us to exercise the same kind of control over the world of thought as we already possess in respect of the material world; whereas the alternative, or spiritualistic, terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion of ideas.

Thus there can be little doubt that, the further science advances, the more extensively and consistently will all the phenomena of nature be represented by materialistic formula; and symbols. But the man of science, who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulas and symbols into what is commonly understood by materialism, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician who should mistake the *xs* and *ys* with which he works his problems, for real entities — and with this further disadvantage, as compared with the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic materialism may paralyze the energies and destroy the beauty of a life.

Science and Culture

1880

Sir Josiah Mason was a self-made man who, having accumulated a large fortune in various industrial enterprises, gave £180,000 to establish

a college at Birmingham to furnish a strictly scientific education to the youth of that centre of English industry. As the foremost advocate of the claims of natural science to the chief place in education, Thomas H. Huxley was chosen to deliver the chief address at the opening of the institution, October 1, 1880. His remarks called forth the rejoinder by Matthew Arnold (page 709). The address was subsequently published in a volume to which it gave the title.

Six years ago, as some of my present hearers may remember, I had the privilege of addressing a large assemblage of the inhabitants of this city, who had gathered together to do honor to the memory of their famous townsman, Joseph Priestley;^x and, if any satisfaction attaches to posthumous glory, we may hope that the *manes*² of the burnt-out³ philosopher were then finally appeased.

No man, however, who is endowed with a fair share of common sense, and not more than a fair share of vanity, will identify either contemporary or posthumous fame with the highest good; and Priestley's life leaves no doubt that he, at any rate, set a much higher value upon the advancement of knowledge, and the promotion of that freedom of thought which is at once the cause and the consequence of intellectual progress.

Hence I am disposed to think that, if Priestley could be amongst us today, the occasion of our meeting would afford him even greater pleasure than the proceedings which celebrated the centenary of his chief discovery.⁴ The kindly heart would be moved, the high sense of social duty would be satisfied, by the spectacle of well-earned wealth neither squandered in tawdry luxury and vainglorious show, nor scattered with the careless charity which blesses neither him that gives nor him that takes, but expended in the execution of a well-considered plan for the aid of present and future generations of those who are willing to help themselves.

We shall all be of one mind thus far. But it is needful to share Priestley's keen interest

¹ A Unitarian clergyman and scientist (1733-1804).
^a ancestral spirits.

³ Priestley's house was burned by a mob in 1791 because of his support of the French Revolution.

⁴ «oxygen.

in physical science; and to have learned, as he had learned, the value of scientific training in fields of inquiry apparently far remote from physical science; in order to appreciate, as he would have appreciated, the value of the noble gift which Sir Josiah Mason has bestowed upon the inhabitants of the Midland district.

For us children of the nineteenth century, however, the establishment of a college under the conditions of Sir Josiah Mason's Trust, has a significance apart from any which it could have possessed a hundred years ago. It appears to be an indication that we are reaching the crisis of the battle, or rather of the long series of battles, which have been fought over education in a campaign which began long before Priestley's time, and will probably not be finished just yet.

In the last century, the combatants were the champions of ancient literature on the one side, and those of modern literature on the other; but, some thirty years ago, the contest became complicated by the appearance of a third army, ranged round their banner of physical science.

I am not aware that anyone has authority to speak in the name of this new host. For it must be admitted to be somewhat of a guerilla force, composed largely of irregulars, each of whom fights pretty much for his own hand. But the impressions of a full private, who has seen a good deal of service in the ranks, respecting the present position of affairs and the conditions of a permanent peace, may not be devoid of interest; and I do not know that I could make a better use of the present opportunity than by laying them before you.

From the time that the first suggestion to introduce physical science into ordinary education was timidly whispered, until now, the advocates of scientific education have met with opposition of two kinds. On the one hand, they have been pooh-poohed by the men of business who pride themselves on being the representatives of practicality; while, on the other hand, they have been communicated by the classical scholars, in their capacity of Levites in charge of the ark

of culture and monopolists of liberal education.

The practical men believed that the idol whom they worship — rule of thumb — has been the source of the past prosperity, and will suffice for the future welfare of the arts and manufactures. They were of opinion that science is speculative rubbish; that theory and practice have nothing to do with one another; and that the scientific habit of mind is an impediment, rather than an aid, in the conduct of ordinary affairs.

I have used the past tense in speaking of the practical men — for although they were very formidable thirty years ago, I am not sure that the pure species has not been extirpated. In fact, so far as mere argument goes, they have been subjected to such a *feu d'enfer* that it is a miracle if any have escaped. But I have remarked that your typical practical man has an unexpected resemblance to one of Milton's angels. His spiritual wounds, such as are inflicted by logical weapons, may be as deep as a well and as wide as a church door, but beyond shedding a few drops of ichor, celestial or otherwise, he is no whit the worse. So, if any of these opponents be left, I will not waste time in vain repetition of the demonstrative evidence of the practical value of science; but knowing that a parable will sometimes penetrate where syllogisms fail to effect an entrance, I will offer a story for their consideration.

Once upon a time, a boy, with nothing to depend upon but his own vigorous nature, was thrown into the thick of the struggle for existence in the midst of a great manufacturing population. He seems to have had a hard fight, inasmuch as, by the time he was thirty years of age, his total disposable fund: amounted to twenty pounds. Nevertheless, middle life found him giving proof of his comprehension of the practical problems he had been roughly called upon to solve, by a career of remarkable prosperity.

Finally, having reached old age with its well-earned surroundings of "honour, troops of friends," the hero of my story bethought himself of those who were making a like start in life, and how he could stretch out a helping hand to them.

After long and anxious reflection this successful practical man of business could devise nothing better than to provide them with the means of obtaining "sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge." And he devoted a large part of his wealth and five years of incessant work to this end.

I need not point the moral of a tale which, as the solid and spacious fabric of the Scientific College assures us, is no fable, nor can anything which I could say intensify the force of this practical answer to practical objections.

We may take it for granted then, that, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the diffusion of thorough scientific education is an absolutely essential condition of industrial progress; and that the College which has been opened to-day will confer an inestimable boon upon those whose livelihood is to be gained by the practice of the arts and manufactures of the district.

The only question worth discussion is, whether the conditions, under which the work of the College is to be carried out, are such as to give it the best possible chance of achieving permanent success.

Sir Josiah Mason, without doubt most wisely, has left very large freedom of action to the trustees, to whom he proposes ultimately to commit the administration of the College, so that they may be able to adjust its arrangements in accordance with the changing conditions of the future. But, with respect to three points, he has laid most explicit injunctions upon both administrators and teachers.

Party politics are forbidden to enter into the minds of either, so far as the work of the College is concerned; theology is as sternly banished from its precincts; and finally, it is especially declared that the College shall make no provision for "mere literary instruction and education."

It does not concern me at present to dwell upon the first two injunctions any longer than may be needful to express my full conviction of their wisdom. But the third prohibition brings us face to face with those other opponents of scientific education, who arc by

no means in the moribund condition of the practical man, but alive, alert, and formidable.

It is not impossible that we shall hear this express exclusion of "literary instruction and education" from a College which, nevertheless, professes to give a high and efficient education, sharply criticised. Certainly the time was that the Levites of culture would have sounded their trumpets against its walls as against an educational Jericho.¹

How often have we not been told that the study of physical science is incompetent to confer culture; that it touches none of the higher problems of life, and, what is worse, that the continual devotion to scientific studies tends to generate a narrow and bigoted belief in the applicability of scientific methods to the search after truth of all kinds? How frequently one has reason to observe that no reply to a troublesome argument tells so well as calling its author a "mere scientific specialist." And, as I am afraid it is not permissible to speak of this form of opposition to scientific education in the past tense; may we not expect to be told that this, not only omission, but prohibition, of "mere literary instruction and education" is a patent example of scientific narrow-mindedness?

I am not acquainted with Sir Josiah Mason's reasons for the action which he has taken; but if, as I apprehend is the case, he refers to the ordinary classical course of our schools and universities by the name of "mere literary instruction and education," I venture to offer sundry reasons of my own in support of that action.

For I hold very strongly by two convictions — The first is, that neither the discipline nor the subject-matter of classical education is of such direct value to the student of physical science as to justify the expenditure of valuable time upon either; and the second is, that for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education.

I need hardly point out to you that these opinions, especially the latter, are diametrically opposed to those of the great majority of

¹ See Joshua vi.

educated Englishmen, influenced as they are by school and university traditions. In their belief, culture is obtainable only by a liberal education; and a liberal education is synonymous, not merely with education and instruction in literature, but in one particular form of literature, namely, that of Greek and Roman antiquity. They hold that the man who has learned Latin and Greek, however little, is educated; while he who is versed in other branches of knowledge, however deeply, is a more or less respectable specialist, not admissible into the cultured caste. The stamp of the educated man, the University degree, is not for him.

I am too well acquainted with the generous catholicity of spirit, the true sympathy with scientific thought, which pervades the writings of our chief apostle of culture to identify him with these opinions; and yet one may cull from one and another of those epistles to the Philistines, which so much delight all who do not answer to that name, sentences which lend them some support.

Mr. Arnold tells us that the meaning of culture is "to know the best that has been thought and said in the world." It is the criticism of life contained in literature. That criticism regards "Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result, and whose members have, for their common outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?"¹

We have here to deal with two distinct propositions. The first, that a criticism of life is the essence of culture; the second, that literature contains the materials which suffice for the construction of such criticism.

I think that we must all assent to the first proposition. For culture certainly means

something quite different from learning or technical skill. It implies the possession of an ideal, and the habit of critically estimating the value of things by comparison with a theoretic standard. Perfect culture should supply a complete theory of life, based upon a clear knowledge alike of its possibilities and of its limitations.

But we may agree to all this, and yet strongly dissent from the assumption that literature alone is competent to supply this knowledge. After having learnt all that Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity have thought and said, and all that modern literature have to tell us, it is not self-evident that we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life, which constitutes culture.

Indeed, to any one acquainted with the scope of physical science, it is not at all evident. Considering progress only in the "intellectual and spiritual sphere," I find myself wholly unable to admit that either nations or individuals will really advance, if their common outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science. I should say that an army, without weapons of precision and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine, than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life.

When a biologist meets with an anomaly, he instinctively turns to the study of development to clear it up. The rationale of contradictory opinions may with equal confidence be sought in history.

It is, happily, no new thing that Englishmen should employ their wealth in building and endowing institutions for educational purposes. But, five or six hundred years ago, deeds of foundation expressed or implied conditions as nearly as possible contrary to those which have been thought expedient by Sir Josiah Mason. That is to say, physical science was practically ignored, while a certain literary training was enjoined as a means to the acquirement of knowledge which was essentially theological.

The reason of this singular contradiction

¹ See Arnold, *The Function of Criticism*, page 685.

between the actions of men alike animated by a strong and disinterested desire to promote the welfare of their fellows, is easily discovered.

At that time, in fact, if any one desired knowledge beyond such as could be obtained by his own observation, or by common conversation, his first necessity was to learn the Latin language, inasmuch as all the higher knowledge of the western world was contained in works written in that language. Hence, Latin grammar, with logic and rhetoric, studied through Latin, were the fundamentals of education. With respect to the substance of the knowledge imparted through this channel, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, as interpreted and supplemented by the Romish Church, were held to contain a complete and infallibly true body of information.

Theological dicta were, to the thinkers of those days, that which the axioms and definitions of Euclid are to the geometers of these. The business of the philosophers of the middle ages was to deduce from the data furnished by the theologians, conclusions in accordance with ecclesiastical decrees. They were allowed the high privilege of showing, by logical process, how and why that which the Church said was true, must be true. And if their demonstrations fell short of or exceeded this limit, the Church was maternally ready to check their aberrations; if need were by the help of the secular arm.

Between the two, our ancestors were furnished with a compact and complete criticism of life. They were told how the world began and how it would end; they learned that all material existence was but a base and insignificant blot upon the fair face of the spiritual world, and that nature was, to all intents and purposes, the play-ground of the devil; they learned that the earth is the centre of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial, and more especially was it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered by the agency of innumerable spiritual beings, good and bad, according as they were moved by the deeds and prayers of men. The sum and substance of the whole doctrine was to produce

the conviction that the only thing really worth knowing in this world was how to secure that place in a better which, under certain conditions, the Church promised.

Our ancestors had a living belief in this theory of life, and acted upon it in their dealings with education, as in all other matters. Culture meant saintliness — after the fashion of the saints of those days; the education that led to it was, of necessity, theological; and the way to theology lay through Latin.

That the study of nature — further than was requisite for the satisfaction of everyday wants — should have any bearing on human life was far from the thoughts of men thus trained. Indeed, as nature had been cursed for man's sake, it was an obvious conclusion that those who meddled with nature were likely to come into pretty close contact with Satan. And, if any born scientific investigator followed his instincts, he might safely reckon upon earning the reputation, and probably upon suffering the fate, of a sorcerer.

Had the western world been left to itself in Chinese isolation, there is no saying how long this state of things might have endured. But, happily, it was not left to itself. Even earlier than the thirteenth century, the development of Moorish civilisation in Spain and the great movement of the Crusades had introduced the leaven which, from that day to this, has never ceased to work. At first, through the intermediation of Arabic translations, afterwards by the study of the originals, the western nations of Europe became acquainted with the writings of the ancient philosophers and poets, and, in time, with the whole of the vast literature of antiquity.

Whatever there was of high intellectual aspiration or dominant capacity in Italy, France, Germany, and England, spent itself for centuries in taking possession of the rich inheritance left by the dead civilisations of Greece and Rome. Marvellously aided by the invention of printing, classical learning spread and flourished. Those who possessed it prided themselves on having attained the highest culture then within the reach of mankind.

And justly. For, saving Dante on his solitary pinnacle, there was no figure in modern

literature at the time of the Renaissance to compare with the men of antiquity, there was no art to compete with their sculpture; there was no physical science but that which Greece had created. Above all, there was no other example of perfect intellectual freedom — of the unhesitating acceptance of reason as the sole guide to truth and the supreme arbiter of conduct.

The new learning necessarily soon exerted a profound influence upon education. The language of the monks and schoolmen seemed little better than gibberish to scholars fresh from Virgil and Cicero, and the study of Latin was placed upon a new foundation. Moreover, Latin itself ceased to afford the sole key to knowledge. The student who sought the highest thought of antiquity, found only a secondhand reflection of it in Roman literature, and turned his face to the full light of the Greeks. And after a battle, not altogether dissimilar to that which is at present being fought over the teaching of physical science, the study of Greek was recognised as an essential element of all higher education.

Then the Humanists, as they were called, won the day; and the great reform which they effected was of incalculable service to mankind. But the Nemesis of all reformers is finality, and the reformers of education, like those of religion, fell into the profound, however common, error of mistaking the beginning for the end of the work of reformation.

The representatives of the Humanists, in the nineteenth century, take their stand upon classical education as the sole avenue to culture, as firmly as if we were still in the age of Renaissance. Yet, surely, the present intellectual relations of the modern and the ancient worlds are profoundly different from those which obtained three centuries ago. Leaving aside the existence of a great and characteristically modern literature, of modern painting, and, especially, of modern music, there is one feature of the present state of the civilized world which separates it more widely from the Renaissance, than the Renaissance was separated from the middle ages.

This distinctive character of our own times lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge. Not

only is our daily life shaped by it; not only does the prosperity of millions of men depend upon it, but our whole theory of life has long been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the general conceptions of the universe, which have been forced upon us by physical science.

In fact, the most elementary acquaintance with the results of scientific investigation shows us that they offer a broad and striking contradiction to the opinion so implicitly credited and taught in the middle ages.

The notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes, and that the chief business of mankind is to learn that order and govern themselves accordingly. Moreover this scientific "criticism of life" presents itself to us with different credentials from any other. It appeals not to authority, nor to what anybody may have thought or said, but to nature. It admits that all our interpretations of natural fact are more or less imperfect and symbolic, and bids the learner seek for truth not among words but among things. It warns us that the assertion which outstrips evidence is not only a blunder but a crime.

The purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the Humanists in our day, gives no inkling of all this. A man may be a better scholar than Erasmus, and know no more of the chief causes of the present intellectual fermentation than Erasmus did. Scholarly and pious persons, worthy of all respect, favour us with allusions upon the sadness of the antagonism of science to their mediæval way of thinking, which betray an ignorance of the first principles of scientific investigation, an incapacity for understanding what a man of science means by veracity, and an unconsciousness of the weight of established scientific truths, which is almost comical.

There is no great force in the *tu quoque* argument, or else the advocates of scientific

education might fairly enough retort upon the modern Humanists that they may be learned specialists, but that they possess no such sound foundation for a criticism of life as deserves the name of culture. And, indeed, if we were disposed to be cruel, we might urge that the Humanists have brought this reproach upon themselves, not because they are too full of the spirit of the ancient Greek, but because they lack it.

The period of the Renaissance is commonly called that of the "Revival of Letters," as if the influences then brought to bear upon the mind of Western Europe had been wholly exhausted in the field of literature. I think it is very commonly forgotten that the revival of science, effected by the same agency, although less conspicuous, was not less momentous.

In fact, the few and scattered students of nature of that day picked up the clue to her secrets exactly as it fell from the hands of the Greeks a thousand years before. The foundations of mathematics were so well laid by them, that our children learn their geometry from a book written for the schools of Alexandria two thousand years ago. Modern astronomy is the natural continuation and development of the work of Hipparchus and of Ptolemy; modern physics of that of Democritus and of Archimedes; it was long before modern biological science outgrew the knowledge bequeathed to us by Aristotle, by Theophrastus, and by Galen.

We cannot know all the best thoughts and sayings of the Greeks unless we know what they thought about natural phenomena. We cannot fully apprehend their criticism of life unless we understand the extent to which that criticism was affected by scientific conceptions. We falsely pretend to be the inheritors of their culture, unless we are penetrated, as the best minds among them were, with an unhesitating faith that the free employment of reason, in accordance with scientific method, is the sole method of reaching truth.

Thus I venture to think that the pretensions of our modern Humanists to the possession of the monopoly of culture and to the exclusive inheritance of the spirit of antiquity must be abated, if not abandoned.

But I should be very sorry that anything I have said should be taken to imply a desire on my part to depreciate the value of classical education, as it might be and as it sometimes is. The native capacities of mankind vary no less than their opportunities; and while culture is one, the road by which one man may best reach it is widely different from that which is most advantageous to another. Again, while scientific education is yet inchoate and tentative, classical education is thoroughly well organised upon the practical experience of generations of teachers. So that, given ample time for learning and estimation for ordinary life, or for a literary career, I do not think that a young Englishman in search of culture can do better than follow the course usually marked out for him, supplementing its deficiencies by his own efforts.

But for those who mean to make science their serious occupation; or who intend to follow the profession of medicine; or who have to enter early upon the business of life; for all these, in my opinion, classical education is a mistake; and it is for this reason that I am glad to see "mere literary education and instruction" shut out from the curriculum of Sir Josiah Mason's College, seeing that its inclusion would probably lead to the introduction of the ordinary smattering of Latin and Greek.

Nevertheless, I am the last person to question the importance of genuine literary education, or to suppose that intellectual culture can be complete without it. An exclusively scientific training will bring about a mental twist as surely as an exclusively literary training. The value of the cargo does not compensate for a ship's being out of trim; and I should be very sorry to think that the Scientific College would turn out none but lopsided men.

There is no need, however, that such a catastrophe should happen. Instruction in English, French, and German is provided, and thus the three greatest literatures of the modern world are made accessible to the student.

French and German, and especially the latter language, are absolutely indispensable to those who desire full knowledge in any de-

partment of science. But even supposing that the knowledge of these languages acquired is not more than sufficient for purely scientific purposes, every Englishman has, in his native tongue, an almost perfect instrument of literary expression, and, in his own literature, models of every kind of literary excellence. If an Englishman cannot get literary culture out of his Bible, his Shakespeare, his Milton, neither, in my belief, will the profoundest study of Homer and Sophocles, Virgil and Horace, give it to him.

Thus, since the constitution of the College makes sufficient provision for literary as well as for scientific education, and since artistic instruction is also contemplated, it seems to me that a fairly complete culture is offered to all who are willing to take advantage of it.

But I am not sure that at this point the "practical" man, scotched but not slain, may ask what all this talk about culture has to do with an Institution, the object of which is defined to be "to promote the prosperity of the manufactures and the industry of the country." He may suggest that what is wanted for this end is not culture, nor even a purely scientific discipline, but simply a knowledge of applied science.

I often wish that this phrase, "applied science," had never been invented. For it suggests that there is a sort of scientific knowledge of direct practical use, which can be studied apart from another sort of scientific knowledge, which is of no practical utility, and which is termed "pure science." But there is no more complete fallacy than this. What people call applied science is nothing but the application of pure science to particular classes of problems. It consists of deductions from those general principles, established by reasoning and observation, which constitute pure science. No one can safely make these deductions until he has a firm grasp of the principles; and he can obtain that grasp only by personal experience of the operations of observation and of reasoning on which they are founded.

Almost all the processes employed in the arts and manufactures fall within the range either of physics or of chemistry. In order to improve them, one must thoroughly un-

derstand them; and no one has a chance of really understanding them, unless he has obtained that mastery of principles and that habit of dealing with facts, which is given by long-continued and well-directed purely scientific training in the physical and the chemical laboratory. So that there really is no question as to the necessity of purely scientific discipline, even if the work of the College were limited by the narrowest interpretation of its stated aims.

And, as to the desirableness of a wider culture than that yielded by science alone, it is to be recollected that the improvement of manufacturing processes is only one of the conditions which contribute to the prosperity of industry. Industry is a means and not an end; and mankind work only to get something which they want. What that something is depends partly on their innate, and partly on their acquired, desires.

If the wealth resulting from prosperous industry is to be spent upon the gratification of unworthy desires, if the increasing perfection of manufacturing processes is to be accompanied by an increasing debasement of those who carry them on, I do not see the good of industry and prosperity.

Now it is perfectly true that men's views of what is desirable depend upon their characters; and that the innate proclivities to which we give that name are not touched by any amount of instruction. But it does not follow that even mere intellectual education may not, to an indefinite extent, modify the practical manifestation of the characters of men in their actions, by supplying them with motives unknown to the ignorant. A pleasure-loving character will have pleasure of some sort; but, if you give him the choice, he may prefer pleasures which do not degrade him to those which do. And this choice is offered to every man, who possesses in literary or artistic culture a never-failing source of pleasures, which are neither withered by age, nor staled by custom, nor embittered in the recollection by the pangs of self-reproach.

If the Institution opened to-day fulfils the intention of its founder, the picked intelligences among all classes of the population of this district will pass through it. No child

born in Birmingham, henceforward, if he have the capacity to profit by the opportunities offered to him, first in the primary and other schools, and afterwards in the Scientific College, need fail to obtain, not merely the instruction, but the culture most appropriate to the conditions of his life.

Within these walls, the future employer and the future artisan may sojourn together for a while, and carry, through all their lives, the stamp of the influences then brought to bear upon them. Hence, it is not beside the mark to remind you, that the prosperity of industry depends not merely upon the improvement of manufacturing processes, not merely upon the ennobling of the individual character, but upon a third condition, namely, a clear understanding of the conditions of social life, on the part of both the capitalist and the operative, and their agreement upon common principles of social action. They must learn that social phenomena are as much the expression of natural laws as any others; that no social arrangements can be permanent unless they harmonise with the requirements of social states and dynamics; and that, in the nature of things, there is an arbiter whose decisions execute themselves.

But this knowledge is only to be obtained by the application of the methods of investigation adopted in physical researches to the investigation of the phenomena of society. Hence, I confess, I should like to see one addition made to the excellent scheme of

education propounded for the College, in the shape of provision for the teaching of Sociology. For though we are all agreed that party politics are to have no place in the instruction of the College; yet in this country, practically governed as it is now by universal suffrage, every man who does his duty must exercise political functions. And, if the evils which are inseparable from the good of political liberty are to be checked, if the perpetual oscillation of nations between anarchy and despotism is to be replaced by the steady march of self-restraining freedom; it will be because men will gradually bring themselves to deal with political, as they now deal with scientific questions; to be as ashamed of undue haste and partisan prejudice in the one case as in the other; and to believe that the machinery of society is at least as delicate as that of a spinning-jenny, and as little likely to be improved by the meddling of those who have not taken the trouble to master the principles of its action.

In conclusion, I am sure that I make myself the mouthpiece of all present in offering to the venerable founder of the Institution, which now commences its beneficent career, our congratulations on the completion of his work; and in expressing the conviction, that the remotest posterity will point to it as a crucial instance of the wisdom which natural piety leads all men to ascribe to their ancestors.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning • 1806-1861

When Elizabeth Barrett, daughter of a wealthy, but tyrannical, man of affairs in London, married Robert Browning in 1846, she had already published four volumes, in one of which appeared the stirring *The Cry of the Children*. She was already a poet in her own right. After her marriage, while living in Italy, she published *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850), a sonnet sequence (not translations as the title implies) inspired by, and celebrating her love for, Browning; *Casa Guidi Windows* (1851), a poem in praise of Italian liberty; and a novel in blank verse, *Aurora Leigh* (1857), in which she tells the story of a modern woman with modern ideas.

Mrs. Browning is a distinguished example of the influence of Carlyle on his younger

contemporaries. In *Aurora Leigh* appear many of his themes and ideas. Her passionate argument for the unity of the natural and spiritual worlds, and her cry,

Get work, get work:

Be sure 'tis better than what you work to get —

are clear echoes of his doctrine.

The moral earnestness of Carlyle pervades most of Mrs. Browning's poetry. Like her master, she felt that form in literature was less important than substance. As a result, we find in her work, mingled with much fine verse, sorry examples of false rhyme and careless metre. Nevertheless she richly deserves a place among the foremost women poets of England. She possessed technical skill and originality. She had a sensitiveness to beauty, which made her rejoice over landscapes, and suffer at the sight of ugliness and injustice in the new civilization of the machine age.

Sonnets from the Portuguese

I

I thought once how Theocritus¹ had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for
years,

Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young,
And as I mused it in his antique tongue, 5
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was
'ware, 9

So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the
hair;

And a voice said in mastery while I strove,
"Guess now who holds thee?" — "Death!"

I said. But there
The silver answer rang: "Not Death, but
Love."

3

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee,
art 5

A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages² from a hundred brighter eyes

¹ The great Greek idyllic poet of the third century, B.C.
pledges.

Than tears even can make mine, to ply thy
part

Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing
through ii

The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrim¹ is on thine head, — on mine,
the dew, —

And Death must dig the level where these
agree.

4

Thou hast thy calling to some palace floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems, where
The danciers will break footing, from the
care

Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and
bear 6

To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fulness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof! 10
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps as — thou must sing — alone,
aloof.

14

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,

¹ ointment.

"I love her for her smile — her look — her way
 Of speaking gently, — for a trick of thought
 That falls in well with mine, and certes
 wrought 5
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a day;" —
 For these things in themselves, beloved,
 may
 Be changed, or change for thee, — and love
 so wrought,
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me
 for
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks
 dry: 10
 A creature might forget to weep, who bore
 Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby.
 But love me for love's sake, that evermore
 Thou may'st love on through love's eternity.

22

When our two souls stand up erect and
 strong,
 Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
 Until the lengthening wings break into fire
 At either curved point, — What bitter wrong
 Can the earth do to us, that we should not
 long 5
 Be here contented? Think. In mounting
 higher,
 The angels would press on us, and aspire
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
 Rather on earth, beloved, — where the unfit,
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away n
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit
 A place to stand and love in for a day,
 With darkness and the death-hour rounding
 it.

16

I lived with visions for my company
 Instead of men and women, years ago,
 And found them gentle mates, nor thought to
 know
 A sweeter music than they played to me.
 But soon their trailing purple was not free 5
 Of this world's dust, their lutes did silent
 grow,
 And I myself grew faint and blind below
 Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst come
 — to be,

Beloved, what they seemed. Their shining
 fronts,
 Their songs, their splendors — better, yet the
 same, 10
 As river-water hallowed into fountains —
 Met in thee, and from out thee overcame
 My soul with satisfaction of all wants —
 Because God's gifts put man's best dreams to
 shame.

35

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
 And be all to me? Shall I never miss
 Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
 That comes to each in turn, nor count it
 strange,
 When I look up, to drop on a new range 5
 Of walls and floors, another home than this?
 Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which
 is
 Filled by dead eyes too tender to know
 change?
 That's hardest! If to conquer love has tried,
 To conquer grief, tries more, as all things
 prove; 10
 For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
 Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.
 Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart
 wide
 And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

43

How do I love thee? Let me count the
 ways.
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and
 height
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
 I love thee to the level of every day's 5
 Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
 I love thee purely, as men turn from Praise.
 I love thee with the passion put to use
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's
 faith. 10
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
 With my lost saints, — I love thee with the
 breath,
 Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God
 choose,
 I shall but love thee better after death.

To George Sand¹*A Recognition*

True genius, but true woman! dost deny
 Thy woman's nature with a manly scorn,
 And break away the gauds and armlets worn
 By weaker women in captivity?
 Ah, vain denial! that revolted cry 5
 Is sobbed in by a woman's voice forlorn:
 Thy woman's hair, my sister, all unshorn,
 Floats back dishevelled strength in agony,
 Disproving thy man's name: and while before
 The world thou burnest in a poet fire, 10
 We see thy woman's heart beat evermore
 Through the large flame. Beat purer, heart,
 and higher,
 Till God unsex thee on the heavenly shore,
 Where unincarnate spirits purely aspire!

The Cry of the Children

This poem is Mrs. Browning's eloquent protest
 against child labor.

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my
 brothers,
 Ere the sorrow comes with years?
 They are leaning their young heads against
 their mothers,
 And *that* cannot stop their tears. 4
 The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
 The young birds are chirping in the nest,
 The young fawns are playing with the shadows;
 The young flowers are blowing toward
 the west —
 But the young, young children, O my
 brothers,
 They are weeping bitterly! 10
 They are weeping in the playtime of the
 others,
 In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in their
 sorrow,
 Why their tears are falling so?
 The old man may weep for his to-morrow 15
 Which is lost in Long Ago;

¹ Literary pseudonym of Armandine Dupin, the
 French poetess, novelist, and playwright (1804-76).

The old tree is leafless in the forest,
 The old year is ending in the frost,
 The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
 The old hope is hardest to be lost: 20
 But the young, young children, O my
 brothers,
 Do you ask them why they stand
 Weeping sore before the bosoms of their
 mothers,
 In our happy Fatherland?

They look up with their pale and sunken
 faces, 25
 And their looks are sad to see,
 For the man's hoary anguish draws and
 presses
 Down the cheeks of infancy;
 "Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary,
 Our young feet," they say, "are very
 weak! 30
 Few paces have we taken, yet are weary —
 Our grave-rest is very far to seek:
 Ask the aged why they weep, and not the
 children,
 For the outside earth is cold,
 And we young ones stand without, in our
 bewildering, 35
 And the graves are for the old:

"True," say the children, "it may happen
 That we die before our time:
 Little Alice died last year, her grave is shapen
 Like a snowball, in the rime. 40
 We looked into the pit prepared to take her:
 Was no room for any work in the close
 clay!
 From the sleep wherein she lieth none will
 wake her
 Crying, 'Get up, little Alice! it is day.'
 If you listen by that grave, in sun and
 shower, 45
 With your ear down, little Alice never
 cries; "
 Could we see her face, be sure we should not
 know her,
 For a smile has time for growing in her
 eyes:
 And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in
 The shroud by the kirk-chime. 50
 It is good when it happens," say the children,
 "That **we** die before our time."

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking
 Death in life as best to have:
 They are binding up their hearts away from
 breaking, 55
 With a cerement from the grave.
 Go out, children, from the mine and from the
 city,
 Sing out, children, as the little thrushes
 do;
 Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips
 pretty,
 Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let
 them through! 60
 But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the
 meadows
 Like our weeds anear the mine?
 Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-
 shadows,
 From your pleasures fair and fine!"
 "For oh," say the children, "we are weary,
 And we cannot run or leap; 66
 If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
 To drop down in them and sleep.
 Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
 We fall upon our faces, trying to go; 70
 And, underneath our heavy eyelids droop-
 ing,
 The reddest flower would look as pale as
 snow.
 For, all day, we drag our burden tiring,
 Through the coal-dark, underground;
 Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron 75
 In the factories, round and round.
 "For, all day, the wheels are droning, turn-
 ing;
 Their wind comes in our faces,
 Till our hearts turn, our heads, with pulses
 burning,
 And the walls turn in their places: 80
 Turns the sky in the high window, blank and
 reeling,
 Turns the long light that drops adown
 the wall,
 Turn the black flies that crawl along the
 ceiling:
 All are turning, all the day, and we with
 all.
 And all day the iron wheels are droning: 85
 And sometimes we could pray,

'O ye wheels,' (breaking out in a mad
 moaning)
 'Stop! be silent for to-day!' "
 Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other
 breathing
 For a moment, mouth to mouth! 90
 Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh
 wreathing
 Of their tender human youth!
 Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
 Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
 Let them prove their living souls against the
 notion 95
 That they live in you, or under you, O
 wheels!
 Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
 Grinding life down from its mark;
 And the children's souls, which God is calling
 sunward,
 Spin on blindly in the dark. 100
 Now tell the poor young children, O my
 brothers,
 To look up to Him and pray;
 So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,
 Will bless them another day.
 They answer, "Who is God that He should
 hear us, 105
 While the rushing of the iron wheels is
 stirred?
 When we sob aloud, the human creatures
 near us
 Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a
 word.
 And we hear not (for the wheels in their
 'resounding)
 Strangers speaking at the door: no
 Is it likely God, with angels singing round
 Him,
 Hears our weeping any more?
 "Two words, indeed, of praying we remem-
 ber;
 And at midnight's hour of harm,
 'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,
 We say softly for a charm. 116
 We know no other words, except 'Our
 Father,'
 And we think that, in some pause of
 angels' song,

God may pluck them with the silence sweet
 to gather,
 And hold both within His right hand
 which is strong. 120
 'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would surely
 (For they call Him good and mild)
 Answer, smiling down the steep world very
 purely,
 'Come and rest with me, my child.'

"But no!" say the children, weeping faster,
 "He is speechless as a stone: 126
 And they tell us, of His image is the master
 Who commands us to work on.
 Go to!" say the children, — Up in Heaven,
 Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all
 we find. 130
 Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving:
 We look up for God, but tears have made
 us blind."
 Do you hear the children weeping and dis-
 proving,
 O my brothers, what ye preach?
 For God's possible is taught by His world's
 loving. 135
 And the children doubt of each.

And well may the children weep before you!
 They are weary ere they run,
 They have never seen the sunshine, nor the
 glory
 Which is brighter than the sun: 140

They know the grief of man, without its
 wisdom;
 They sink in man's despair, without its
 calm;
 And slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,
 Are martyrs, by the pang without the
 palm:
 Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievably 145
 The harvest of its memories cannot
 reap, —
 Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
 Let them weep! let them weep!

They look up with their pale and sunken
 faces,
 And their look is dread to see, 150
 For they mind you of their angels in high
 places,
 With eyes turned on Deity.
 "How long," they say, "how long, O cruel
 nation,
 Will you stand, to move the world, on a
 child's heart, —
 Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpi-
 tation, 155
 And tread onward to your throne amid
 the mart?
 Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
 And your purple shows your path!
 But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
 Than the strong man in his wrath." 160
 Pub. 1841.

Edward Fitzgerald • 1809-1883

Fitzgerald, a retiring man of much talent, is remembered as the outspoken friend of most of the great English writers of his time, as a writer of many interesting letters, as a translator of Calderon, 'schylus, and Sophocles; but, especially, as the translator of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*. He was at Cambridge University at the same time as Thackeray and Tennyson. Most of his life thereafter, with the exception of a brief, unhappy marriage, he lived alone in the country, or near London, studying what he liked, and writing.

The *Rubdiyd* is one of the great translations in English literature. It was first published, anonymously, in 1859; next, with additions and revisions, in 1868, again, cut and recast, in 1871; and, finally, revised, in 1879. ¹ is a carefully made poem, polished and felicitous, and accurate in its rendering of Omar's meaning and spirit, even though the verse-scheme

of the original Persian is somewhat altered in translation. Omar, called Khayyam, or the tent-maker, was by profession a mathematician and astronomer, born at Naishapur, where he died in 1113. At various times he wrote, in no particular order, rubaiyat, or quatrains, which contained his reflections on the transitoriness of life. Fitzgerald displayed skill not only in translating some of the rubaiyat, but in arranging those, that he finally decided upon, into a sequence.

Fitzgerald's translation was slow in finding recognition. Only in the last two decades of the century did its pessimism meet with response from the temper of the time. Young people found congenial the philosophy of "eat, drink, and be *melancholy*, for tomorrow we die" — a philosophy which is, perhaps, even more Fitzgerald's than Omar's. The *Rubaiyf* became "the bible of Oxford," and was found on the table, there and elsewhere, of every student, who had any pretension to sophistication. Its celebration of pleasure as the only justification of life appealed to a generation that had grown weary of the moral earnestness of Carlyle and George Eliot. Its quatrains of pentameters, with the third line "wild," is as wonderful a vehicle for its pagan defiance as are Tennyson's stanzas in *In Memoriam* for Christian submission.

The complete works of Fitzgerald were edited in seven volumes by G. Bentham (1901-03). A. C. Benson has written his life for the English Men of Letters series (192.5).

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam of Naishapur

i

Wake! For the Sun who scattered into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n,
and strikes
The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

2

Before the phantom of False morning¹ died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood
before
The Tavern shouted — "Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to
stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

4

Now the New Year² reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,

¹ The "false dawn" of the East, a light seen on the horizon about an hour before the true dawn.

³ Here, springtime.

Where the WHITE HAND OF MosEs¹ on
the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.²

5

Iram³ indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's⁴ Sev'n-ringed Cup⁵ where no
one knows;

But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

6

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Pehlevi,⁶ with "Wine! Wine!
Wine!

Red Wine!" — the Nightingale cries to the
Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:

¹ See Exodus iv, 6; the reference in this and the next line is to the blossoms in spring.

² "According to [the Persians] the healing power of Jesus resided in his breath." (Fitzgerald.)

³ A Persian garden that sank in the sands of Arabia.

⁴ Ancient king of Persia.

⁵ It "was typical of the seven heavens, seven planets, seven seas, etc., and was a divining cup." (Fitzgerald.)

⁶ Sanscrit, the language of old Persian literature.

The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter — and the Bird is on the Wing.

8

Whether at Naishapur or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by
drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

9

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings
the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

10

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobad the Great, or Kaikhosru?¹
Let Zal and Rustum² thunder as they will,
Dr Hatim³ call to Supper — heed not you.

11

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultan is forgot —
And Peace to Mahmud⁴ on his golden
Throne!

12

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

13

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

14

Look to the blowing Rose about us — "Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure⁵ on the Garden throw."

¹ Famous Persians.

² Cf. Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*. Rustum, Zal's son,
was the Persian Hercules.

³ He was generosity personified.

⁴ The Sultan.

⁵ "The rose's golden centre." (Fitzgerald.)

15

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like
Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth arc turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

16

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two — was gone.

17

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultdn with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

18

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank
deep:
And Bahrain,¹ that great Hunter — the
Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his
Sleep.

19

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

20

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs, un-
seen!

21

Ah, my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
TO-DAY of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow! — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand
Years.²

¹ An ancient king who sank in a swamp while
hunting.

² "A thousand years to each planet." (Fitzgerald.)

22

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time has prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two
before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

23

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of
Earth
Descend — ourselves to make a Couch — for
whom?

M

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and —
sans End!

25

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzin¹ from the Tower of Darkness
cries,
"Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor
There."

26

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to
Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopt with
Dust.

17

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

18

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand wrought to make it
grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I
reaped —
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."
^x The crier who summons the faithful to prayer.

29

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

30

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

31

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh
Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn¹ sate,
And many a Knot unravelled by the Road,
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

32-

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I could not
see:
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was — and then no more of THEE and
ME.

33

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that
mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs re-
vealed
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

34

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness, and I heard,
As from Without — "THE ME WITHIN THEE
BLIND!"

35

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmured — "While
you live,
Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall
return."

¹ "Lord of the seventh heaven." (Fitzgerald.)

36

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
 Articulation answered, once did live,
 And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kissed,
 How many Kisses might it take — and give!

37

For I remember stopping by the way
 To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
 And with its all-obiterated Tongue
 It murmured — "Gently, Brother, gently
 pray!"¹

38

Listen — a moment listen! — Of the same
 Poor Earth from which that Human Whisper
 came
 The luckless Mould in which Mankind was
 cast
 They did compose, and called him by the
 name.

39

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
 For Earth to drink of,² but may steal below
 To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
 There hidden — far beneath, and long ago.

40

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
 Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
 Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
 To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

41

Perplex no more with Human or Divine,
 To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
 And lose your fingers in the tresses of
 The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

42

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
 End in what All begins and ends in — Yes;
 Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTER-
 DAY
 You were — TO-MORROW you shall not be
 less.

¹ "The clay from which the bowl is made was once
 Man." (Fitzgerald.)
² A Persian custom.

43

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
 At last shall find you by the river-brink,
 And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
 Forth to your Lips to quaff — you shall not
 shrink.

44

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
 And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
 Wer't not a Shame — wer't not a Shame
 for him
 In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

45

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one-day's rest
 A Sultan to the realm of Death address;
 The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash¹
 Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

46

And fear not lest Existence closing your
 Account, and mine, should know the like no
 more;
 The Eternal Saki³ from that Bowl has
 poured
 Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

47

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
 Oh but the long long while the World shall
 last,
 Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
 As the SEV'N SEAS should heed a pebble-cast.

48

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste
 Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste —
 And Lo! — the phantom Caravan has
 reached
 The NOTHING it set out from — Oh, make
 haste!

49

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
 About THE SECRET — quick about it, Friend!
 A Hair perhaps divides the False and
 True —
 And upon what, prithee, does Life depend?
¹ Servant. ³ Wine-pourer.

50

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
 Yes; and a single Alif¹ were the clue —
 Could you but find it — to the Treasure-
 house,
 And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

51

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's
 veins
 Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
 Taking all shapes from Man to Mahi;² and
 They change and perish all — but He re-
 mains,

52-

A moment guessed — then back behind the
 Fold
 Immerst of Darkness round the. Drama rolled
 Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
 He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.

53

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
 Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening
 Door,
 You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You —
 how then
 TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no
 more?

54

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pur-
 suit
 Of This and That endeavor and dispute;
 Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
 Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

55

You know, my Friends, with what a brave
 Carouse
 I made a Second Marriage in my house;
 Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
 And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

56

For "Is" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule
 And Line,
 And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,

¹ The letter A.^a "From fish to moon." (Fitzgerald.)

Of all that one should care to fathom, I
 Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

57

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
 Reduced the Year to better reckoning?¹ —
 Nay,
 'Twas only striking from the Calendar
 Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

58

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
 Came shining through the Dusk an Angel
 Shape
 Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
 He bid me taste of it; and 'twas — the Grape!

59

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
 The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects² confute:
 The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
 Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

60

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,
 That all the misbelieving and black Horde³
 Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
 Scatters before him with his whirlwind
 Sword.

61

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who
 dare
 Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
 A Blessing, we should use it, should we
 not?
 And if a Curse — why, then, Who set it
 there?

62.

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
 Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on
 trust,
 Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
 To fill the Cup — when crumbled into Dust!

¹ Omar was a profound mathematician, and at Jamshyd's request helped to correct the calendar.² "The seventy-two sects into which Islamism so soon split." (Fitzgerald.)³ "Alluding to Sultan Mahmiid's conquest of India." (Fitzgerald.)

63

O threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain, — *This Life* flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

64

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

65

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from
Sleep
They told their fellows, and to Sleep returned.

66

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered "I Myself am Heav'n and
Hell."

67

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Our-
selves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

68

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with this Sun-illumined Lantern
held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

69

Impotent Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Checker-board of Nights and
Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and
slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

yc

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;

And He that tossed you down into the Field,
He knows about it all — HE knows — HE
knows!

71

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

72

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for *It*
As impotently rolls as you or I.

73

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last
Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed:
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

74

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came,
nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor
where.

75

I tell you this — When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n¹ Parwin² and Mushtari³ they
flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

76

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being — let the Dervish⁴ flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

77

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of *It* within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

¹ A southern constellation called the "little horse."

² The Pleiades. ³ Jupiter.

⁴ A fervent Mohammedan.

78

Wnat! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

79

What, from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-allayed —
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

80

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin¹
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

81

Oh, Thou, who Man of basti' Earth didst
make
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened — Man's Forgiveness give —
and take!

.

81

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan² away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

83

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and
some
Listened perhaps, but'iever talked at all.

84

Said one among them — "Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

85

Then said a Second — "Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank
in joy:

¹ snare. ² The month of fasting.

And He that with his hand the Vessel
made •
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

86

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter
shake?"

87

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot —
I think a Sufi¹ pipkin — waxing hot —
"All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me then,
Who makes — Who sells — Who buys—
Who is the Pot?"

88

"Why," said another, "Some there are who
tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making —
Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

89

"Well," murmured one, "Let whoso make or
buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

90

So while the Vessels one by one were speak-
ing¹
The little Moon² looked in that all were
seeking:
And then they jogged each other, "Bro-
ther! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot³ a-creak-
ing!"

.

91

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

¹ A Persian pantheist. ² The end of Ramazan.
³ Used for carrying the wine-jars.

92-

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

93

Indeed the Idols¹ I have loved so long
Have done my credit in Men's eyes much
wrong:
Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

94

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-
in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

95

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor —
Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

96

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the
Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should
close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who
knows!

¹ Wine and bong.

97

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
To which the fainting Traveller might
spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

98

Would but some winged Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

99

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

100

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane,
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in
vain!

101

And when like her, oh Saki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the
Grass,
And in your blissful errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty
Glass!

TAMAM

Dante Gabriel 'ssetti • 182.8-1882.

Rossetti was the son of the professor of Italian in King's College, University of London, who, a self-exiled revolutionist, had come to England four years before the poet's birth in 1818.

Most of his preparatory education Rossetti received at home with his sister, Christina, and his brother, William Michael. He early studied painting, and began the practice of writing verses. After a brief career at King's College, he gave himself almost entirely to painting. Through Ford Madox Brown, his instructor in art, he became acquainted with Holman Hunt, Millais, Woolner, and other artists. They founded in 1848 the Pre-Raphael-

ite Brotherhood, whose members sought to revive painting in England by going back for instruction and inspiration to the Italian masters before Raphael. They felt that the conventions in art upheld by the Royal Academy had been a bad influence in English art. Proudly they signed their paintings "P.B." in defiance to the Academicians' "R.A." Their creed was set forth in a magazine that they edited, *The Germ*, the first issue of which appeared on January 1, 1850. Only four numbers were published, but they were sufficient to make clear the Brotherhood's "Thoughts towards Nature in Poetry, Literature, and Art" (as the sub-title had it); and, with the publication of such poems as *The Blessed Damozel* and *My Sister's Sleep*, to establish Dante Gabriel Rossetti as a poet.

But Rossetti considered himself a painter, often regarding his verses merely as texts for his paintings. For ten years he published nothing. During these years he became closely associated with William Morris, Burne-Jones, and Ruskin. The latter helped him greatly, not only with advice but by buying many of his pictures. During this time, too, he met Elizabeth Siddal, who worked in a milliner's shop. She posed as a model for him, and in 1860 they were married.

Rossetti had continued writing, and in 1861 published his first volume, a collection of metrical translations of early Italian poets, which he later called *Dante and His Circle*. He had also written a number of original poems. When, in 1862, his wife died suddenly, he buried with her all his manuscripts. With his brother, William Michael, he joined Swinburne and Meredith, living with them for a short time in a house in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, not far from Carlyle. In 1869, he was persuaded to allow the manuscripts that he had buried to be unearthed. These he published in 1870 under the title *Poems*. They were harshly criticized by a minor writer, Robert Buchanan (who a few years before had attacked Swinburne), in a now notorious article called "The Fleshly School of Poetry." This provoked a controversy, from which Rossetti emerged victorious. In 1881, he published his third and last volume, *Ballads and Sonnets*. He died in 1881.

Rossetti and his friends fought against the materialism and ugliness that they found in the new machine-age. In a way, they were belated romanticists, going back to the past for inspiration and guidance. On the other hand, in their insistence on detail and truth to nature, they were realists or naturalists; and in their social consciousness, they were, especially in the figure of William Morris, painfully aware of what was wrong with the times.

Rossetti, more so than some of his friends, like Ruskin and Morris, was the romanticist. If he used detail in his verse or in his drawings, he used it not so much to arrive at verisimilitude or so-called truth to nature, as to stimulate imagination and produce glamour. Old forms, like the ballad with its refrain, or the sonnet (of which he was a master), seemed natural to his genius. In his reactions to his time, he sought beauty rather than reform.

In the sonnet-form Rossetti showed his greatest skill. The introductory sonnet to *The House of Life* is a noteworthy definition — and an excellent example — of what he thought a sonnet should be.

The best edition of Rossetti's poems is by his brother, William Michael, in one volume. A. C. Benson has written the biography for the English Men of Letters series. See also the essays by Swinburne and Pater. A recent study is R. L. Mcgroz, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Painter and Poet of Heaven in Earth* (1919).

The Blessed Damozel

According to Hall Caine, Rossetti said of this poem: "I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and so I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." The reference is, of course, to *The Raven*.

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the golden bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand, 5
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn; • 10
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
 One of God's choristers;
 The wonder was not yet quite gone 15
 From that still look of hers,
 Albeit, to them she left, her day
 Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
— Yet now, and in this place, 20
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face....
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house 25
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun. 30

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth 35
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims.

Spoke evermore among themselves
 Their heart-remembered names;
 And the souls mounting up to God
 Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
 Out of the circling charm;
 Until her bosom must have made
 The bar she leaned on warm,
 And the lilies lay as if asleep
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce 50
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon 55
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf, and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together. 60

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
 Strove not her accents there,
 Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
 Possessed the mid-day air,
 Strove not her steps to reach my side 65
 Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me.
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed? 70
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him 75
To the deep wells of light,
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;

- And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.
- "We two will lie i' the shadow of 85
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly. 90
- "And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause, 95
Or some new thing to know."
- (Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity 100
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)
- "We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names 105
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosaly.
- "Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded, no
Into the fine cloth, white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.
- "He shall fear, haply, and be dumb: 115
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak. 120
- "Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round Whom all souls
Kne'l, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;
And angels meeting us shall sing 125
To their citherns and citoles.
- "There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me: —
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, — only to be, 130
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."
- She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild, —
"All this is when he comes." She ceased. 135
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.
- (I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres: 140
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)
1847.

Sister Helen

- "Why did you melt your waxen man,¹
Sister Helen?
To-day is the third since you began."
"The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother." 5
(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You'll let me play, for you said I might." 10
"Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother."
(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "You said it must melt ere vesper-bell, 15
Sister Helen;
If now it be molten, all is well."
"Even so, — nay, peace! you cannot tell,
Little brother."
(O Mother, Mary Mother, 20
What is this, between Hell and Heaven?)

¹ According to an old superstition, a woman might cause her faithless lover's life to dwindle by melting a wax image of him slowly in front of a fire.

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
 Sister Helen;
 How like dead folk he has dropped away!"
 "Nay now, of the dead what can you say, 25
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
 Sister Helen, 30
 Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"
 "Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven'.) 35

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick and
 sore,
 Sister Helen,
 And I'll play without the gallery door."
 "Ay, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,
 Little brother." 40
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Here high up in the balcony,
 Sister Helen,
 The moon flies face to face with me." 45
 "Ay, look and say whatever you see,
 Little brother."
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake, 50
 Sister Helen;
 In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."
 "Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,* 55
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
 Sister Helen,
 Three horsemen that ride terribly."
 "Little brother, whence come the three, 60
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven!)

"They come by the hill-verge from Boyne Bar,
 Sister Helen, 65

And one draws nigh, but two are afar."
 "Look, look, do you know them who they
 are,
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven!}) 70

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,
 Sister Helen,
 For I know the white mane on the blast."
 "The hour has come, has come at last,
 Little brother!" 75
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called 'Halloo!'
 Sister Helen,
 And he says that he would speak with you."
 "Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew, 81
 Little brother."
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven!)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry, 85
 Sister Helen,
 That Keith of Ewern's like to die."
 "And he and thou, and thou and I,
 Little brother."
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,* 90
And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,
 Sister Helen,
 He sickened, and lies since then forlorn."
 "For bridegroom's side is the bride a thorn, 95
 Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Three days and nights he has lain abed,
 Sister Helen, 100
 And he prays in torment to be dead."
 "The thing may chance, if he have prayed,
 Little brother!"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
If he have grayed, between Hell and Heaven!) 105

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,
 Sister Helen,
 That you should take your curse away."

"My prayer was heard, — he need but pray,
 Little brother!" no
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"But he says, till you take back your ban,
 Sister Helen,
 His soul would pass, yet never can." 115
 "Nay then, shall I slay a living man,
 Little brother?"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"But he calls forever on your name, 120
 Sister Helen,
 And says that he melts before a flame."
 "My heart for his pleasure fared the same,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother, 125
 Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
 Sister Helen,
 For I know the white plume on the blast."
 "The hour, the sweet hour I forecast, 130
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,
 Sister Helen; 135
 But his words are drowned in the wind's
 course."
 "Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforce,
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What word now heard, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry, 141
 Sister Helen,
 Is ever to see you ere he die."
 "In all that his soul sees, there am I,
 Little brother!" 145
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 The soul's one sight, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,
 Sister Helen,
 And bids you mind the banks of Boyne." 150
 "What else he broke will he ever join,

Little brother?"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 No, never joined, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He yields you these and craves full fain, 155
 Sister Helen,
 You pardon him in his mortal pain."
 "What else he took will he give again,
 Little brother?"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother, 160
 Not twice to give, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He calls your name in an agony,
 Sister Helen,
 That even dead Love must weep to see."
 "Hate, born of Love, is blind as he, 165
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,
 Sister Helen, 170
 For I know the white hair on the blast."
 "The short, short hour will soon be past,
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He looks at me and he tries to speak, 176
 Sister Helen,
 But oh his voice is sad and weak!"
 "What here should the mighty Baron seek,
 Little brother?" 180
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,
 Sister Helen,
 The body dies, but the soul shall live." 185
 "Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would rive, 190
 Sister Helen,
 To save his dear son's soul alive."
 "Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,
 Little brother!"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother, 195
 Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!)*

- "He cries to you, kneeling in the road,
Sister Helen,
To go with him for the love of God!"
"The way is long to his son's abode, 200
Little brother."
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,
Sister Helen, 305
So darkly clad, I saw her not."
"See her now or never see aught,
Little brother!"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
What more to see, between Hell and Heaven!) 210
- "Her hood falls back, and the moon shines
fair,
Sister Helen,
On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."
"Blest hour of my power and her despair,
Little brother!" 215
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
Hour blest and banned, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride did
glow,
Sister Helen,
'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago." 220
"One morn for pride and three days for woe,
Little brother!"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days, three mghts, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "Her clasped hands stretch from her bending
head, 225
Sister Helen;
With the loud wind's wail her sobs arc wed "
"What wedding-strains hath her bridal-bed,
Little brother?"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother, 230
What strain but death's, between Hell and Heaven?)
- "She may not speak, she sinks in a swoon,
Sister Helen, —
She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."
"Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe tune,
Little brother!" 236
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "They've caught her to Westholm's saddle-
bow,
Sister Helen, 241'
And her moonlit hair gleams white in its
flow."
"Let it turn whiter than winter snow,
Little brother!"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
Woe-withered gold, between Hell and Heaven!) 245
- "O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,
Sister Helen;
More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."
"No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,
Little brother!" 250
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,
Sister Helen,
Is it in the sky or in the ground?" 255
"Say, have they turned their horses round,
Little brother?"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
What would she more, between Hell and Heaven?)
- "They have raised the old man from his knee,
Sister Helen, 261
And they ride in silence hastily."
"More fast the naked soul doth flee,
Little brother!"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother, 26s
The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "Flank to flank are the three steeds gone,
Sister Helen,
But the lady's dark steed goes alone."
"And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath
flown, 270
Little brother."
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!)
- "Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,
Sister Helen, 275
And weary sad they look by the hill."
"But he and I are sadder still,
Little brother!"
(0 Mother, Mary Mother,
Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!) 280

"Sec, see, the wax has dropped from its place,
Sister Helen,

And the flames are winning up apace!"

"Yet here they burn but for a space,
Little brother!" 285

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!')

"Ah! what white thing at the door has
crossed,

Sister Helen,

Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?" 290

"A soul that's lost as mine is lost,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!')
Pub. 1853.

The Ballad of Dead Ladies

From *Francois Villon*¹

Tell me now in what hidden way is

Lady Flora the lovely Roman?

Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thais,³

Neither of them the fairer woman?

Where is Echo, beheld of no man, 5

Only heard on river and mere, —

Shew whose beauty was more than human?...

But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Heloise, the learned nun,

For whose sake Abeillard, I ween, 10

Lost manhood and put priesthood on?

(From Love he won such dule and teen!³)

And where, I pray you, is the Queen

Who willed that Buridan⁴ should steer

Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seme?...

But where are the snows of yester-year? 16

White Queen Blanche,⁵ like a queen of lilies,

With a voice like any mermaid, —

Bertha Broadfoot,⁶ Beatrice, Alice,

And Ermengarde the lady of Maine, — 20

¹ "The madcap poet of France," born 1431.

² Mistress of Alexander the Great. ³ grief.

⁴ Jean Buridan, a French philosopher, of the 14th century. He was one of the important scholars whom Queen Marguerite caused to be thrown into the Seine after a visit to her apartment.

⁵ Wife of Louis VIII of France.

⁶ Mother of Charlemagne.

And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there, —

Mother of God, where are they then?...

But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord, 25

Where they are gone, nor yet this year,

Except with this for an overword, —

"But where are the snows of yester-year?"

Troy Town

Heavenborn Helen, Sparta's queen,

(O Troy Town!)

Had two breasts of heavenly sheen,

The sun and moon of the heart's desire:

All Love's lordship lay between. 5

(O Troy's down,

Tall Troy's on fire)

Helen knelt at Venus' shrine,

(O Troy Town!)

Saying "A little gift is mine, 10

A little gift for a heart's desire.

Hear me speak and make me a sign!

(O Troy's down,

Tall Troy's on fire!')

"Look, I bring thee a carven cup; 15

(O Troy Town!)

See it here as I hold it up, —

Shaped it is to the heart's desire,

Fit to fill when the gods would sup.

(O Troy's down,

Tall Troy's on fire!)

"It was moulded like my breast;

(O Troy Town!)

He that sees it may not rest,

Rest at all for his heart's desire. 25

O give ear to my heart's behest!

(O Troy's down,

Tall Troy's on fire!)

"See my breast, how like it is,

(O Troy Town!)

See it bare for the air to kiss! 30

Is the cup to thy heart's desire?

O for the breast, O make it his!

(O Troy's down,

Tall Troy's on fire!)

35

" Yea, for my bosom here I sue:
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Thou must give it where 'tis due,
 Give it there to the heart's desire.
 Whom do I give my bosom to? 40
 (0 Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

"Each twin breast is an apple sweet!
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Once an apple stirred the beat 45
 Of thy heart with the heart's desire:
 Say, who brought it then to thy feet?
 (0 Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

"They that claimed it then were three: 50
 (0 Troy Town'.}
 For thy sake two hearts did he
 Make forlorn of the heart's desire.
 Do for him as he did for thee!
 (0 Troy's down, 55
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

"Mine are apples grown to the south,
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Grown to taste in the days of drouth,
 Taste and waste to the heart's desire: 60
 Mine are apples meet for his mouth!"
 (0 Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

Venus looked on Helen's gift,
 (0 Troy Town.} 65
 Looked and smiled with subtle drift,
 Saw the work of her heart's desire: —
 "There thou kneel'st for Love to lift!"
 (0 Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!} 70

Venus looked in Helen's face,
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Knew far off an hour and place,
 And fire lit from the heart's desire;
 Laughed and said, "Thy gift hath grace!"
 (0 Troy's down, 76
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

Cupid looked on Helen's breast,
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Saw the heart within its nest, 80

Saw the flame of the heart's desire, —
 Marked his arrow's burning crest.
 (0 Troy's down.
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

Cupid took another dart, 85
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Fledged it for another heart,
 Winged the shaft with the heart's desire,
 Drew the string and said, "Depart!"
 (0 Troy's down, 90
 Tall Troy's on fire!}

Paris turned upon his bed,
 (0 Troy Town!}
 Turned upon his bed and said,
 Dead at heart with the heart's desire, — 95
 "O to clasp her golden head!"
 (0 Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire.')

Pub. 1870.

FROM The House of Life¹

The Sonnet

A Sonnet is a moment's monument, —
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it
 be,
 Whether for lustral rite² or dire portent,
 Of its own arduous fulness reverent: 5
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
 As Day or Night may rule, and let Time
 see
 Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
 A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals
 The soul, — its converse, to what Power
 'tis due: — 10
 Whether for tribute to the august appeals
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
 It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's³ cavernous
 breath,
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

¹ The title is taken from astrology, according to which the heavens were divided into twelve houses, the first of which, on the eastern horizon, was called the house of the ascendant, or the house of life.

² purification.
³ At the Styx, where the soul had to pay Charon for ferrying across.

4. *Love-Sight*

When do I see thee most, beloved one?
 When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
 Before thy face, their altar solemnize
 The worship of that Love through thee made
 known? 4
 Or when in the dusk hours (we two alone),
 Close kissed and eloquent of still replies,
 Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage
 lies,
 And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
 O love, my love! if I no more should see 9
 Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
 Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, —
 How then should sound upon Life's darken-
 ing slope
 The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of
 Hope,
 The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

19. *Silent Noon*

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, —
 The finger-points look through like rosy
 blooms:
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams
 and glooms
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass, s
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge,
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the haw-
 thorn-hedge.
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
 Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-
 fly
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the
 sky:— 10
 So this winged hour is dropped to us from
 above.
 Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless
 dower,
 This close-companioned, inarticulate hour
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

71, 71, 73, *The Choice*

i

Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die.
 Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,
 Needs not our help. Then loose me, love,
 and hold
 Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I

May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-
 high, 5
 Till round the glass thy fingers glow like
 gold.
 We'll drown all hours: thy song, while
 hours are tolled,
 Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.
 Now kiss, and think that there are really
 those,
 My own high-bosomed beauty, who in-
 crease 10
 Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose
 our way!
 Through many years they toil; then on
 a day
 They die not, — for their life was death, —
 but cease;
 And round their narrow lips the mould falls
 close.

2

Watch thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt
 die.
 Or art thou sure thou shalt have time for
 death?
 Is not the day which God's word promiseth
 To come man knows not when? In yonder
 sky,
 Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth:
 can I s
 Or thou assure him of his goal? God's
 breath
 Even at this moment haply quickeneth
 The air to a flame, till spirits, always nigh
 Though screened and hid, shall walk the day-
 light here. 9
 And dost thou prate of all that man shall do?
 Canst thou, who hast but plagues, pre-
 sume to be
 Glad in his gladness that comes after
 thee?
 Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell? Go
 to:
 Cover thy countenance, and watch, and fear.

3

Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die.
 Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the
 shore,
 Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is all
 gone o'er;

Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh,
 Man clomb until he touched the truth; and I,
 Even I, am he whom it was destined for."
 How should this be? Art thou, then, so
 much more 7
 Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst
 reap thereby?
 Nay, come up hither. From this wave-
 washed mound
 Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;
 Then reach on with thy thought till it be
 drowned. n
 Miles and miles distant though the last
 line be,
 And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues
 beyond,
 Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there
 is more sea.

85. *Vain Virtues*

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
 None of the sins, — but this and that fair
 deed
 Which a soul's sin at length could super-
 sede.
 These yet are virgins, whom death's timely
 knell
 Might once have sainted; whom the fiends
 compel 5
 Together now, in snake-bound shuddering
 sheaves
 Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
 Their refuse maidenhood abominable.
 Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit,
 Whose names, half entered in the book of
 Life, 10
 Were God's desire at noon. And as their
 hair
 And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no
 whit
 To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined
 wife,
 The Sin still blithe on earth that sent
 them there.

86. *Lost Days*

The lost days of my life until to-day,
 What were they, could I see them on the
 street
 Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of
 wheat

Sown once for food but trodden into clay? 4
 Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
 Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
 Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
 The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?
 I do not see them here; but after death
 God knows I know the faces I shall see, 10
 Each one a murdered self, with low last
 breath.
 "I am thyself, — what hast thou done
 to me?"
 "And I — and I — thyself" (lo! each one
 saith),
 "And thou thyself to all eternity!"

97. *A Superscription*

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-
 been;
 I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-
 well;
 Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
 Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
 Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
 Which had Life's form and Love's, but by
 my spell 6
 Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
 Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.
 Mark me, how still I am! But should there
 dart
 One moment through thy soul the soft
 surprise 10
 Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath
 of sighs, —
 Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
 Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
 Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

101. *The One Hope*

When vain desire at last and vain regret
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
 What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
 And teach the forgetful to forget?
 Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long un-
 met, — 5
 Or may the soul at once in a green plain
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-
 fountain
 And cull the dew-drenched flowering am-
 ulet?
 Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air 9
 Between the scripted petals softly blown

Peers breathless for the gift of grace un-
known,—
Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
But only the one Hope's one name be there, —
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.
Pub. 1870.

The Cloud Confines

The day is dark and the night
To him that would search their heart;
No lips of cloud that will part
Nor morning song in the light: 5
Only, gazing alone,
To him wild shadows are shown,
Deep under deep unknown
And height above unknown height.
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way, 10
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;
Named new, we name it the old;
Thereof some tale hath been told 15
But no words come from the dead;
Whether at all they be,
Or whether as bond or free,
Or whether they too were we,
Or by what spell they have sped. 20
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate 25
That beats in thy breast, O Time? —

Red strife from the furthest prime,
And anguish of fierce debate;
War that shatters her slain,
And peace that grinds them as grain, 30
And eyes fixed ever in vain
On the pitiless eyes of Fate.
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know, 35
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love
That bleeds in thy breast, O Man? —
Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban
Of fangs that mock them above; 40
Thy bells prolonged unto knells,
Thy hope that a breath dispels,
Thy bitter forlorn farewells
And the empty echoes thereof?
Still we say as we go, — 45
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,
Aweary with all its wings; 50
And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.
Our past is clean forgot,
Our present is and is not,
Our future's a sealed seedplot, 55
And what betwixt them are we? —
We who say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know
That shall we know one day." 60
Pub. 1872.

Emily Bronte • 1818-1848

Emily Bronte was born in the parsonage at Haworth, a lonely village on the desolate moors of Yorkshire, in 1818. After attending boarding schools, she became a governess. She returned to the depressing life at Haworth in 1841. Here began an illness which led to consumption.

In 1846, Emily and her two sisters published *Poems by Cumr, Ellis, and Acton Bell* — pseudonyms, obviously, for Charlotte, Emily, and Anne. In 1847, Charlotte published *Jane Eyre* and Emily, *Wuthenng Heights*, two remarkable novels that have achieved a permanent

place in English fiction. In 1848 Emily died (standing up, tradition says), and was buried in the churchyard adjoining the house.

Her poems, often halting in technique, are the passionate outpourings of a soul, sincere, aloof, and courageous.

For an account of the lives of the Bronte sisters, see Clement Shorter's *The Brontes* (1908).

The Philosopher

Enough of thought, philosopher!

Too long hast thou been dreaming
Unlightened, in this chamber drear,
While summer's sun is beaming!
Space-sweeping soul, what sad refrain
Concludes thy musings once again?

"Oh, for the time when I shall sleep
Without identity.
And never care how rain may steep,
Or snow may cover me!
No promised heaven these wild desires
Could all, or half, fulfill;
No threatened hell, with quenchless fires,
Subdue this quenchless will!"

"So said I, and still say the same;
Still, to my death, will say —
Three gods, within this little frame,
Are warring night and day;
Heaven could not hold them all, and yet
They all are held in me;
And must be mine till I forget
My present entity!
Oh for the time when in my breast
Their struggles will be o'er!
Oh for the day when I shall rest,
And never suffer more!"

"I saw a spirit, standing, man,
Where thou dost stand — an hour ago,
And round his feet three rivers ran,
Of equal depth, and equal flow —
A golden stream — and one like blood;
And one like sapphire seemed to be;
But where they joined their triple flood
It tumbled in an inky sea.
The spirit sent his dazzling gaze
Down through that ocean's gloomy night;
Then, kindling all, with sudden blaze,
The glad deep sparkled wide and bright —

White as the sun, far, far more fair
Than its divided sources were! 40

"And even for that spirit, seer,
I've watched and sought my lifetime long;
Sought him in heaven, hell, earth, and air,
An endless search, and always wrong.
Had I but seen his glorious eye
Once light the clouds that wilder me,
I ne'er had raised this coward cry
To cease to think, and cease to be;
I ne'er had called oblivion blest,
Nor, stretching eager hands to death,
Implored to change for senseless rest
This sentient soul, this living breath.
Oh, let me die — that power and will
Their cruel strife may close;
And conquered good and conquering ill
Be lost in one repose!" 55

Remembrance

Cold in the earth — and the deep snow piled
above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer
hover 5
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-
leaves cover
Thy noble heart forever, ever more?

Cold in the earth — and fifteen wild Decem-
bers
From those brown hills have melted into
spring: 10
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remem-
bers
After such years of change and suffering I

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
 While the world's tide is bearing me along;
 Other desires and other hopes beset me, 15
 Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
 No second morn has ever shone for me;
 All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
 All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee. 20

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
 And even Despair was powerless to destroy,
 Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
 Strengthened, and fed, without the aid of joy-

Then did I check the tears of useless passion — 25
 Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
 Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
 Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
 Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain; 30
 Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
 How could I seek the empty world again?

That Wind, I Used to Hear

That wind, I used to hear it swelling
 With joy divinely deep;
 You might have seen my hot tears welling,
 But rapture made me weep.

I used to love on winter nights «
 To lie and dream alone
 Of all the rare and real delights
 My lonely years had known.

And, oh! above the best of those i<
 That coming time should bear,
 Like heaven's own glorious stars they rose,
 Still beaming bright and fair.

The Night is Darkening

The night is darkening round me,
 The wild winds coldly blow;
 But a tyrant spell has bound me,
 And I cannot, cannot go.

The giant trees are bending 5
 Their bare boughs weighed with snow;
 The storm is fast descending,
 And yet I cannot go.

Clouds beyond clouds above me,
 Wastes beyond wastes below; 10
 But nothing drear can move me:
 I will not, cannot go.

Fall, Leaves

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
 Lengthen night and shorten day:
 Every leaf speaks bliss to me,
 Fluttering from the autumn tree;

I shall smile when wreaths of snow 5
 Blossom where the rose should grow:
 I shall sing when night's decay
 Ushers in the drearier day.

The Weary Task

A little while, a little while,
 The weary task is put away,
 And I can sing and I can smile,
 Alike, while I have holiday.

Where wilt thou go, my harassed heart — 5
 What thought, what scene invites thee now?

What spot, or near or far apart,
 Has rest for thee, my weary brow?

There is a spot, 'mid barren hills,
 Where winter howls, and driving rain; 10
 But, if the dreary tempest chills,
 There is a light that warms again.

The house is old, the trees are bare,
 Moonless above bends twilight's dome;

But what on earth is half so dear — 15
So longed for — as the hearth of home?

The mute bird sitting on the stone,
The dank moss dripping from the wall,
The thorn-trees gaunt, the walks o'ergrown,
I love them — how I love them all! 20

Still, as I mused, the naked room,
The alien firelight died away;
And from the midst of cheerless gloom,
I passed to bright, unclouded day.

A little and a lone green lane 25
That opened on a common wide;
A distant, dreamy, dim blue chain
Of mountains circling every side.

A heaven so clear, an earth so calm,
So sweet, so soft, so hushed an air; 30
And, deepening still the dream-like charm,
Wild moor-sheep feeding everywhere.

That was the scene, I knew it well;
I knew the turfy pathway's sweep,
That, winding o'er each billowy swell, 35
Marked out the tracks of wandering sheep.

Could I have lingered but an hour,
It well had paid a week of toil;
But Truth has banished Fancy's power:
Restraint and heavy task recoil. 40

Even as I stood with raptured eye,
Absorbed in bliss so deep and dear,
My hour of rest had fled by,
And back came labor, bondage, care.

Shall Earth no More Inspire Thee?

"The following little piece has no title; but in it the Genius of a solitary region seems to address his wandering and wayward votary, and to recall within his influence the proud mind which rebelled at times even against what it most loved."
(Charlotte Brontë.)

Shall earth no more inspire thee,
Thou lonely dreamer, now?
Since passion may not fire thee,
Shall nature cease to bow?

Thy mind is ever moving 5
In regions dark to thee;
Recall its useless roving;
Come back, and dwell with me.

I know my mountain breezes
Enchant and soothe thee still, 10
I know my sunshine pleases,
Despite thy wayward will.

When day, with evening blending,
Sinks from the summer sky,
I've seen thy spirit bending 15
In fond idolatry.

I've watched thee every hour;
I know my mighty sway:
I know my magic power
To drive thy griefs away. 20

Few hearts to mortals given
On earth so wildly pine;
Yet few would ask a heaven
More like this earth than thine.

Then let my winds caress thee; 25
Thy comrade let me be:
Since nought beside can bless thee,
Return — and dwell with me.

Self-Interrogation

"The evening passes fast away,
'Tis almost time to rest;
What thoughts has left the vanished day,
What feelings in thy breast?"

"The vanished day? It leaves a sense 5
Of labor hardly done;
Of little gained with vast expense —
A sense of grief alone!

"Time stands before the door of Death,
Upbraiding bitterly; 10
And Conscience, with exhaustless breath,
Pours black reproach on me:

"And though I've said that Conscience lies,
And Time should Fate condemn;
Still, sad Repentance clouds my eyes, 15
And makes me yield to them!"

"Then art thou glad to seek repose? Art glad to leave the sea, And anchor all thy weary woes In calm Eternity?"	20	Too often thus, when left alone, Where none my thoughts can see, Comes back a word, a passing tone From thy strange history.	«j
"Nothing regrets to see thee go — Not one voice sobs 'Farewell'; And where thy heart has suffered so, Canst thou desire to dwell?"		Sometimes I seem to see thee rise, A glorious child again; All virtues beaming from thine eyes That ever honored men:	10
"Alas! the countless links are strong That bind us to our clay; The loving spirit lingers long, And would not pass away!	25	Courage and truth, a generous breast Where sinless sunshine lay: A being whose very presence blessed Like gladsome summer-day.	15
"And rest is sweet, when laureled fame Will crown the soldier's crest; But a brave heart, with a tarnished name, Would rather fight than rest."	30	Oh, fairly spread thy early sail, And fresh, and pure, and free Was the first impulse of the gale Which urged life's wave for thee!	20
"Well thou hast fought for many a year, Hast fought thy whole life through, Hast humbled Falsehood, trampled Fear, What is there left to do?"	35	Why did the pilot, too confiding, Dream o'er that ocean's foam, And trust in Pleasure's careless guiding To bring his vessel home?	
"Tis true, this arm has hotly striven, Has dared what few would dare; Much have I done, and freely given, But little learned to bear!"	40	For well he knew what dangers frowned, What mists would gather dim, What rocks and shelves and sands lay round Between his port and him.	25
"Look on the grave where thou must sleep, Thy last, and strongest foe; It is endurance not to weep If that repose seem woe.		The very brightness of the sun, The splendor of the main, The wind which bore him wildly on, Should not have warned in vain.	30
"The long war closing in defeat — Defeat serenely borne, — Thy midnight rest may still be sweet, And break in glorious morn!"	45	An anxious gazer from the shore — I marked the whitening wave, And wept above thy fate the more Because — I could not save.	35

The Wanderer from the Fold

Clement Shorter believes that this is the last poem written by Emily Brontë. The Wanderer is her wayward brother Branwell, who died less than three months before Emily.

How few, of all the hearts that loved.
Are grieving for thee now;
And why should mine to-night be moved
With such a sense of woe?

It recks not now, when all is over:
But yet my heart will be
A mourner still, though friend and lover
Have both forgotten thee!

Stanzas

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with
me,

And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region; 5
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality, 10
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be
leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are
feeding, 15
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

The Old Stoic

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And Love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream,
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer 5
That moves my lips for me
Is, "Leave the heart that now I bear
And give me liberty!"

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore; 10
In life and death, a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

Last Lines

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled
sphere:

I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast, 5
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life — that in me has rest,
As I — undying Life — have power in thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain; 10
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
So surely anchored on 15
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone, 21
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death, 25
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou — THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be destroyed

Arthur Hugh Clough • 1819-1861

The names of Arthur Hugh Clough and Matthew Arnold are forever linked, not merely because they were close friends from school days until Clough's untimely death, but because they had the same reaction — fearless, honest, and cultured — to what they felt was wrong in their world. Their reputation has grown steadily, as readers begin to realize how right they were.

Clough was born in Liverpool, January 1, 1819, the son of a cotton merchant. His young boyhood was spent in Charleston, South Carolina (where his brother, who died of "stran-

ger's fever," lies in the churchyard of old St. Michael's.) When he was nine, he was sent back to England. At Rugby, then under the headmastership of Dr. Arnold, Matthew's father, he became the outstanding student of the school.

When Clough entered Balliol College in 1837, Oxford was already at the full tide of the Oxford Movement led by John Henry Newman; but for Clough the revival of the medieval religious spirit caused in the end a reaction to rationalism. In 1843, ^{two} years after receiving his B.A., he was elected fellow of Oriel College. He resigned in 1848, when he felt that he could no longer support the Articles of Religion of the Church of England (to which Fellows had to subscribe).

In 1851, at the suggestion of Ralph Waldo Emerson, whom he had met in London, he came to the United States and settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he supported himself by tutoring and writing magazine articles. There is evidence that he thought of taking up his permanent residence here; but in 1853, against Emerson's advice, he left for London, to accept a position in the Education Office (which Carlyle had procured for him), and to marry a cousin of Florence Nightingale's. Clough worked diligently at his duties as examiner, and also wrote steadily. In 1861 he traveled on the Continent for his health. He died, November 13, in Florence, Italy, and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery.

Clough is one of the more significant minor figures in English poetry, because his poems, like those of Matthew Arnold, express the doubt and uncertainty caused by the challenge to supernatural faith made by natural science. His characteristic mood, however, is not one of discouragement and pessimism, but rather one of courage and joy in achievement. His verse is simple and sparing of ornament, but it has the strength of sincerity. It frequently anticipates the realism of a later day.

The standard edition is *Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, edited, with a memoir, by his wife in 1869 (i vols.). The poems have been edited by H. S. Milford (1910) and by C. Whibley (1913).

Say Not, the Struggle Nought Availeth

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars; 5
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain, 10
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,

In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly, 15
But westward, look, the land is bright.
1849.

FROM Dipsychus

Dipsychus, published after Clough's death, is a poetic play, laid in Venice. As may be gathered from the following lines, spoken by the Spirit in a dialogue with Dipsychus, it is filled with humor. In the epilogue to the play, Clough remarks, half-seriously, that his purpose was to represent "the conflict between the tender conscience and the world."

This world is very odd we see,
We do not comprehend it;
But in one fact we all agree,
God won't, and we can't, mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin 5
To take it as I find it;

The pleasure to take pleasure in;
 The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,
 May be an unreal mere appearance; 10
 Only — for my inside, in fine,
 They have a singular coherence.

Oh, yes, my pensive youth, abstain;
 And any empty sick sensation,
 Remember, anything like pain 15
 Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage
 To far more purpose e'er than you did,
 You find it in his wisest page,
 Whom God deludes is well deluded.¹ 20
 1849.

Qua Cursum Ventus²

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
 With canvas drooping, side by side,
 Two towers of sail at dawn of day
 Are scarce long leagues apart descried,

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze, 5
 And all the darkling hours they plied,
 Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
 By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
 Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
 Brief absence joined anew to feel, n
 Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were rilled,
 And onward each rejoicing steered —
 Ah, neither blame, for neither willed, 15
 Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
 Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
 Through winds and tides one compass
 guides —
 To that, and your own selves, be true. 20

¹ "Wen Gott betrügt, ist wohl betrogen." Clough
 used this line as the title of one of his early poems.
² The course lies as the wind blows.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
 Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
 On your wide plain they join again,
 Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought, 25
 One purpose hold where'er they fare, —
 O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
 At last, at last, unite them there!
 Pub. 1849.

The Latest Decalogue

Thou shalt have one God only; who
 Would be at the expense of two?
 No graven images may be
 Worshipped, except the currency:
 Swear not at all; for, for thy curse 5
 Thine enemy is none the worse:
 At church on Sunday to attend
 Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
 Honor thy parents: that is, all
 From whom advancement may befall; 10
 Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
 Officiously to keep alive:
 Do not adultery commit;
 Advantage rarely comes of it:
 Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat, 15
 When it's so lucrative to cheat:
 Bear not false witness; let the lie
 Have time on its own wings to fly:
 Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
 Approves all forms of competition. ao
 Pub. 1862.

Hope Evermore and Believe

Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en
 as thy thought
 So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as
 thy hope and belief.
 Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise to
 provoke thee against them;
 Hast thou courage? enough, sec them
 exulting to yield.
 Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild
 sea's furling waters 5
 (Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou
 think'st to destroy),

All with ineffable longing are waiting their
 Invader,
 All, with one varying voice, call to him,
 Come and subdue;
 Still for their Conqueror call, and but for the
 joy of being conquered
 (Rapture they will not forego), dare to
 resist and rebel; 10
 Still, when resisting and raging, in soft under-
 voice say unto him,
 Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore
 and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and
 the stars direct thee,
 Go with the girdle of man, go and encom-
 pass the earth.
 Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting,
 the hoarding, the having, 15
 But for the joy of the deed; but for the
 Duty to do.

Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition
 and action,
 With the great girdle of God, go and en-
 compass the earth.

Go; say not in thy heart, And what then were
 it accomplished,
 Were the wild impulse allayed, what were
 the use or the good! 20
 Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when the
 deed is accomplished,
 What thou hast done and shalt do, shall be
 declared to thee then.

Go with the sun and the stars, and yet ever-
 more in thy spirit
 Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there better
 than it.

This that I see is not all, and this that I do is
 but little; 25
 Nevertheless it is good, though there is
 better than it.

Pub. 1862.

Qui Laborat, Orat¹

O only Source of all our light and life,
 Whom as our truth, our strength, we see
 and feel,
 But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
 Alone again reveal!

¹ He who works, prays.

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
 Thy presence owns ineffable, divine; 6
 Chastised each rebel self-centered thought,
 My will adareth Thine.

With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly
 mind
 Speechless remain, or speechless e'en de-
 part, 10
 Nor seek to see — for what of earthly kind
 Can see Thee as Thou art? —

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
 In thought's abstractest forms to seem to
 see,
 It dare not dare the dread communion hold 15
 In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,
 In worldly walks the prayerless heart pre-
 pare;
 And if in work its life it seem to live,
 Shalt make that work be prayer. 20

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it
 plies,
 Unsummoned powers the blinding film
 shall part,
 And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes
 In recognition start.

But, as thou wiltiest, give or e'en forbear 25
 The beatific supersensual sight,
 So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler
 prayer
 Approach Thee morn and night.
 Pub. 1862.

Itē Domum Saturni, Venit Hesperus^T

The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie),²

The rainy clouds are filing fast below.
 And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie. 5

¹ Go home, well fed; evening is here.

² The names of the cows that the girl is driving home.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year ago,
 Who stepped beside and cheered us on and on?
 My sweetheart wanders far away from me,
 In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie. 10

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie),
 And through the vale the rains go sweeping
 by;
 Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie. is

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
 O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie).
 And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to mind 19
 The pleasant huts and herds he left behind?
 And doth he sometimes in his slumbering sec
 The feeding kme, and doth he think of me,
 My sweetheart wandering wheresoc'er it be?
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to snow
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie), 26
 And loud and louder roars the flood below.
 Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be—
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie.

Or shall he find before his term be sped, 30
 Some comelier maid that he shall wish to
 wed?
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Pahe.)

For weary is work, and weary day by day
 To have your comfort miles on miles away.
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie. 35

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
 And he returning see himself too late?⁷
 For work we must, and what we sec, we sec,
 And God he knows, and what must be, must
 be,

When sweethearts wander far away from me.
 Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie. 41

The sky behind is brightening up anew
 (Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La
 Palie),

The rain is ending, and our journey too:
 Heigho! aha! for here at home are we: — 45
 In Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.
 Pub. 1862.

Life is Struggle

To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain,
 And give oneself a world of pain;
 Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,
 Imperious, supple — God knows what,
 For what's all one to have or not; 5
 O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
 For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,
 It is not in itself a bliss,
 Only it is precisely this
 That keeps us all alive. 10

To say we truly feel the pain,
 And quite are sinking with the strain; —
 Entirely, simply, undeceived,
 Believe, and say we ne'er believed
 The object, e'en were it achieved, 15
 A thing we e'er had cared to keep;
 With heart and soul to hold it cheap,
 And then to go and try it again;
 O false, unwise, absurd, and vain! 30
 O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss,
 Only it is precisely this
 That keeps us still alive.
 Pub. 1869.

In a London Square

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
 East wind and frost are safely gone;
 With zephyr mild and balmy rain
 The summer comes serenely on;
 Earth, air, and sun and skies combine 5
 To promise all that's kind and fair: —
 But thou, O human heart of mine,
 Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
 The winds of March were wild and drear,
 And, nearing and receding still, n
 Spring never would, we thought, be here.
 The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
 Had, not the less, their certain date: —
 And thou, O human heart of mine, 15
 Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.
 Pub. 1869.

All is Well

Whate'er you dream with doubt possessed,
 Keep, keep it snug within your breast,

And lay you down and take your rest;
 Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,
 And when you wake, to work again. 5
 The wind it blows, the vessel goes,
 And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well: no need of care;
 Though how it will, and when, and where,
 We cannot see, and can't declare. 10
 In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,
 'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,
 The wind it blows, the ship it goes,
 Though where and whither, no one knows.
 Pub. 1869.

Christina Georgina Rossetti • 1830-1894

The life of Christina Rossetti, one of England's greatest women poets, is closely connected with the lives of her elder brothers, Dante Gabriel and William Michael. Through them she became associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, to whose magazine, *The Germ*, she contributed her first poems. Although leading a secluded life with her mother, she had, because of them, more contacts with the world of men than most mid-Victorian women had.

Her poems range from nursery rhymes to poems deeply religious, from genuine love poems to lyrics, melancholy but courageous, on death. Most original of her poems, showing a rare imagination and, as always, technical skill, is *Goblin Market*. Like Elizabeth Barrett Browning, she wrote a sonnet-sequence on love, based upon her own experience — *Monna Innominata*.

The best edition of her poems is in one volume, edited by her brother, William Michael.

G. An appreciative essay may be found in A. Symons, *Studies in Two Literatures*.

Song: "When I am Dead, My Dearest"

"This celebrated lyric, which has perhaps been oftener quoted, and certainly oftener set to music, than anything else by Christina Rossetti". .. (W. M. Rossetti.)

When I am dead, my dearest,
 Sing no sad songs for me;
 Plant thou no roses at my head,
 Nor shady cypress tree.
 Be the green grass above me 5
 With showers and dewdrops wet;
 And if thou wilt, remember,
 And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
 I shall not feel the ram; 10
 I shall not hear the nightingale
 Sing on as if in pain.
 And dreaming through the twilight
 That doth not rise nor set,
 Haply I may remember, 15
 And haply may forget.
 12 December, 1848.

Looking Forward

"The tone of this lyric suggests that it was written in expectation of seemingly imminent death; in the MS. notebook it stands in my

mother's handwriting (quite contrary to wont)."
(W. M. Rossetti.)

Sleep, let me sleep, for I am sick of care;
Sleep, let me sleep, for my pain wearies me.
Shut out the light; thicken the heavy air
With drowsy incense, let a distant stream
Of music lull me, languid as a dream, 5
Soft as the whisper of a summer sea.

Pluck me no rose that groweth on a thorn,
Nor myrtle white and cold as snow in June,
Fit for a virgin on her marriage morn:
But bring me poppies brimmed with sleepy
death, 10
And ivy choking what it garlandeth,
And primroses that open to the moon.

Listen, the music swells into a song,
A simple song I loved in days of yore;
The echoes take it up and up along 15
The hills, and the wind blows it back again.—
Peace, peace, there is a memory in that strain
Of happy days that shall return no more.

Oh peace! your music wakeneth old thought,
But not old hope that made my life so
sweet, 20

Only the longing that must end in nought.
Have patience with me, friends, a little while:
For soon, where you shall dance and sing and
smile,
My quickened dust may blossom at your feet.

Sweet thought that I may yet live and grow
green, 25
That leaves may yet spring from the
withered root,

And buds and flowers and berries half unseen.
Then, if you haply muse upon the past,
Say this: Poor child, she has her wish at last,
Barren through life, but in death bearing
fruit. 30

8 June, 1849.

The Heart Knoweth Its Own Bitterness

"Few things written by Christina Rossetti contain more of her innermost self than this."
(W. M. Rossetti.)

When all the over-work of life
Is finished once, and fast asleep
We swerve no more beneath the knife
But taste that silence cool and deep;
Forgetful of the highways rough, 5
Forgetful of the thorny scourge,
Forgetful of the tossing surge,
Then shall we find it is enough?

How can we say "enough" on earth —
"Enough" with such a craving heart? 10
I have not found it since my birth,
But still have bartered part for part.
I have not held and hugged the whole,
But paid the old to gain the new:
Much have I paid, yet much is due, 15
Till I am beggared sense and soul.

I used to labor, used to strive
For pleasure with a restless will:
Now if I save my soul alive
All else what matters, good or ill? 20
I used to dream alone, to plan
Unspoken hopes and days to come: —
Of all my past this is the sum —
I will not lean on child of man.

To give, to give, not to receive! 25
I long to pour myself, my soul,
Not to keep back or count or leave,
But king with king to give the whole.
I long for one to stir my deep —
I have had enough of help and gift — 30
I long for one to search and sift
Myself, to take myself and keep.

You scratch my surface with your pin,
You stroke me smooth with hushing
breath:—
Nay pierce, nay probe, nay dig within, 35
Probe my quick core and sound my depth.
You call me with a puny call,
You talk, you smile, you nothing do:
How should I spend my heart on you,
My heart that so outweighs you all? 40

Your vessels are by much too strait:
Were I to pour, you could not hold. —
Bear with me: I must bear to wait,
A fountain sealed through heat and cold.

Bear with me days or months or years:	45	Swart-headed mulberries,	10
Deep must call deep until the end		Wild free-born cranberries,	
When friend shall no more envy friend		Crab-apples, dewberries,	
Nor vex his friend at unawares.		Pineapples, blackberries,	
		Apricots, strawberries —	
Not in this world of hope deferred,		All ripe together	15
This world of perishable stuff: —	50	In summer weather —	
Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard		Morns that pass by,	
Nor heart conceived that full "enough":		Fair eves that fly;	
Here moans the separating sea,		Come buy, come buy:	
Here harvests fail, here breaks the heart:		Our grapes fresh from the vine,	20
There God shall join and no man part,	55	Pomegranates full and fine,	
I full of Christ and Christ of me.		Dates and sharp bullaces,	
27 August, 1857.		Rare pears and greengages,	
		Damsons and bilberries,	
		Taste them and try;	25
		Currants and gooseberries,	
		Bright-fire-like barberries,	
		Figs to fill your mouth,	
		Citrons from the South,	
		Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;	30
		Come buy, come buy."	

Goblin Market

"The original title of this poem was *A Peep at the Goblins — To M. F. R.* — i.e. Maria Francsca Rossetti. I have more than once heard Christina say that she did not mean anything profound by this fairy tale — it is not a moral apologue consistently carried out in detail. Still the incidents are such as to be at any rate suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them. I find at times that people do not see the central point of the story, such as the authoress intended it: and she has expressed it too, but perhaps not with due emphasis. The foundation of the narrative is this: That the goblins tempt women to eat their luscious but uncanny fruits; that a first taste produces a rabid craving for a second taste; but that the second taste is never accorded, and, in default of it, the woman pines away and dies. Then comes the central point: Laura having tasted the fruits once, and being at death's door through inability to get a second taste, her sister Lizzie determines to save her at all hazards; so she goes to the goblins, refuses to eat their fruits, and beguiles them into forcing the fruits upon her with so much insistency that her face is all smeared and steeped with the juices; she gets Laura to kiss and suck these juices off her face, and Laura, having thus obtained the otherwise impossible second taste, rapidly recovers." (W. M. Rossetti.)

Morning and evening
 Maids heard the goblins cry,
 "Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy:
 Apples and quinces, 5
 Lemons and oranges,
 Plump unpecked cherries,
 Melons and raspberries,
 Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,

Evening by evening
 Among the brook-side rushes,
 Laura bowed her head to hear,
 Lizzie veiled her blushes; 35
 Crouching close together
 In the cooling weather,
 With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
 With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
 "Lie close," Laura said, 40
 Pricking up her golden head.
 "We must not look at goblin men,
 We must not buy their fruits,
 Who knows upon what soil they fed
 Their hungry thirsty roots?" 45
 "Come buy," call the goblins
 Hobbling down the glen.
 "Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
 You should not peep at goblin men." 50
 Lizzie covered up her eyes,
 Covered close lest they should look;
 Laura reared her glossy head,
 And whispered like the restless brook:
 "Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
 Down the glen tramp little men. 55
 One hauls a basket,
 One bears a plate,
 One lugs a golden dish
 Of many pounds' weight.

How fair the vine must grow Whose grapes are so luscious! How warm the wind must blow Through those fruit bushes!" "No," said <i>Lizzie</i> , "No, no, no; Their offers should not charm us, Their evil gifts would harm us." She thrust a dimpled ringer In each ear, shut eyes and ran. Curious <i>Laura</i> chose to linger, Wondering at each merchant man. One had a cat's face, One whisked a tail, One tramped at a rat's pace, One crawled like a snail, One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry, One like a ratel tumbled hurry-skurry.	60	The cat-faced purred, The rat-paced spoke a word Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard; One parrot-voiced and jolly Cried, " <i>Pretty Goblin</i> " still for " <i>Pretty Polly</i> "; One whistled like a bird.	no
She heard a voice like voice of doves Cooing all together; They sounded kind and full of loves In the pleasant weather.	76	But sweet-tooth <i>Laura</i> spoke in haste: "Good folk, I have no coin; To take were to purloin. I have no copper in my purse, I have no silver either, And all my gold is on the furze That shakes in windy weather Above the rusty heather."	115
<i>Laura</i> stretched her gleaming neck Like a rush-imbedded swan, Like a lily from the beck, Like a moonlit poplar branch, Like a vessel at the launch When its last restraint is gone.	80	"You have much gold upon your head," They answered all together; "Buy from us with a golden curl."	125
Backward up the mossy glen Turned and trooped the goblin men, With their shrill repeated cry, "Come buy, come buy." When they reached where <i>Laura</i> was, They stood stock still upon the moss, Leering at each other, Brother with queer brother; Signaling each other, Brother with sly brother.	85	She clipped a precious golden lock, She dropped a tear more rare than pearl, Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red. Sweeter than honey from the rock, Stronger than man-rejoicing wine, Clearer than water flowed that juice; She never tasted such before, How should it cloy with length of use? She sucked and sucked and sucked the more Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;	135
One set his basket down, One reared his plate; One began to weave a crown Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown (Men sell not such in any town), One heaved the golden weight Of dish and fruit to offer her; "Come buy, come buy" was still their cry.	90	She sucked until her lips were sore; Then flung the emptied rinds away, But gathered up one kernel stone, And knew not was it night or day As she turned home alone.	140
<i>Laura</i> stared but did not stir, Longed but had no money. The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste In tones as smooth as honey,	95	<i>Lizzie</i> met her at the gate, Full of wise upbraidings: "Dear, you should not stay so late; Twilight is not good for maidens; Should not loiter in the glen In the haunts of goblin men. Do you not remember <i>Jeanie</i> , How she met them in the moonlight, Took their gifts both choice and many, Ate their fruits and wore their flowers Plucked from bowers Where summer ripens at all hours? But ever in the moonlight She pined and pined away; Sought them by night and day,	145
	100		150
	105		155

- Found them no more, but dwindled and
grew gray;
Then fell with the first-snow,
While to this day no grass will grow
Where she lies low;
I planted daisies there a year ago 160
That never blow.
You should not loiter so."
"Nay, hush," said Laura;
"Nay, hush, my sister.
I ate and ate my fill, 165
Yet my mouth waters still.
To-morrow night I will
Buy more"; and kissed her.
"Have done with sorrow,
I'll bring you plums to-morrow 170
Fresh on their mother twigs,
Cherries worth getting;
You cannot think what figs
My teeth have met in,
What melons icy-cold 175
Piled on a dish of gold
Too huge for me to hold,
What peaches with a velvet nap,
Pellucid grapes without one seed.
Odorous indeed must be the mead 180
Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they
drink
With lilies at the brink,
And sugar-sweet their sap."
- Golden head by golden head,
Like two pigeons in one nest 185
Folded in each other's wings,
They lay down in their curtained bed;
Like two blossoms on one stem,
Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
Like two wands of ivory 190
Tipped with gold for awful kings.
Moon and stars gazed in at them,
Wind sang to them lullaby,
Lumbering owls forebore to fly,
Not a bat flapped to and fro 195
Round their nest;
Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
Locked together in one nest.
- Early in the morning
When the first cock crowed his warning, 200
Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
Laura rose with Lizzie;
- Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
Aired and set to rights the house,
Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat, 205
Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
Fed their poultry, sat and sewed;
Talked as modest maidens should —
Lizzie with an open heart, 210
Laura in an absent dream,
One content, one sick in part;
One warbling for the mere bright day's de-
light,
One longing for the night.
- At length slow evening came. 215
They went with pitchers to the reedy brook;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from its deep.
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
Then turning homeward said: "The sunset 221
flushes
Those furthest loftiest crags;
Come, Laura, not another maiden lags.
No willful squirrel wags;
The beasts and birds are fast asleep." 225
- But Laura loitered still among the rushes,
And said the bank was steep,
And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill;
Listening ever, but not catching 230
The customary cry,
"Come buy, come buy,"
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words;
Not for all her watching 235
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling —
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single, 240
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.
- Till Lizzie urged, "O Laura, come;
I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not look.
You should not loiter longer at this brook;
Come with me home. 245
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each glowworm winks her spark.
Let us get home before the night grows dark,

- For clouds may gather
Though this is summer weather, 250
Put out the lights and drench us through;
Then if we lost our way what should we do?"
- Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry alone,
That goblin cry, 255
"Come buy our fruits, come buy."
Must she then buy no more such dainty
fruit?
Must she no more such succous pasture find,
Gone deaf and blind?
Her tree of life drooped from the root; 260
She said not one word in her heart's sore
ache;
But peering through the dimness, naught dis-
cerning,
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the
way;
So crept to bed, and lay
Silent till Lizzie slept; 265
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
And gnashed her teeth for balked desire, and
wept
As if her heart would break.
- Day after day, night after night,
Laura kept watch in vain 270
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
She never caught again the goblin cry,
"Come buy, come buy";
She never spied the goblin men
Hawking their fruits along the glen. 275
But when the noon waxed bright
Her hair grew thin and gray;
She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth
turn
To swift decay and burn
Her fire away. 280
- One day, remembering her kernel-stone,
She set it by a wall that faced the south;
Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
Watched for a waxing shoot,
But there came none. 285
It never saw the sun,
It never felt the trickling moisture run;
While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
She dreamed of melons, as a traveler sees
False waves in desert drouth 290
- With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.
- She no more swept the house,
Tended the fowls or cows,
Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat, 295
Brought water from the brook;
But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
And would not eat.
- Tender Lizzie could not bear
To watch her sister's cankerous care, 300
Yet not to share.
She night and morning
Caught the goblin's cry:
"Come buy our orchard fruits.
Come buy, come buy." 305
Beside the brook, along the glen,
She heard the tramp of goblin men,
The voice and stir
Poor Laura could not hear;
Longed to buy fruit to comfort her, 310
But feared to pay too dear.
She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
Who should have been a bride:
But who for joys brides hope to have
Fell sick and died 315
In her gay prime,
In earliest winter time,
With the first glazing rime,
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.
- Till Laura dwindling 320
Seemed knocking at Death's door.
Then Lizzie weighed no more
Better and worse;
But put a silver penny in her purse,
Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps
of furze 325
At twilight, halted by the brook,
And for the first time in her life
Began to listen and look.
- Laughed every goblin
When they spied her peeping; 330
Came toward her hobbling,
Flying, running, leaping,
Puffing and blowing,
Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
Clucking and gobbling, 335
Mopping and mowing,

[illegible]

- And streaked her neck which quaked like
curd.
At last the evil people,
Worn out by her resistance,
Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
Along whichever road they took, 440
Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
Some writhed into the ground,
Some dived into the brook
With ring and ripple,
Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
Some vanished in the distance. 446
- In a smart, ache, tingle,
Lizzie went her way;
Knew not was it night or day;
Sprang up the bank, tore through the furze,
Threaded copse and dingle, 451
And heard her penny jingle
Bouncing in her purse —
Its bounce was music to her ear.
She ran and ran 455
As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged her with gibe or curse
Or something worse;
But not one goblin skurried after,
Nor was she pricked by fear, 460
The kind heart made her windy-paced
That urged her home quite out of breath
with haste
And inward laughter.
- She cried, "Laura," up the garden,
"Did you miss me? 465
Come and kiss me.
Never mind my bruises,
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
Goblin pulp and goblin dew. 470
Eat me, drink me, love me;
Laura, make much of me;
For your sake I have braved the glen
And had to do with goblin merchant men."
- Laura started from her chair, 475
Flung her arms up in the air,
Clutched her hair:
"Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
For my sake the fruit forbidden?
Must your light like mine be hidden, 480
Your young life like mine be wasted,
- Undone in mine undoing,
And ruined in my ruin,
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?" —
She clung about her sister, 485
Kissed and kissed and kissed her;
Tears once again
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
Dropping like rain
After long sultry drouth; 490
Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,
She kissed and kissed her with a hungry
mouth.
- Her lips began to scorch,
That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
She loathed the feast. 495
Writhing as one possessed, she leaped and sung,
Rent all her robe, and wrung
Her hands in lamentable haste,
And beat her breast.
Her locks streamed like the torch 500
Borne by a racer at full speed,
Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
Or like an eagle when she stems the light
Straight toward the sun,
Or like a caged thing freed, 505
Or like a flying flag when armies run.
- Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked
at her heart,
Met the fire smoldering there
And overbore its lesser flame,
She gorged on bitterness without a name —
Ah, fool, to choose such part 511
Of soul-consuming care!
Sense failed in the mortal strife;
Like the watch-tower of a town
Which an earthquake shatters down, 515
Like a lightning-stricken mast,
Like a wind-uprooted tree
Spun about,
Like a foam-topped waterspout
Cast down headlong in the sea, 520
She fell at last;
Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life?
- Life out of death.
That night long Lizzie watched by her, 525
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
Felt for her breath,

Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
 With tears and fanning leaves.
 But when the first birds chirped about their
 eaves, 530
 And early reapers plodded to the place
 Of golden sheaves,
 And dew-wet grass
 Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
 And new buds with new day 535
 Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
 Laura awoke as from a dream,
 Laughed in the innocent old way,
 Hugged *Lizzie* but not twice or thrice;
 Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of
 gray, 540
 Her breath was sweet as May,
 And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
 Afterwards, when both were wives
 With children of their own; 545
 Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
 Their lives bound up in tender lives;
 Laura would call the little ones
 And tell them of her early prime,
 Those pleasant days long gone 550
 Of not-returning time;
 Would talk about the haunted glen,
 The wicked quaint fruit-merchant men,
 Their fruits like honey to the throat
 But poison in the blood; 555
 (Men sell not such in any town);
 Would tell them how her sister stood
 In deadly peril to do her good,
 And win the fiery antidote;
 Then joining hands to little hands 560
 Would bid them cling together —

"For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 To fetch one if one goes astray, 565
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands."
 27 April, 1859.

Sleeping at Last

"I regard these verses (the title again is mine) as being the very last that Christina ever wrote; probably late in 1893, or it may be early in 1894. They form a very fitting close to her poetic performance, the longing for rest (even as distinguished from actual bliss in heaven) being most marked throughout the whole course of her writings. I found the lines after her death." (W. M. Rossetti.)

Sleeping at last, the trouble and tumult over,
 Sleeping at last, the struggle and horror
 past,
 Cold and white, out of sight of friend and of
 lover,
 Sleeping at last.

No more a tired heart downcast or overcast,
 No more pangs that wring or shifting fears
 that hover, 6
 Sleeping at last in a dreamless sleep locked
 fast.

Fast asleep. Singing birds in their leafy cover
 Cannot wake her, nor shake her the gusty
 blast.
 Under the purple thyme and the purple clover
 Sleeping at last. n
 Circa 1893.

William Morris • 1834-1896

The son of a well-to-do broker, William Morris was privately educated, went to Marlborough School, and then proceeded to Exeter College, Oxford. Few men were better endowed: he had wealth enough to make him independent, he had robust health to make him eager for every activity, he had a love of beauty that forced him to seek it everywhere and to create it where he could; and he had a sincere love for his fellow men. He was not a genius, in the sense that Keats was, but he became one of the great well-rounded men of

his time who, with a spirit of joy and faith, dedicated his life to the service of humanity — a fact that we only now fully realize.

William Morris was at Oxford in the years when Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his friends were starting their Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in London. He and his friend Edward Burne-Jones became the sponsors for a similar movement back to the Middle Ages for inspiration in art and poetry. Morris, born in 1834, was six years younger than Rossetti. The two became intimate friends. Morris studied painting with Rossetti, and later, when Morris came to London, the two became members of a firm which Morris directed with the object of bringing beautiful design and decoration into English churches and homes. The firm dealt in carving, stained glass, metal-work, chintzes, carpets, and furniture. All his life Morris remained interested in handicrafts of all sorts. He set up looms for weaving tapestry. He set up his own printing-press. He learned to write a beautiful hand like that of the medieval scribes. This interest in reviving the fine traditions of industry, of which the great tradition was a workman's joy in the work of his hands, led him to protest against the modern industrial system in much the same way as Ruskin had done. Morris, however, believed in the end that the way to bring back medieval conditions of work inspired by art was through socialism. He joined the Social Democratic Federation in 1883, and devoted many years to speaking, writing, and editing papers in behalf of the cause of social justice. He died in 1896.

Morris began his career as poet in the full tide of the medieval revival. His first volume, *The Defence of Guenevere* (1858), contains work of extraordinary originality — bits of medieval psychology and realism which are much more penetrating than Tennyson's *Idylls*. Most of Morris's poetic achievement, however, consisted in retelling the old stories of the race. The most famous of his works is *The Earthly Paradise*. Two groups of voyagers, Greeks and Northmen, unite to exchange month by month the old myths of their people. Other longer narratives in verse to which Morris set his hand are *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) and *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876). He translated the *Æneid* and the *Odyssey* as well as some of the Icelandic sagas and *Beowulf*. As a socialist he lectured on the connection between art and society, in *Hopes and Fears for Art*, and wrote a Utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*. His last phase of literary activity was marked by the prose romances, *The House of the Wolfings* (1889), and its successors, in which he pictured the early life of the Germanic tribes.

Altogether the bulk of Morris's work in prose and verse is very great. Most of it owes its inspiration to the literature of the past rather than to the life of the present. To Morris, poetry was a decoration of life, and, like other arts, a matter of sound craftsmanship. He once wrote that, if a man could not compose an epic while he was weaving a tapestry, he was no good at all. But if Morris as a poet seems withdrawn from the life of his time, one must not forget the devotion with which he set himself to work out its social problem and to create a better world.

The *Collected Works* have been published in twenty-four volumes, with introductions, by his daughter, M. Morris (1911-15). Selections from the poems have been edited by P. R. Colwell (1904) and by H. Newbolt (1913). The standard biography is by J. W. Mackail (z. vols., 1899). Alfred Noyes wrote the life for the English Men of Letters series (1908). See also Swinburne's essay, and G. K. Chesterton's in *Varied Tyfes* (1902); also A. Glutton-Brock, *William Morris, His Work and Influence* (1914).

The Defence of Guenevere

But, knowing now that they would have her
 speak,
 She threw her wet hair backward from her
 brow,
 Her hand close to her mouth touching her
 cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful blow,
 And feeling it shameful to feel ought but
 shame 5
 All through her heart, yet felt her cheek
 burned so,

She must a little touch it; like one lame
 She walked away from Gauwaine, with her
 head
 Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame

The tears dried quick; she stopped at last and
 said: 10
 "O knights and lords, it seems but little skill
 To talk of well-known things past now and
 dead.

⁴⁴ God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,
 And pray you all forgiveness heartily!
 Because you must be right such great lords —
 still 15

"Listen, suppose your time were come to die,
 And you were quite alone and very weak;
 Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
 Of river through your broad lands running
 well: 20
 Suppose a hush should come, then some one
 speak:

"One of these cloths is heaven, and one is
 hell,
 Now choose one cloth for ever, which they
 be,
 I will not tell you, you must somehow tell

"Of your own strength and mightiness;
 here, see! 25
 Yea, yea, my Lord, and you to ope your eyes,
 At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such
 dyes,
 Not known on earth, on his great wings, and
 hands,
 Held out two ways, light from the inner skies

"Showing him well, and making his com-
 mands 31
 Seem to be God's commands, moreover, too,
 Holding within his hands the cloths on
 wands;

"And one of these strange choosing cloths
 was blue,
 Wavy and long, and one cut short and red,
 No man could tell the better of the two. 36

¹¹ After a shivering half-hour you said,
 'God help! heaven's color, the blue;' and he
 said, 'hell.'

Perhaps you then would roll upon your bed,

" And cry to all good men that loved you well,
⁴ Ah Christ! if only I had known, known,
 known;' 41

Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

"Like wisest man how all things would be,
 moan,
 And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,
 And yet fear much to die for what was sown.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie, 46
 Whatever may have happened through these
 years,
 God knows I speak truth, saying that you
 he."

Her voice was low at first, being full of tears,
 But as it cleared, it grew full loud and shrill,
 Growing a windy shriek in all men's ears, 51

A ringing in their startled brains, until
 She said that Gauwaine lied, then her voice
 sunk,
 And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and never
 shrunk, 55
 But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!
 Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung
her hair,
Spoke out at last with no more trace of
shame, 59
With passionate twisting of her body there:

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot
came
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christmas-
time
This happened, when the heralds sung his
name,

"Son of King Ban of Benwick,' seemed to
chime
Along with all the bells that rang that day, 6s
O'er the white roofs, with little change of
rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed
away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds, yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with
flame, 70
And bowed my head down — Autumn, and
the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be the
same,

"However often Spring might be most thick
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and I
grew
Careless of most things, let the clock tick,
tick, 75

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right
through
My eager body: while I laughed out loud,
And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any cloud.
Behold my judges, then the cloths were
brought: 80
While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts would
crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought
By Arthur's great name and Jiis little love,
Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever round me
move 85

Glorifying all things, for a little word,
Scarce ever meant at all, must I now prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does the
Lord
Will that all folks should be quite happy and
good?
I love God now a little, if this cord 90

"Were broken, once for all what striving
could
Make me love anything in earth or heaven.
So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn smooth
and even,
Down to a cool sea on a summer day; 95
Yet still in slipping was there some small
leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small stones
by the way,
Until one surely reached the sea at last,
And felt strange new joy as the worn head
lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed; yea all
past 100
Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,
Washed utterly out by the dear waves o'er-
cast

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!
Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
No minute of that wild day ever slips 105

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes sing,
And wheresoever I may be, straightway
Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh
sting,

"I was half mad with beauty on that day,
And went without my ladies all alone, no
In a quiet garden walled round every way;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,
That shut the flowers and trees up with the
sky,
And trebled all the beauty: to the bone,

"Yea right through to my heart, grown very
shy 115
With weary thoughts, it pierced, and made
me glad;
Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me
mad;
I dared not think, as I was wont to do,
Sometimes, upon my beauty; if I had 120

"Held out my long hand up against the
blue,
And, looking on the tenderly darkened
fingers,
Thought that by rights one ought to see
quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still light
yet lingers,
Round by the edges, what should I have
done, 125
If this had joined with yellow spotted singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by the
sun?
But shouting, loosed out, see now! all my
hair,
And trancedly stood watching the west wind
run

"With faintest half-heard breathing sound —
why there 130
I lose my head e'en now in doing this;
But shortly listen — In that garden fair

"Came Launcelot walking; this is true, the
kiss
Wherewith we kissed in meeting that spring
day,
I scarce dare talk of the remembered bliss,

"When both our mouths went wandering in
one way, 136
And aching sorely, met among the leaves;
Our hands being left behind strained far away.

"Never within a yard of my bright sleeves
Had Launcelot come before — and now, so
nigh! 140
After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever happened on through all those
years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you
lie.

"Being such a lady could I weep these
tears 145
If this were true? A great queen such as I
Having sinned this way, straight her con-
science sears;

"And afterwards she liveth hatefully,
Slaying and poisoning, certes never weeps, —
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me lovingly.

"Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps 151
All through your frame, and trembles in
yourmouth?
Remember in what grave your mother sleeps,

"Buried in some place far down in the south,
Men are forgetting as I speak to you; 155
By her head severed in that awful drouth

"Of pity that drew Agravaine's fell blow,
I pray your pity! let me not scream out
For ever after, when the shrill winds blow

"Through half your castle-locks! let me not
shout 160
For ever after in the winter night
When you ride out alone! in battle rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your sword
light!
Ah! God of mercy how he turns away!
So, ever must I dress me to the fight, 165

"So — let God's justice work! Gauwaine,
I say,
See me hew down your proofs: yea all men
know
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one
day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*,¹ for so
All good knights held it after, saw — 170
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknighly outrage;
though

¹ "The false prison."

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without a
flaw,
This Mellyagraunce saw blood upon my
bed —
Whose blood then pray you? is there any law

"To make a queen say why some spots of red
Lie on her coverlet? or will you say, 176
'Your hands are white, lady, as when you wed,

""Where did you bleed?" and must I stam-
mer out — 'Nay,
I blush indeed, fair lord, only to rend
My sleeve up to my shoulder, where there
lay 180

""A knife-point last night:" so must I defend
The honor of the lady Guenevere?
Not so, fair lords, even if the world should
end

"This very day, and you were judges here
Instead of God. Did you see Melly-
graunce 185
When Launcelot stood by him? what white
fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did
dance,
His side sink in? as my knight cried and said,
'Slayer of unarmed men, here is a chance!

""Setter of traps, I pray you guard your
head, 190
By God I am so glad to fight with you,
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

"For driving weight; hurrah now! draw and
do,
For all my wounds are moving in my breast,
And I am getting mad with waiting so.' 195

"He struck his hands together o'er the beast,
Who fell down flat, and grovelled at his feet,
And groaned at being slain so young — 'at
least.'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are so
fleet
At catching ladies, half-armed will I fight, 200
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

"Up sprang Sir Mellyagrauncc with great
delight
Upon his knave's face; not until just then
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

"Along the lists look to my stake and pen 205
With such a joyous smile, it made me sigh
From agony beneath my waist-chain, when

"The fight began, and to me they drew nigh;
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,
And traversed warily, and ever high 210

"And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my
knight
Sudden threw up his sword to his left hand,
Caught it, and swung it; that was all the fight.

"Except a spout of blood on the hot land;
For it was hottest summer; and I know 215
I wondered how the fire, while I should stand,

"And burn, against the heat, would quiver so,
Yards above my head; thus these matters
went;
Which things were only warnings of the woe

"That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce was
shent,¹ 220
For Mellyagraunce had fought against the
Lord;
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you be
blent²

"With all this wickedness; say no rash word
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes,
Wept all away to grey, may bring some
sword 325

"To drown you in your blood; see my breast
rise,
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand,
And how my arms are moved in wonderful
wise,

"Yea also at my full heart's strong com-
mand,
See through my long throat how the words
go up 230
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand
¹ disgraced. ^a blinded.

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup
Of marvellously colored gold; yea now
This little wind is rising, look you up,

⁴ And wonder how the light is falling so 235
Within my moving tresses: will you dare,
When you have looked a little on my brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you care
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,
When you can see my face with no lie there

"For ever? am I not a gracious proof — 241
⁴ But in your chamber Launcelot was found' —
Is there a good knight then would stand
aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle queenly
sound:

'O true as steel come now and talk with me,
I love to see your step upon the ground 246

""Unwavering, also well I love to see
That gracious smile light up your face, and
hear
Your wonderful words, that all mean verily

" 'The thing they seem to mean: good friend,
so dear 250
To me in everything, come here to-night,
Or else the hours will pass most dull and
drear;

" 'If you come not, I fear this time I might
Get thinking over much of times gone by,
When I was young, and green hope was in
sight; 255

""For no man cares now to know why I sigh;
And no man comes to sing me pleasant songs,
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that lie

""So thick in the gardens; therefore one so
long
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be 260
Like children once again, free from all wrongs

""Just for one night.' Did he not come to
me?

What thing could keep true Launcelot away
If I said 'come'? there was one less than three

"In my quiet room that night, and we were
gay; 265
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and sick,
Because a bawling broke our dream up, yea

"I looked at Launcelot's face and could not
speak,
For he looked helpless too, for a little
while;
Then I remembered how I tried to shriek, 270

"And could not, but fell down; from tile to
tile
The stones they threw up rattled o'er my
head,
And made me dizzy; till within a while

"My maids were all about me, and my
head
On Launcelot's breast was being soothed
away 275
From its white chattering, until Launcelot
said —

"By God! I will not tell you more to-day,
Judge any way you will — what matters it?
You know quite well the story of that fray,

"How Launcelot stilled their bawling, the
mad fit 280
That caught up Gauwaine — all, all, verily,
But just that which would save me, these
things flit.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened these long
years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you
lie! 285

"All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear
tears."
She would not speak another word, but stood
Turned sideways; listening, like a man who
hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through the
wood
Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly, 290
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as she
could

At last hear something really; joyfully
 Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong
 speed
 Of the roan charger drew all men to see,
 The knight who came was Launcelot at
 good need. 295
 Pub. 1858.

The Eve of Crecy

The speaker, Sir Lambert de Bois, is an indigent French knight. On the next day, the English under Edward III defeated Philip VI of France, August 26, 1346.

Gold on her head, and gold on her feet,
 And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
 And a golden girdle round my sweet; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Margaret's maids are fair to see, 5
 Freshly dressed and pleasantly;
 Margaret's hair falls down to her knee; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
 I would kiss the place where the gold hems
 meet, 10
 And the golden girdle round my sweet —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Ah me! I have never touched her hand;
 When the arriere-ban¹ goes through the land,
 Six basnets² under my pennon stand; — 15
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And many an one grins under his hood:
 "Sir Lambert de Bois, with all his men good,
 Has neither food nor firewood;" —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite. 20

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
 And the golden girdle of my sweet,
 And thereabouts where the gold hems meet; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Yet even now it is good to think, 25
 While my few poor varlets grumble and drink
 In my desolate hall, where the fires sink, —
 Ah! quelle est belle La Marguerite.

¹ The summons of a French king calling his vassals to war.
² helmets.

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
 In glory of gold and glory of hair, 30
 And glory of glorious face most fair; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,
 Because this battle draweth near:
 For what have I to lose or fear? — 35
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

For, look you, my horse is good to prance
 A right fair measure in this war-dance,
 Before the eyes of Philip of France; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite. 40

And sometime it may hap, perdie,
 While my new towers stand up three and
 three,
 And my hall gets painted fair to see —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite —

That folks may say: "Times change, by the
 rood, 45
 For Lambert, banneret of the wood,
 Has heaps of food and firewood; —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

"And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood
 Of a damsel of right noble blood:" 50
 St. Ives, for Lambert of the wood! —
 Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.
 Pub. 1858.

The Haystack in the Floods

Sir Robert de Marny, an English knight, riding with his sweetheart, Jehanc, meets the French knight Godmar, just after the great English victory over the French at Poitiers in 1356.

Had she come all the way for this,
 To part at last without a kiss?
 Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain
 That her own eyes might see him slain
 Beside the haystack in the floods? 5

Along the dripping leafless woods,
 The stirrup touching either shoe,
 She rode astride as troopers do;
 With kirtle kilted to her knee,
 To which the mud splashed wretchedly; 10
 And the wet dripped from every tree

Upon her head and heavy hair,
 And on her eyelids broad and fair;
 The tears and rain ran down her face.
 By fits and starts they rode apace, 15
 And very often was his place
 Far off from her; he had to ride
 Ahead, to see what might betide
 When the roads crossed; and sometimes, when
 There rose a murmuring from his men, 20
 Had to turn back with promises;
 Ah me! she had but little ease;
 And often for pure doubt and dread
 She sobbed, made giddy in the head
 By the swift riding; while, for cold, 25
 Her slender fingers scarce could hold
 The wet reins, yea, and scarcely, too,
 She felt the foot within her shoe
 Against the stirrup: all for this,
 To part at last without a kiss 30
 Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they neared that old soaked hay,
 They saw across the only way
 That Judas, Godmar, and the three
 Red running lions dismally 35
 Grinned from his pennon, under which,
 In one straight line along the ditch,
 They counted thirty heads.

So then,
 While Robert turned round to his men,
 She saw at once the wretched end, 40
 And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
 Her coil¹ the wrong way from her head,
 And hid her eyes; while Robert said:
 "Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one,
 At Poitiers where we made them run 45
 So fast — why, sweet my love, good cheer,
 The Gascon frontier is so near,
 Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,
 "My God! my God! I have to tread
 The long way back without you; then 50
 The court at Paris; those six men;
 The gratings of the Chatelet;²
 The swift Seine on some rainy day
 Like this, and people standing by,
 And laughing, while my weak hands try 55

To recollect how strong men swim.¹
 All this, or else a life with him,
 For which I should be damned at last,
 Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answered not, but cried his cry, 60
 "St. George for Marny!" cheerily;
 And laid his hand upon her rein.
 Alas! no man of all his train
 Gave back that cheery cry again;
 And, while for rage his thumb beat fast 65
 Upon his sword-hilts, some one cast
 About his neck a kerchief long,
 And bound him.

Then they went along
 To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,
 Your lover's life is on the wane 70
 So fast, that, if this very hour
 You yield not as my paramour,
 He will not see the rain leave off —
 Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,
 Sir Robert, or I slay you now." 75

She laid her hand upon her brow,
 Then gazed upon the palm, as though
 She thought her forehead bled, and — "No."
 She said, and turned her head away,
 As there were nothing else to say, 80
 And everything were settled: red
 Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:
 "Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
 My castle, guarding well my lands:
 What hinders me from taking you, 85
 And doing that I list to do
 To your fair wilful body, while
 Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile
 Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
 A long way out she thrust her chin: 90
 "You know that I should strangle you
 While you were sleeping; or bite through
 Your throat, by God's help — ah!" she
 said,
 "Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!
 For in such wise they hem me in, 95
 I cannot choose but sin and sin,
 Whatever happens: yet I think
 They could not make me eat or drink,

¹ tight-fitting cap.
² A prison in Paris.

¹ A prisoner who swam when thrown into the Seine was judged guilty.

And so should I just reach my rest."
 "Nay, if you do not my behest, 100
 OJehane! though I love you well,"
 Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell
 All that I know." "Foul lies," she said.
 "Eh? lies my Jehane? by God's head,
 At Paris folks would deem them true! 105
 Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,
 'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!
 Give us Jehane to burn or drown!' —
 Eh — gag me Robert! — sweet my friend,
 This were indeed a piteous end no
 For those long fingers, and long feet,
 And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet;
 An end that few men would forget
 That saw it — So, an hour yet:
 Consider, Jehane, which to take 115
 Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,

Dismounting, did she leave that place,
 And totter some yards: with her face
 Turned upward to the sky she lay,
 Her head on a wet heap of hay, 120
 And fell asleep: and while she slept,
 And did not dream, the minutes crept
 Round to the twelve again, but she,
 Being waked at last, sighed quietly,
 And strangely childlike came, and said: 12
 "I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,
 As though it hung on strong wires, turned
 Most sharply round, and his face burned.

For Robert — both his eyes were dry,
 He could not weep, but gloomily 130
 He seemed to watch the rain; yea, too,
 His lips were firm; he tried once more
 To touch her lips; she reached out, sore
 And vain desire so tortured them,
 The poor grey lips, and now the hem 135
 Of his sleeve brushed them.

With a start
 Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
 From Robert's throat he loosed the bands
 Of silk and mail, with empty hands
 Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw, 140
 The long bright blade without a flaw
 Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
 In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
 Back Robert's head; she saw him send

The thin steel down; the blow told well, 145
 Right backward the knight Robert fell,
 And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,
 Unwitting, as I deem: so then
 Godmar turned grinning to his men,
 Who ran, some five or six, and beat 150
 His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turned again and said:
 "So, Jehane, the first fitte¹ is read!
 Take note, my lady, that your way
 Lies backward to the Chatelet!" 155
 She shook her head and gazed awhile
 At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
 As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
 Beside the haystack in the floods. 160
 Pub. 1858.

An Apology

Prologue to The Earthly Paradise

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
 I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
 Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
 Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
 Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears, 5
 Or hope again for aught that I can say,
 The idle singer of an empty day.²

But rather, when, aware of your mirth,
 From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
 And, feeling kindly unto all the earth, 10
 Grudge every minute as it passes by,
 Made the more mindful that the sweet days
 die —
 Remember me a little then, I pray,
 The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care 15
 That weighs us down who live and earn our
 bread,
 These idle verses have no power to bear;
 So let me sing of names remembered,
 Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
 Or long time take their memory quite away 20
 From us poor singers of an empty day.

¹ canto. ² Note that the stanza is the rime royal.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due
time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked
straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory
gate, 25
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did
show, 30
That through one window men beheld the
spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day. 35

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must
be; 40
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall
slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.
Pub. 1868.

L'Envoi to The Earthly Paradise

Here are we for the last time face to face,
Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed
Upon thy perilous journey to that place
For which I have done on thee pilgrim's weed,
Striving to get thee all things for thy need —
I love thee, whatso time or men may say 6
Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en if thou
Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears on;
For ever as thy fashioning did grow, 10
Kind word and praise because of thee I won
From those without whom were my world all
gone,

My hope fallen dead, my singing cast away,
And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be 15
That thou must hold thy peace and I must
speak,
Lest if thou babble I begin to see
Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart too
weak,
To find the land thou goest forth to seek —
Though what harm if thou die upon the
way, 20
Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never
reach,
Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet, or
death,
Therefore a word unto thee would I teach
To answer these, who, noting thy weak
breath, 25
Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little faith,
May make thy fond desire a sport and play
Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the road
thereto?
Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou
know'st it not; 30
Surely no book of verse I ever knew
But ever was the heart within him hot
To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot —
There, now we both laugh — as the whole
world may,
At us poor singers of an empty day. 35

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast thou
heard
That therein I believe I have a friend,
Of whom for love I may not be afear'd?
It is to him indeed I bid thee wend;
Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere thou
end, 40
Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,
Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the road,
And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,
Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load, 4i
My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou do meet,
Then shalt thou win a space of rest full sweet;

Then be thou bold, and speak the words I
say,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"O Master, O thou great of heart and
tongue, 50
Thou well mayst ask me why I wander
here,
In raiment rent of stories oft besung!
But of thy gentleness draw thou anear,
And then the heart of one who held thee
dear
Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay 55
Unto the singer of an empty day.

"For this he ever said, who sent me forth
To seek a place amid thy company:
That howsoever little was my worth,
Yet was he worth e'en just so much as I; 60
He said that rhyme hath little skill to lie;
Nor feigned to cast his worse part away;
In idle singing for an empty day.

"I have beheld him tremble oft enough
At things he could not choose but trust to
me, 65
Although he knew the world was wise and
rough;
And never did he fail to let me see
His love, — his folly and faithlessness, maybe;
And still in turn I gave him voice to pray
Such prayers as cling about an empty day. 70

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst read
him through,
For surely little is there left behind;
No power great deeds unnameable to do;
No knowledge for which words he may not
find, 74
No love of things as vague as autumn wind —
Earth of the earth lies hidden by my clay,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late made
wise
In love, but in all else most childish still,
And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes, 80
And what our ears with sweetest sounds may
fill;
Not fearing Love, lest these things he should
kill;

Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,
Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not what it
meant; 85
Life have we loved, through green leaf and
through sere,
Though still the less we knew of its intent;
The Earth and Heaven through countless
year on year,
Slow changing, were to us but curtains fair,
Hung around about a little room, where
play 90
Weeping and laughter of man's empty day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us
yet,
Spite of things left undone, and wrongly
done,
Some place in loving hearts then should we
get,
For thou, sweet-souled, didst never stand
alone, 95
But know'st the joy and woe of many an one—
By lovers dead, who live through thee, we
pray,
Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou mayst
gain
Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof thou
die? 100
Nay, it shall not be. — Thou mayst toil in
vain,
And never draw the House of Fame anigh;
Yet he and his shall know whereof we cry,
Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay
The ghosts that crowd about life's empty
day. 105

Then let the others go! and if indeed
In some old garden thou and I have wrought,
And made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded
seed,
And fragrance of old days and deeds have
brought 109
Back to folk weary; all was not for nought.
— No little part it was for me to play —
The idle singer of an empty day.
Pub. 1870.

Art, Wealth, and Riches

An Address delivered at a Joint Conversazione of Manchester Societies at the Royal Institution, Manchester, 6th March, 188)

Like Ruskin, William Morris regarded art as the test of a good world — good in satisfaction for the individual, and in social welfare. For the individual, the artistic impulse should result in pleasure in work, which is now stifled by machine production. For society, a general dominant interest in art and beauty would result not only in the revival of the fine arts as such, but would relieve civilization of its sordid and cruel features. To bring about this happy state, a change in the present social order is necessary. This new world Morris later pictured in his *Utopia, News from Nowhere* (1891). The following speech is more a fervid plea than a finished essay.

Art, Wealth, and Riches are the words I have written at the head of this paper. Some of you may think that the two latter words, wealth and riches, are tautologous; but I cannot admit it. In truth, there are no real synonyms in any language, I mean unless in the case of words borrowed from another tongue, and in the early days of our own language no one would have thought of using the word rich as a synonym for wealthy. He would have understood a wealthy man to mean one who had plentiful livelihood, and a rich man one who had great dominion over his fellowmen. Alexander the Rich, Canute the Rich, Alfred the Rich; these are familiar words enough in the early literature of the North, the adjective would scarcely be used except of a great king or chief, a man pre-eminent above other kings and chiefs. Now, without being a stickler for etymological accuracy, I must say that I think there are cases where modern languages have lost power by confusing two words into one meaning, and that this is one of them. I shall ask your leave therefore to use the words wealth and riches somewhat in the way in which our forefathers did, and to understand wealth as signifying the means of living a decent life, and riches the means for exercising dominion over other people. Thus understood the words are widely different to my mind; yet, indeed, if you say that the difference is but one of degree I must needs

admit it; just so it is between the shepherd's dog and the wolf. Their respective views on the subject of mutton differ only in degree.

Anyhow, I think the following question is an important one: Which shall art belong to, wealth or riches? Whose servant shall she be? or rather, Shall she be the slave of riches, or the friend and helpmate of wealth? Indeed, if I put the question in another form, and ask: Is art to be limited to a narrow class who only care for it in a very languid way, or is it to be the solace and pleasure of the whole people? the question finally comes to this: Arc we to have art or the pretense of art? It is like enough that to many or even most of you the question will seem of no practical importance. To most people the present condition of art does seem in the main to be the only condition it could exist in among cultivated people, and they are (in a languid way, as I said) content with its present aims and tendencies. For myself, I am so discontented with the present conditions of art, and the matter seems to me so serious that I am forced to try to make other people share my discontent, and am this evening risking the committal of a breach of good manners by standing before you, grievance in hand, on an occasion like this, when everybody present, I feel sure, is full of good will both towards the arts and towards the public. My only excuse is my belief in the sincerity of your wish to know any serious views that can be taken of a matter so important. So I will say that the question I have asked, whether art is to be the helpmate of wealth or the slave of riches, is of great practical import, if indeed art is important to the human race, which I suppose no one here will gainsay.

Now I will ask those who think art is in a normal and healthy condition to explain the meaning of the enthusiasm (which I am glad to learn the people of Manchester share) shown of late years for the foundation and extension of museums, a great part of whose contents is but fragments of the household goods of past ages. Why do cultivated, sober, reasonable people, not lacking in a due sense of the value of money, give large sums for scraps of figured cloth, pieces of

roughly made pottery, worm-eaten carving, or battered metal-work, and treasure them up in expensive public buildings under the official guardianship of learned experts? Well, we all know that these things are supposed to teach us something; they are educational. The type of all our museums, that at South Kensington, is distinctly an educational establishment. Nor is what they are supposed to teach us mere dead history; these things are studied carefully and laboriously by men who intend making their living by the art of design. Ask any expert of any school of opinion as to art what he thinks of the desirability of those who are to make designs for the ornamental part of industrial art studying from these remains of past ages, and he will be certain to answer you that such study is indispensable to a designer. So you see this is what it comes to. It is not to the best works of our own time that a student is sent; no master or expert could honestly tell him that that would do him good, but to the mere wreckage of a bygone art, things which, when they were new, could be bought for the most part in every shop and marketplace. Well, need one ask what sort of a figure the wreckage of our ornamental art would cut in a museum of the twenty-fourth century? The plain truth is that people who have studied these matters know that these remnants of the past give tokens of an art which fashioned goods not only better than we do now, but different in kind, and better because they are different in kind, and were made in quite other ways than we make such things.

Before we ask why they were so much better, and why they differ in kind and not merely in degree of goodness, I want you to note specially once more that they were common wares, bought and sold in any market. I want you to note that, in spite of the tyranny and violence of the days when they were fashioned, the beauty of which they formed a part surrounded all life, that then, at all events, art was the helpmate of wealth and not the slave of riches. True it is that then as now rich men spent great sums of money in ornament of all kinds, and no doubt the lower classes were wretchedly poor (as they

are now); nevertheless, the art that rich men got differed only in abundance and splendor of material from what other people could compass. The thing to remember is that then everything which was made by man's hand was more or less beautiful.

Contrast that with the state of art at present, and then say if my unmannerly discontent is not somewhat justified. So far from everything that is made by man being beautiful, almost all ordinary wares that are made by civilised man are shabbily and pretentiously ugly; made so (it would almost seem) by perverse intent rather than by accident, when we consider how pleasant and tempting to the inventive mind and the skillful hand are many of the processes of manufacture. Take for example the familiar art of glass-making. I have been in a glass-house, and seen the workmen in the process of their work bring the molten glass into the most elegant and delicious forms. There were points of the manufacture when, if the vessel they were making had been taken straight to the annealing house, the result would have been something which would have rivaled the choicest pieces of Venetian glass; but that could not be, they had to take their callipers and moulds and reduce the fantastic elegance of the living metal to the due marketable ugliness and vulgarity of some shape, designed most likely by a man who did not in the least know or care how glass was made; and the experience is common enough in other arts. I repeat that all manufactured goods are now divided into two classes; one class vulgar and ugly, though often pretentious enough, with work on it which it is a mockery to call ornamental, but which probably has some wretched remains of tradition still clinging to it, that is for poor people, for the uncultivated. The other class, made for some of the rich, intends to be beautiful, is carefully and elaborately designed, but usually fails of its intent partly because it is cast loose from tradition, partly because there is no co-operation in it between the designer and the handicraftsman. Thus is our wealth injured, our wealth, the means of living a decent life, and no one is the gainer; for while on the one hand the lower classes have no real art of

any kind about their houses, and have instead to put up with shabby and ghastly pretenses of it which quite destroy their capacity for appreciating real art when they come across it in museums and picture-galleries, so on the other hand, not all the superfluous money of the rich can buy what they profess to want; the only real art they can have is that which is made by unassisted individual genius, the laborious and painful work of men of rare attainments and special culture, who, cumbered as they are by unromantic life and hideous surroundings, do in spite of all manage now and then to break through the hindrances and produce noble works of art, which only a very few people even pretend to understand or be moved by. This art rich people can buy and possess sometimes, but necessarily there is little enough of it; and if there were tenfold what there is, I repeat it would not move the people one jot, for they are deadened to all art by the hideousness and squalor that surround them. Nor can I honestly say that the lack is wholly on their side, for the great artists I have been speaking of are what they are in virtue of their being men of very peculiar and especial gifts, and are mostly steeped in thoughts of history, wrapped up in contemplation of the beauty of past times. If they were not so constituted, I say, they would not in the teeth of all the difficulties in their way be able to produce beauty at all. But note the result. Everyday life rejects and neglects them; they cannot choose but let it go its way, and wrap themselves up in dreams of Greece and Italy. The days of Pericles and the days of Dante are the days through which they move, and the England of our own day with its millions of eager struggling people neither helps nor is helped by them; yet it may be they bide their time of usefulness, and in the days to come will not be forgotten. Let us hope so.

That, I say, is the condition of art amongst us. Lest you doubt it, or think I exaggerate, let me ask you to note how it fares with that art which is above all others co-operative: the art of architecture, to wit. Now, none know better than I do what a vast amount of talent and knowledge there is amongst the

first-rate designers of buildings nowadays; and here and there all about the country one sees the buildings they have planned, and is rejoiced by them. Yet little enough does that help us in these days when, if a man leaves England for a few years, he finds when he comes back half a county of bricks and mortar added to London. Can the greatest optimists say that the style of building in that half county has improved meanwhile? Is it not true, on the contrary, that it goes on getting worse, if that be possible? the last house built being always the vulgarest and ugliest, till one is beginning now to think with regret of the days of Gower Street,¹ and to look with some complacency on the queer little boxes of brown brick which stand with their trim gardens choked up amongst new squares and terraces in the suburbs of London? It is a matter of course that almost every new house shall be quite disgracefully and degradmgly ugly, and if by chance we come across a new house that shows any signs of thoughtfulness in design and planning we are quite astonished, and want to know who built it, who owns it, who designed it, and all about it from beginning to end; whereas when architecture was alive every house built was more or less beautiful. The phrase which called the styles of the Middle Ages Ecclesiastical Architecture has been long set aside by increased knowledge, and we know now that in that time cottage and cathedral were built in the same style and had the same kind of ornaments about them; size and, in some cases, material were the only differences between the humble and the majestic building. And it will not be till this sort of beauty is beginning to be once more in our towns, that there will be a real school of architecture; till every little chandler's shop in our suburbs, every shed run up for mere convenience is made without effort fit for its purpose and beautiful at one and the same time. Now just think what a contrast that makes with our present way of housing ourselves. It is not easy to imagine the beauty of a town all of whose houses are beautiful, at least unless you have seen (say) Rouen or Oxford thirty years ago. But what a strange state art must

¹ In Bloomsbury, near the British Museum.

be in when we either won't or can't take any trouble to make our houses fit for reasonable human beings to live in! Cannot, I suppose: for once again, except in the rarest cases, rich men's houses are no better than common ones. Excuse an example of this, I beg you. I have lately seen Bournemouth, the watering-place southwest of the New Forest. It is a district (scarcely a town) of rich men's houses. There was every inducement there to make them decent, for the place, with its sandy hills and pine trees, gave really a remarkable site. It would not have taken so very much to have made it romantic. Well, there stand these rich men's houses among the pine trees and gardens, and not even the pine trees and gardens can make them tolerable. They are (you must pardon me the word) simply blackguardly, and while I speak they are going on building them by the mile.

And now why cannot we amend all this? Why cannot we have, for instance, simple and beautiful dwellings fit for cultivated, well-mannered men and women, and not for ignorant, purse-proud digesting machines? You may say because we don't wish for them, and that is true enough; but that only removes the question a step further, and we must ask: why don't we care about art? Why has civilised society in all that relates to the beauty of man's handiwork degenerated from the time of the barbarous, superstitious, unpeaceful Middle Ages? That is indeed a serious question to ask, involving questions still more serious, and the mere mention of which you may resent if I should be forced to speak of them.

I said that the relics of past art which we are driven to study nowadays are of a work which was not merely better than what we do now, but differed in kind from it. Now this difference in kind explains our shortcomings so far, and leaves us only one more question to ask: How shall we remedy the fault? For the kind of the handiwork of former times down to at least the time of the Renaissance was intelligent work, whereas ours is unintelligent work, or the work of slaves; surely this is enough to account for the worsening of art, for it means the disappear-

ance of popular art from civilization. Popular art, that is, the art which is made by the co-operation of many minds and hands varying in kind and degree of talent, but all doing their part in due subordination to a great whole, without any one losing his individuality — the loss of such an art is surely great, nay, inestimable. But hitherto I have only been speaking of the lack of popular art being a grievous loss as a part of wealth; I have been considering the loss of the thing itself, the loss of the humanizing influence which the daily sight of beautiful handiwork brings to bear upon people; but now, when we are considering the way in which that handiwork was done, and the way in which it is done, the matter becomes more serious still. For I say unhesitatingly that the intelligent work which produced real art was pleasant to do, was human work, not overburdensome or degrading; whereas the unintelligent work, which produces sham art, is irksome to do, it is unhuman work, burdensome and degrading; so that it is but right and proper that it should turn out nothing but ugly things. And the immediate cause of this degrading labor which oppresses so large a part of our people is the system of the organization of labor, which is the chief instrument of the great power of modern Europe, competitive commerce. That system has quite changed the way of working in all matters that can be considered as art, and the change is a very much greater one than people know of or think of. In times past these handicrafts were done on a small, almost a domestic, scale by knots of workmen who mostly belonged to organized guilds, and were taught their work soundly, however limited their education was in other respects. There was little division of labor among them; the grades between master and man were not many, a man knew his work from end to end, and felt responsible for every stage of its progress. Such work was necessarily slow to do and expensive to buy; neither was it always finished to the nail; but it was always intelligent work; there was a man's mind in it always, and abundant tokens of human hopes and fears, the sum of which makes life for all of us.

Now think of any kind of manufacture which you are conversant with, and note how differently it is done nowadays, almost certainly the workmen are collected in huge factories, in which labor is divided and subdivided, till a workman is perfectly helpless in his craft if he finds himself without those above to feed his work, those below to be fed by it. There is a regular hierarchy of masters over him; foreman, manager, clerk, and capitalist, every one of whom is more important than he who does the work. Not only is he not asked to put his individuality into his share of the work, but he is not allowed to. He is but part of a machine, and has but one unvarying set of tasks to do; and when he has once learned these, the more regularly and with the less thought he does them, the more valuable he is. The work turned out by this system is speedily done, and cheap to buy. No wonder, considering the marvelous perfection of the organization of labor that turns it out, and the energy with which it is carried through. Also, it has a certain high finish, and what I should call shop-counter look, quite peculiar to the wares of this century, but it is of necessity utterly unintelligent, and has no sign of humanity on ipnot even so much as to show weariness here and there, which would imply that one part of it was pleasanter to do than another. Whatever art or semblance of art is on it has been doled out with due commercial care, and applied by a machine, human or otherwise, with exactly the same amount of interest in the doing it as went to the non-artistic parts of the work. Again I say that if such work were otherwise than ugly and despicable to look at one's sense of justice would be shocked; for the labor which went to the making of it was thankless and unpleasurable, little more than a mere oppression on the workman.

Must this sort of work last forever? As long as it lasts the mass of the people can have no share in art; the only handicraftsmen who are free are the artists, as we call them to-day, and even they are hindered and oppressed by the oppression of their fellows. Yet I know that this machine-organized labor is necessary to competitive

commerce; that is to say, to the present constitution of society; and probably most of you think that speculation on a root-and-branch change in that is mere idle dreaming.

I cannot help it; I can only say that that change must come, or at least be on the way, before art can be made to touch the mass of the people. To some that may seem an unimportant matter. One must charitably hope that such people are blind on the side of art, which I imagine is by no means an uncommon thing; and that blindness will entirely prevent them from understanding what I have been saying as to the pleasure which a good workman takes in his handiwork. But all those who know what art means will agree with me in asserting that pleasure is a necessary companion to the making of everything that can be called a work of art. To those, then, I appeal and ask them to consider if it is fair and just that only a few among the millions of civilization shall be partakers in a pleasure which is the surest and most constant of all pleasures, the un-failing solace of misfortune, happy and honorable work. Let us face the truth, and admit that a society which allows little other human and undegrading pleasure to the greater part of its toilers save the pleasure that comes of rest after the torment of weary work — that such a society should not be stable if it is; that it is but natural that such a society should be honeycombed with corruption and sick with oft-repeated sordid crimes.

Anyhow, dream or not as we may about the chances of a better kind of life which shall include a fair share of art for most people, it is no dream, but a certainty, that change is going on around us, though whitherward the change is leading us may be a matter of dispute. Most people though, I suppose, will be inclined to think that everything tends to favor the fullest development of competitive commerce and the utmost perfection of the system of labor which it depends upon. I think that is likely enough, and that things will go on quicker and quicker till the last perfection of blind commercial war has been reached; and then? May the change come with as little violence and suffering as may be!

It is the business of all of us to do our best to that end of preparing for change, and so softening the shock of it; to leavers little as possible that must be destroyed to be destroyed suddenly and by violence of some sort or other. And in no direction, it seems to me, can we do more useful work in forestalling destructive revolution than in being beforehand with it in trying to fill up the gap that separates class from class. Here is a point surely where competitive commerce has disappointed our hopes, she has been ready enough to attack the privilege of feudality, and successful enough in doing it, but in leveling the distinctions between upper and middle classes, between gentleman and commoner, she has stopped as if enough had been done; for, alas, most men will be glad enough to level down to themselves, and then hold their hands obstinately enough. But note what stopping short here will do for us. It seems to me more than doubtful, if we go no further, whether we had better have gone as far; for the feudal and hierarchical system under which the old guild brethren whose work I have been praising lived, and which undoubtedly had something to do with the intelligence and single-heartedness of their work, this system, while it divided men rigorously into castes, did not actually busy itself to degrade them by forcing on them violent contrasts of cultivation and ignorance. The difference between lord and commoner, noble and burgher, was purely arbitrary; but how does it fare now with the distinction between class and class? Is it not the sad fact that the difference is no longer arbitrary but real? Down to a certain class, that of the educated gentleman, as he is called, there is indeed equality of manners and bearing, and if the commoners still choose to humble themselves and play the flunkey, that is their own affair; but below that class there is, as it were, the stroke of a knife, and gentlemen and non-gentlemen divide the world.

Just think of the significance of one fact; that here in England in the nineteenth century, among all the shouts of progress that have been raised for many years, the greater number of people are doomed by the accident

of their birth to misplace their aitches; that there are two languages talked in England: gentleman's English and workman's English. I do not care who gainsays it, I say that this is barbarous and dangerous; and it goes step by step with the lack of art which the same classes are forced into, it is a token, in short, of that vulgarity, to use a hateful word, which was not in existence before modern times and the blossoming of competitive commerce....

And now I want to get back before I finish to my first three words, Art, Wealth, and Riches. I can conceive that many people would be like to say to me: You declare yourself in rebellion against the system which creates wealth for the world. It is just that which I deny, it is the destruction of wealth of which I accuse competitive commerce. I say that wealth, or the material means for living a decent life, is created in spite of that system, not because of it. To my mind real wealth is of two kinds; the first kind, food, raiment, shelter, and the like; the second, matters of art and knowledge; that is, things good and necessary for the body, and things good and necessary for the mind. Many other things than these is competitive commerce busy about, some of them directly injurious to the life of man, some merely encumbrances to its honorable progress; meanwhile the first of these two kinds of real wealth she largely wastes, the second she largely destroys. She wastes the first by unjust and ill-managed distribution of the power of acquiring wealth, which we call shortly money, by urging people to the reckless multiplication of their kind, and by gathering population into unmanageable aggregations to satisfy her ruthless greed, without the least thought of their welfare.

As for the second kind of wealth, mental wealth, in many ways she destroys it, but the two ways which most concern our subject to-night are these: first, the reckless destruction of the natural beauty of the earth, which compels the great mass of the population, in this country at least, to live amidst ugliness and squalor so revolting and disgusting that

¹ There follow two paragraphs emphasizing the evil of class division.

we could not bear it unless habit had made us used to it; that is to say, unless we were far advanced on the road towards losing some of the highest and happiest qualities which have been given to men. But the second way by which competitive commerce destroys our mental wealth is yet worse: it is by the turning of almost all handicraftsmen into machines; that is to say, compelling them to work which is unintelligent and unhuman, a mere weariness to be borne for the greater part of the day; thus robbing men of the gain and victory which long ages of toil and thought have won from stern hard nature and necessity, man's pleasure and triumph in his daily work.

I tell you it is not wealth which our civilization has created, but riches, with its necessary companion poverty; for riches cannot exist without poverty, or in other words slavery. All rich men must have someone to do their dirty work, from the collecting of their unjust rents to the sifting of their ash heaps. Under the dominion of riches we are masters and slaves instead of fellow-workmen as we should be. If competitive commerce creates wealth, then should England surely be the wealthiest country in the world, as I suppose some people think it is, and as it is certainly the richest; but what shabbiness is this rich country driven into? I belong, for instance, to a harmless little society whose object is to preserve for the public now living and to come the wealth which England still possesses in historical and beautiful buildings, and I could give you a long and dismal list of buildings which England, with all her riches, has not been able to save from commercial greed in some form or another. "It's a matter of money" is supposed to be an unanswerable argument in these cases, and indeed we generally find that if we answer it our answer is cast on the winds. Why, to this day in England (in England only, I believe, amongst civilized countries) there is no law to prevent a madman or an ignoramus from pulling down a house which he chooses to call his private property, though it may be one of the treasures of the land for art and history,

Or again, of how many acres of common land has riches robbed the country, even in this century? a treasure irreplaceable, inestimable, in these days of teeming population. Yet where is the man who dares to propose a measure for the reinstatement of the public in its rights in this matter? How often, once more, have railway companies been allowed for the benefit of the few to rob the public of treasures of beauty that can never be replaced, owing to the cowardly and anarchical maxims which seem always to be favored by those who should be our guardians herein; but riches has no bowels except for riches. Or you of this part of the country, what have you done with Lancashire? It does not seem to be above ground. I think you must have been poor indeed to have been compelled to bury it. Were not the brown moors and the meadows, the clear streams and the sunny skies wealth? Riches has made a strange home for you. Some of you, indeed, can sneak away from it sometimes to Wales, to Scotland, to Italy; some, but very few. I am sorry for you, and for myself too, for that matter, for down by the Thames-side there we are getting rid of the earth as fast as we can also; most of Middlesex, most of Surrey, and huge cantles of Essex and Kent are buried mountains deep under fantastic folly or hideous squalor; and no one has the courage to say: "Let us seek a remedy while any of our wealth in this kind is left us."

Or, lastly, if all these things may seem light matters to some of you, grievously heavy as they really are, no one can think lightly of those terrible stories we have been hearing lately of the housing of poor people in London; indeed and indeed no country which can bear to sit quiet under such grievances has any right to be called wealthy. Yet you know very well that it will be long indeed before any party or any Government will have the courage to face the subject, dangerous as they must needs know it is to shut their eyes to it.

And what is to amend these grievances? You must not press me too close on that point. I believe I am in such a very small minority on these matters that it is enough

for me if I find here and there someone who admits the grievances, for my business herein is to spread discontent. I do not think that this is an unimportant office; for, as discontent spreads, the yearning for bettering the state of things spreads with it, and the longing of many people, when it has grown deep and strong, melts away resistance to change in a sure, steady, unaccountable manner. Yet I will, with your leave, tell the chief things which I really want to see changed, in case I have not spoken plainly enough hitherto, and lest I should seem to have nothing to bid you but destruction, the destruction of a system by some thought to have been made to last forever. I want, then, all persons to be educated according to their capacity, not according to the amount of money which their parents happen to have. I want all persons to have manners and breeding according to their innate goodness and kindness, and not according to the amount of money which their parents happen to have. As a consequence of these two things I want to be able to talk to any of my countrymen in his own tongue freely, and feeling sure that he will be able to understand my thoughts according to his innate capacity, and I also want to be able to sit at table with a person of any occupation without a feeling of awkwardness and constraint being present between us. I want no one to have any money except as due wages for work done; and, since I feel sure that those who do the most useful work will neither ask nor get the highest wages, I believe that this change will destroy that worship of a man for the sake of his money, which everybody admits is degrading, but which very few indeed can help sharing in. I want those who do the rough work of the world, sailors, miners, plowmen, and the like, to be treated with consideration and respect, to be paid abundant money-wages, and to have plenty of leisure. I want modern science, which I believe to be capable of overcoming all material difficulties, to turn from such preposterous follies as the invention of anthracene colors and monster cannon to the invention of machines for performing such labor as is revolting and destructive of self-respect to the men who now have

to do it by hand. I want handicraftsmen proper, that is, those who make wares, to be in such a position that they may be able to refuse to make foolish and useless wares, or to make the cheap and nasty wares which are the mainstay of competitive commerce, and are indeed slave-wares, made by and for slaves.

And in order that the workmen may be in this position, I want division of labor restricted within reasonable limits, and men taught to think over their work and take pleasure in it. I also want the wasteful system of middlemen restricted, so that workmen may be brought into contact with the public, who will thus learn something about their work, and so be able to give them due reward of praise for excellence.

Furthermore, I want the workmen to share the good fortunes of the business which they uphold, in due proportion to their skill and industry, as they must in any case share its bad fortunes. To which end it would be necessary that those who organize their labor should be paid no more than due wages for their work, and should be chosen for their skill and intelligence, and not because they happen to be sons of money-bags. Also I want this, and, if men were living under the conditions I have just claimed for them, I should get it, that these islands which make the land we love should no longer be treated as here a cinder heap and there a game preserve, but as the fair green garden of Northern Europe, which no man on any pretense should be allowed to befoul or disfigure. Under all these conditions I should certainly get the last want accomplished which I am now going to name. I want all the works of man's hand to be beautiful, rising in fair and honorable gradation from the simplest household goods to the stately public building, adorned with the handiwork of the greatest masters of expression which that real new birth and the dayspring of hope come back will bring forth for us.

These are the foundations of my Utopia, a city in which riches and poverty will have been conquered by wealth; and however crazy you may think my aspirations for it, one thing at least I am sure of, that hence-

forward it will be no use looking for popular art except in such a Utopia, or at least on the road thither, a road which, in my belief, leads to peace and civilization, as the road away from it leads to discontent, corruption, tyranny, and confusion. Yet it may be we are more nearly on the road to it than many people think; and however that may be, I am cheered somewhat by thinking that the very small minority to which I belong is being helped by everyone who is of good will in social matters. Everyone who is pushing forward education helps us; for education, which seems such a small power to classes which have been used to some share of it for generations, when it reaches those who have grievances which they ought not to bear spreads deep discontent among them, and teaches them what to do to make their discontent fruitful. Everyone who is striving to extinguish poverty is helping us; for one of the greatest causes of the dearth of popular art and the oppression of joyless labor is the necessity that is imposed on modern civilization for making miserable wares for miserable people, for the slaves of competitive commerce. All who assert public rights against private greed are helping us; every foil given to common-stealers, or railway-Philistines, or smoke-nuisance-breeders, is a victory scored to us. Everyone who tries to keep alive traditions of art by gathering together relics of the art of bygone times, still more if he is so lucky as to be able to lead people by his own works to look through

Manchester smoke and squalor to fair scenes of unspoiled nature or deeds of past history, is helping us. Everyone who tries to bridge the gap between the classes, by helping the opening of museums and galleries and gardens and other pleasures which can be shared by all, is helping us. Everyone who tries to stir up intelligence in their work in workmen, and more especially everyone who gives them hope in their work and a sense of self-respect and responsibility to the public in it, by such means as industrial partnerships and the like, is helping the cause most thoroughly. These, and such as these, are our helpers, and give us a kind of hope that the time may come when our views and aspirations will no longer be considered rebellious, and when competitive commerce will be lying in the same grave with chattel slavery, with serfdom, and with feudalism. Or rather, certainly the change will come, however long we shall have been dead by then; how, then, can we prevent its coming with violence and injustice that will breed other grievances in time, to be met by fresh discontent? Once again, how good it were to destroy all that must be destroyed gradually and with a good grace!

Here in England, we have a fair house full of many good things, but cumbered also with pestilential rubbish. What duty can be more pressing than to carry out the rubbish piecemeal and burn it outside, lest some day there be no way of getting rid of it but by burning it up inside with the goods and house and all?

James Thomson ("B. V.") • 1834-1881

Few poets of the nineteenth century had a harder or more lonely life than did James Thomson. An orphan at eight, he was received (being a Scotsman) into the Royal Caledonian Asylum in London. When he was eighteen, he was sent to an army school in Chelsea to be trained as an army schoolmaster. He followed this career — teacher to soldiers and their families — at Aldershot, in Ireland, and at other posts, until dismissed for a minor breach of discipline. During this time he met Charles Bradlaugh, a dragoon, who in 1861 started the liberal weekly, *The Nattonal Reformer*. Thomson had already written some verses that had been published in little-known magazines, and was in-

vitced by Bradlaugh to contribute to his paper. Here appeared in 1874, serially, Thomson's famous poem, *The City of Dreadful Night*— its publication interrupted at one time because some of the readers of this most liberal weekly thought the verses too pessimistic.

During most of his life, Thomson kept his anonymity, signing his poems and articles "B. V." — "Bysshe Vanolis," the first name for his god, Shelley, the second, an anagram for Novalis, the German romanticist and mystic of the eighteenth century. Meredith, George Eliot, and William Michael Rossetti were among the first to discover the identity of "B. V."

After a quarrel with his friend Bradlaugh in 1875, Thomson eked out a slender living by writing for a trade paper and for a few liberal papers that had very little money. In 1880 *The City of Dreadful Night* was published in book form. In 1881 appeared *Vane's Story*, *Weddah* and *Om-el-Bonain and other Poems*, and selections from his prose writings, *Essays and Phantasies*. In 1881, broken in health, hopeless, dispossessed of the small room that had been his home, he was traced by friends to the rooms of the blind poet, Philip B. Marston, from which he was taken, desperately ill, to University College Hospital, where two days later he died. He was buried, in unhallowed ground, in Highgate Cemetery, London.

Thomson, by nature a student and a writer, was born into a world that for him was uncongenial, but a world that he worked eagerly and uncompromisingly to make better. He is often called a pessimist. As a matter of fact, most of his writings arc far from sad; and in his pessimism (as we see in the *Proem* to *The City of Dreadful Night*) there is always the note of heroism, the will to see things as they are, and an overwhelming sympathy and pity for man, who from the nature of things must at times face unhappiness. Thomson is a "minor" poet, but a poet with the gift of imagination and of song, whose work displays one good side of the era that we call "mid-Victorian."

The standard edition of Thomson's poems is *Poetical Works*, edited, with a memoir, by his friend Bertram Dobell (2 vols., 1895). The best and most easily accessible text is the one-volume edition of selections made by G. H. Gerould (1917). The standard biography is H. S. Salt's *The Life and Poetry of James Thomson* (latest ed., 1914). See too the essays by Lafcadio Hearn and by P. E. More.

Mater Tenebrarum¹

In the endless nights, from my bed, where
sleepless in anguish I lie,
I startle the stillness and gloom with a bitter
and strong cry:
O Love! O Beloved long lost! come down
from thy Heaven above,
For my heart is wasting and dying in utter-
most famine for love!
Come down for a moment! oh, come! Come
serious and mild S
And pale, as thou wert on this earth, thou
adorable Child!
Or come as thou art, with thy sanctitude,
triumph and bliss,
For a garment of glory about thee; and give
me one kiss,

One tender and pitying look of thy tenderest
eyes,

One word of solemn assurance and truth that
the soul with its love never dies! 10

In the endless nights, from my bed, where
sleepless in frenzy I lie,

I cleave through the crushing gloom with a
bitter and deadly cry:

Oh! where have they taken my Love from
our Eden of bliss on this earth,

Which now is a frozen waste of sepulchral
and horrible dearth?

Have they killed her indeed? Is her soul as
her body, which long 15

Has moldered away in the dust where the
foul worms throng?

O'er what abhorrent Lethes, to what remot-
est star,

¹ Mother of darkness.

- Is she rapt away from my pursuit through
cycles and systems far?
She is dead, she is utterly dead, for her life
would hear and speed
To the wild imploring cry of my heart that
cries in its dreadful need. 20
- In the endless nights, on my bed, where
sleeplessly brooding I lie,
I burden the heavy gloom with a bitter and
weary sigh:
No hope in this worn-out world, no hope be-
yond the tomb;
No living and loving God, but blind and
stony Doom.
Anguish and grief and sin, terror, disease, and
despair: 25
Why throw not off this life, this garment of
torture I wear,
And go down to sleep in the grave in ever-
lasting rest?
What keeps me yet in this life, what spark in
my frozen breast?
A fire of dread, a light of hope, kindled, O
Love, by thee;
For thy pure and gentle and beautiful soul, it
must immortal be. 30
- 1859-

FROM Sunday at Hampstead

*An Idle Idyll by a very Humble Member of
the Great and Noble London Mob*

■
This is the Heath of Hampstead,¹
There is the dome of Saint Paul's;
Beneath, on the serried house-tops,
A chequered lustre falls:

And the mighty city of London, 5
Under the clouds and the light,
Seems a low wet beach, half shingle,²
With a few sharp rocks upright.

¹ Hampstead Heath, on the edge of London and part of the city, is a favorite playground of the working people of London, especially on bank holidays.
coarse gravel.

Here will we sit, my darling,
And dream an hour away: 10
The donkeys are hurried and worried,
But we are not donkeys today:

Through all the weary week, dear,
We toil in the murk down there,
Tied to a desk and a counter, 15
A patient stupid pair!

But on Sunday we slip our tether,
And away from the smoke and the smirch;
Too grateful to God for His Sabbath
To shut its hours in a church. 20

Away to the green, green country,
Under the open sky;
Where the earth's sweet breath is incense
And the lark sings psalms on high.

On Sunday we're Lord and Lady, 25
With ten times the love and glee
Of those pale and languid rich ones
Who are always and never free.

They drawl and stare and simper,
So fine and cold and staid, 30
Like exquisite waxwork figures
That must be kept in the shade:

We can laugh out loud when merry,
We can romp at kiss-in-the-ring,
We can take our beer at a public, 35
We can loll on the grass and sing....

Would you grieve very much, my darling,
If all yon low wet shore
Were drowned by a mighty flood-tide,
And we never toiled there more? 40

Wicked? — There is no sin, dear,
In an idle dreamer's head;
He turns the world topsy-turvy
To prove that his soul's not dead.

I am sinking, sinking, sinking; 45
It is hard to sit upright!
Your lap is the softest pillow!
Good night, my love, good night!
1863-65.

FROM The City of Dreadful Night

PROEM

Lo, thus, as prostrate, "In the dust I write
My heart's deep languor and my soul's sad
tears."

Yet why evoke the specters of black night
To blot the sunshine of exultant years?
Why disinter dead faith from moldering
hidden?

Why break the seals of mute despair unbidden,^s
And wail life's discords into careless ears?

Because a cold rage seizes one at whiles
To show the bitter old and wrinkled truth
Stripped naked of all vesture that beguiles, 10
False dreams, false hopes, false masks and
modes of youth;

Because it gives some sense of power and
passion

In helpless impotence to try to fashion
Our woe in living words howe'er uncouth.

Surely I write not for the hopeful young, 1=5
Or those who deem their happiness of
worth,

Or such as pasture and grow fat among
The shows of life and feel nor doubt nor
dearth,

Or pious spirits with a God above them
To sanctify and glorify and love them, 20
Or sages who foresee a heaven on earth.

For none of these I write, and none of these
Could read the writing if they deigned to
try;

So may they flourish, in their due degrees,
On our sweet earth and in their unplaced
sky. 25

If any cares for the weak words here written,
It must be someone desolate, Fate-smitten,
Whose faith and hope are dead, and who
would die.

Yes, here and there some weary wanderer
In that same city of tremendous night, 30
Will understand the speech, and feel a stir
Of fellowship in all-disastrous fight;
"I suffer mute and lonely, yet another

Uplifts his voice to let me know a brother
Travels the same wild paths though out
of sight." 35

O sad Fraternity, do I unfold
Your dolorous mysteries shrouded from of
yore?

Nay, be assured — no secret can be told
To any who divine it not before;
None uninitiate by many a presage 40
Will comprehend the language of the message,
Although proclaimed aloud for evermore.

4

He stood alone within the spacious square
Declaiming from the central grassy mound,
With head uncovered and with streaming
hair,

As if large multitudes were gathered round:
A stalwart shape, the gestures full of might, 5
The glances burning with unnatural
light: -

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: All was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
A brooding hush without a stir or note, 10
The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
And thus for hours; then some enormous
things

Swooped past with savage cries and clanking
wings:

But I strode on austere,
No hope could have no fear. 15

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Eyes of fire
Glared at me throbbing with a starved desire;
The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death; 20
Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers cold
Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:

But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was, 25
As I came through the desert: Lo you, there,
That hillock burning with a brazen glare,
Those myriad dusky flames with points a-glow
Which writhed and hissed and darted to and
fro;

A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-mell 30
For Devil's roll-call and some f6te of Hell:

Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Meteors ran 35
And crossed their javelins on the black sky-
span;

The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's fixed
frame;

The ground all heaved in waves of fire that
surged

And weltered round me sole there unsub-
merged: 40

Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Air once more,
And I was close upon a wild sea-shore; 45
Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
The deep tide thundered up a league-broad
strand;

White foambelts seethed there, wan spray
swept and flew;

The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds
and blue:

And I strode on austere; 50
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: On the left,
The sun arose and crowned a broad crag-cleft;
There stopped and burned out black, except
a rim, <j

A bleeding eyeless socket, red and dim;
Whereon the moon fell suddenly southwest,
And stood above the right-hand cliffs at rest:

Still I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear. 60

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: From the right
A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
Bareheaded and barefooted on that strand;
O desolation moving with such grace! 66
O anguish with such beauty in thy face!

I fell as on my bier,
Hope travailed with such fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was, 70
As I came through the desert: I was twain,
Two selves distinct that cannot join again;
One stood apart and knew but could not
stir,

And watched the other stark in swoon and
her,

And she came on, and never turned aside, 75
Between such sun and moon and roaring tide:

And as she came more near
My soul grew mad with fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Hell is mild so
And piteous matched with that accursed wild;
A large black sign was on her breast that
bowed,

A broad black band ran down her snow-white
shroud;

That lamp she held was her own burning
heart,

Whose blood-drips trickled step by step apart:
The mystery was clear: 86

Mad rage had swallowed fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: By the sea
She knelt and bent above that senseless me,
Those lamp-drops fell upon my white brow
there, 91

She tried to cleanse them with her tears and
hair;

She murmured words of pity, love, and woe,
She heeded not the level rushing flow:

And mad with rage and fear, 95
I stood stonebound so near.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: When the tide
Swept up to her there kneeling by my side,
She clasped that corpse-like me, and they
were borne 100

Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
I know the whole sea cannot quench that
heart,

Or cleanse that brow, or wash those two
apart:

They love; their doom is drear,
Yet they nor hope nor fear; 105
But I, what do I here?

Algernon Charles Swinburne • 1837-1909

Swinburne was by birth the aristocrat among the poets of the nineteenth century. In lineage, as measured by hereditary titles in the family, only Shelley (whom he admired greatly) approached him. Like Shelley, Swinburne was an aristocrat, too, in a wider sense, believing that what one was born with was a trust to be used for the benefit of mankind. He sought beauty, not as a thing apart, but as a necessary element in life.

Swinburne's father, an admiral in the British navy, was the son of a baronet, his mother the daughter of an earl. He was born in London, April 5, 1837; reared by his mother and his father's father, who together gave him rigid training in Italian and French; and formally educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, where he added a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek literature to his accomplishments. A voracious reader, a sensitive and very able student, whose passion already was the study and practice of poetic expression, he found formal education, like any restraint, an irritant. After four years at Oxford, during the last terms of which his attendance was desultory, he left without a degree.

The very next year (1860), he published a volume containing two poetic plays, *The Queen Mother*, and *Rosamund*. In 1864, he made an extended trip on the Continent, meeting and spending much time with Landor in Florence. Returning to London in 1865, he took up his residence with Meredith and Rossetti in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, London. Morris, Burne-Jones, and other Pre-Raphaelites became his close friends. In this year he published two volumes, each containing a poetic play, *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard*. The first established Swinburne as a poet; the second play — the first in a trilogy, later completed by *Bothwell* (1874),^{and} *Mary Stuart* (1881) — was condemned by many as immoral. The following year (1866), all England became aroused by the publication of his *Poems and Ballads*. Many readers were thrilled by his remarkable skill in versifying; more were shocked by what they considered his immorality. In 1878, he published a second, and in 1889, a third series of *Poems and Ballads*. Among his other works may be mentioned *Erechtheus* (1876), and *Tristram of Lyonesse* (1881). As a critic, Swinburne wrote studies of Blake (1867), Chapman (1875), Shakespeare (1879), Victor Hugo (1886), and Ben Jonson (1889). Most of his criticism is impressionistic.

During his early years, Swinburne lived a Bohemian life in London, associating mainly with the Pre-Raphaelites, the influence of whose romanticism and modern social ideas is evident in his writings. When Swinburne was in danger of wasting himself in unrestrained living, Theodore Watts-Dunton brought him to his own home in Putney. There he lived for thirty-odd years until his death in 1909. He never married.

As a poet, Swinburne is remarkable for his extraordinary mastery of technique. None of his contemporaries could make words sing as he could. At times his facility in verse is almost fatal to any ideas that he may have had in mind. The charge, however, that his poems are merely full of sound, signifying nothing, is greatly exaggerated. In Swinburne can be found the nineteenth-century struggle over religion, indignant cries at the existing social order, and above all, a deep feeling for nature, especially the sea. Like Wordsworth and Victor Hugo, he too loved, almost revered children, regarding them as having a wisdom that we lose as we leave childhood behind.

Harpers publish the complete works of Swinburne. For his life, see the *Dictionary of National Biography*. H. Nicolson has written the life for the English Men of Letters series (0916).

CHORUSES FROM *Atalanta* in *Calydon*

1

When the hounds of spring are on winter's
traces,

The mother of months¹ in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places

With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale² amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,³ 6

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of
quivers,

Maiden most perfect,⁴ lady of light, 10
With a noise of winds and many rivers,

With a clamor of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;

For the faint east quickens, the wan west
shivers, 15

Round the feet of the day and the feet of
the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to
her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could
spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams that
spring! 20

For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;

For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over, 25
And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;

¹ Diana or Artemis, goddess of the moon (and so
"mother of months") as well as of the chase.

² Philomela, who was changed into a nightingale
when King Tereus pursued her.

³ Son of Tereus and Procne. Procne killed Itylus and
fed him to his father when Tereus violated her sister
Philomela.

⁴ Diana.

And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten, 30
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year
flushes 35

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root. 40

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Micnad¹ and the Bassarid;¹
And soft as lips that laugh and hide, 45
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes; 50
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its
leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves 54
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

2

Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief, with a glass that ran; 60
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;

Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite; 65
Love that endures for a breath:
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears, 70

¹ Bacchantes, female devotees of Bacchus and Pan.

And a measure of sliding sand
 From under the feet of the years;
 And froth and drift of the sea;
 And dust of the laboring earth;
 And bodies of things to be 75
 In the houses of death and of birth;
 And wrought with weeping and laughter,
 And fashioned with loathing and love,
 With life before and after
 And death beneath and above, 80
 For a day and a night and a morrow,
 That his strength might endure for a span
 With travail and heavy sorrow,
 The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the 85
 south
 They gathered as unto strife;
 They breathed upon his mouth,
 They filled his body with life;
 Eyesight and speech they wrought
 For the veils of the soul therein, 90
 A time for labor and thought,
 A time to serve and to sin:
 They gave him light in his ways,
 And love, and a space for delight,
 And beauty and length of days, 95
 And night, and sleep in the night.
 His speech is a burning fire;
 With his lips he travailleth;
 In his heart is a blind desire,
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death; 100
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
 Sows, and he shall not reap,
 His life is a watch or a vision
 Between a sleep and a sleep.
 Pub. 1865.

Hymn to Proserpine¹

*After the Proclamation in Rome of
 the Christian Faith²*

Victsti, Galilae³

I have lived long enough, having seen one
 thing, that love hath an end;
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me
 now and befriend.

¹ Proserpine or Persephone was queen of the lower regions.

² In 313.

³ Thou hast conquered, O Galilean.

Thou art more than the day or the mor-
 row, the seasons that laugh or that
 weep;
 For these give joy and sorrow; but thou,
 Proserpina, sleep.
 Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the
 feet of the dove; 5
 But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the
 grapes or love.
 Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harp-
 string of gold,
 A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to
 behold?
 I am sick of singing; the bays burn deep and
 chafe: I am fain
 To rest a little from praise and grievous
 pleasure and pain. 10
 For the Gods we know not of, who give us
 our daily breath,
 We know they are cruel as love or life, and
 lovely as death.
 O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth,
 wiped out in a day!
 From your wrath is the world released, re-
 deemed from your chains, men say.
 New Gods are crowned in the city; their
 flowers have broken your rods, 15
 They are merciful, clothed with pity, the
 young compassionate Gods.
 But for me their new device is barren, the
 days are bare;
 Things long past over suffice, and men for-
 gotten that were.
 Time and the Gods are at strife; ye dwell in
 the midst thereof,
 Draining a little life from the barren breasts
 of love. 20
 I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say to you
 all, be at peace,
 Till the bitter milk of her breast and the bar-
 ren bosom shall cease.
 Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but these
 thou shalt not take,
 The laurel, the palms and the psean, the
 breast of the nymphs in the brake;
 Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble
 with tenderer breath, 25
 And all the wings of the Loves, and all the
 joy before death;
 All the feet of the hours that sound as a
 single lyre,

Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings
 that flicker like fire,
 More than these wilt thou give, things fairer
 than all these things?
 Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable
 wings. 30
 A little while and we die; shall life not thrive
 as it may?
 For no man under the sky lives twice, out-
 living his day.
 And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath
 enough of his tears:
 Why should he labor, and bring fresh grief to
 blacken his years?
 Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the
 world has grown gray from thy
 breath; 35
 We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed
 on the fulness of death.
 Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet
 for a day;
 But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel
 outlives not May.
 Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world
 is not sweet in the end;
 For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new
 years ruin and rend. 40
 Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a
 rock that abides;
 But her ears are vexed with the roar and her
 face with the foam of the tides.
 O lips that the live blood faints in, the leav-
 ings of rack and rods!
 O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of
 gibbeted Gods!
 Though all men abase them before you in
 spirits, and all knees bend, 45
 1 kneel not neither adore you, but standing,
 look to the end.
 All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits and
 sorrows are cast
 Far out with the foam of the present that
 sweeps to the surf of the past:
 Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and
 between the remote sea-gates,
 Waste water washes, and tall ships founder,
 and deep death waits: so
 Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad
 about with the seas as with wings,
 And impelled of invisible tides, fulfilled of
 unspeakable things,

White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-
 toothed and serpentine-curved,
 Rolls, under the whitening wind of the
 future, the wave of the world.
 The depths stand naked in sunder behind it,
 the storms flee away; 55
 In the hollow before it the thunder is taken
 and snared as a prey;
 In its sides is the north-wind bound, and its
 salt is of all men's tears;
 With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and
 pulse of years:
 With travail of day after day, and with
 trouble of hour upon hour,
 And bitter as blood is the spray; and the
 crests are as fangs that devour: 60
 And its vapor and storm of its steam as the
 sighing of spirits to be;
 And its noise as the noise in a dream; and its
 depth as the roots of the sea:
 And the height of its head as the height of the
 utmost stars of the air:
 And the ends of the earth at the might thereof
 tremble, and time is made bare.
 Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will ye
 chasten the high sea with rods? 65
 Will ye take her to chain her with chains,
 who is older than all ye Gods?
 All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall
 ye pass and be past,
 Ye are Gods, and behold, ye shall die, and the
 waves be upon you at last.
 In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the
 years, in the changes of things,
 Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and the
 world shall forget you for kings 70
 Though the feet of thine high priests tread
 where thy lords and our forefathers
 trod,
 Though these that were Gods are dead, and
 thou being dead art a God,
 Though before thee the throned Cytherean¹
 be fallen, and hidden her head,
 Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy
 dead shall go down to thee dead.
 Of the maiden thy mother men sing as a
 goddess with grace clad around; 75
 Thou art throned where another was king;
 where another was queen she is
 crowned.

¹ Venus.

Yea, once we had sight of another: but now
 she is queen, say these.
 Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, a
 blossom of flowering seas,
 Clothed round with the world's desire as
 with raiment, and fair as the foam,
 And fleeter than kindled fire, and a goddess
 and mother of Rome. 80
 For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister
 to sorrow; but ours,
 Her deep hair heavily laden with odor, and
 color of flowers,
 White rose of the rose-white water, a silver
 splendor, a flame,
 Bent down into us that besought her, and
 earth grew sweet with her name.
 For thine came weeping, a slave among
 slaves, and rejected; but she 85
 Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, and
 imperial, her foot on the sea.
 And the wonderful waters knew her, the
 winds and the viewless ways,
 And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-
 blue stream of the bays.
 Ye are fallen, our lords, by what token? we
 wist that ye should not fall.
 Ye were all so fair that are broken; and one
 more fair than ye all. 90
 But I turn to her¹ still, having seen she shall
 surely abide in the end;
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me
 now and befriend.
 O daughter of earth, of my mother, her crown
 and blossom of birth,
 I am also, I also thy brother; I go as I came
 unto earth. 94
 In the night where thine eyes are as moons
 are in heaven, the night where thou art,
 Where the silence is more than all tunes,
 where sleep overflows from the heart,
 Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in
 our world, and the red rose is white,
 And the wind falls faint as it blows with the
 fume of the flowers of the night,
 And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the
 shadow of Gods from afar
 Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep
 dim soul of a star, 100
 In the sweet low light of thy face, under
 heavens untrod by the sun,

¹ Proserpina.

Let my soul with their souls find place, and
 forget what is done and undone.
 Thou art more than the Gods who number
 the days of our temporal breath;
 For these give labor and slumber, but thou,
 Proserpina, death.
 Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season
 in silence. I know 105
 I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as
 they sleep; even so.
 For the glass of the years is brittle wherein
 we gaze for a span;
 A little soul for a little bears up this corpse
 which is man.¹
 So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not
 again, neither weep.
 For there is no God found stronger than
 death; and death is a sleep. no
 Pub. 1866.

A Match

This poem is a kind of *rondeau* or *rondel*, the chief characteristic of which is the repetition, at the end of each stanza, of the first two lines.

If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf,
 Our lives would grow together
 In sad or singing weather,
 Blown fields or flowerful closes, 5
 Green pleasure or gray grief;
 If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
 And love were like the tune, 10
 With double sound and single
 Delight our lips would mingle,
 With kisses glad as birds are
 That get sweet rain at noon;
 If I were what the words are 15
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
 And I your love were death,
 We'd shine and snow together
 Ere March made sweet the weather 20

¹ ψυχήον εἰς θάνατον νεκρῶν. ["Thou art a little man bearing up a corpse."] ΕΠΙΤΕΤΟΣ. (Swinburne.)

With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow, 25
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy; 30
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May, 35
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May. 40

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure, 45
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

Pub. 1866.

A Ballad of Burdens

This poem is a *ballade*, a French verse-form, which usually consists of three or more eight-line stanzas rhyming *ababbcbc* and a refrain or *envoy* of four lines, *bcbc*. The last line of each stanza is always the same, and often the same rhymes for *a*, *b*, and *c* are kept throughout the *ballade*. Swinburne allows himself variations.

The burden of fair women. Vain delight,
And love self-slain in some sweet shameful
way,
And sorrowful old age that comes by night
As a thief comes that has no heart by day,
And change that finds fair cheeks and
leaves them gray, 5
And weariness that keeps awake for hire,

And grief that says what pleasure used to
say:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is sore,
A burden without fruit in childbearing; 10
Between the nightfall and the dawn three-
score,
Threescore between the dawn and evening.
The shuddering in thy lips, the shuddering
In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,
Makes love seem shameful and a wretched
thing: 15
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay, kneel
down,
Cover thy head, and weep; for verily
These market-men that buy thy white and
brown
In the last days shall take no thought for
thee; 20
In the last days like earth thy face shall be,
Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine
and mire,
Sad with sick leavings of the sterile sea:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt fear 25
Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy bed,
And say at night, "Would God the day were
here!"
And say at dawn, "Would God the day
were dead!"
With weary days thou shalt be clothed and
fed,

And wear remorse of heart for thine attire, 30
Pain for thy girdle, and sorrow upon thine
head:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt see
Gold tarnished, and the gray above the
green;
And as the thing thou seest thy face shall
be, 35
And no more as the thing beforetime seen.
And thou shalt say of mercy, "It hath
been;"
And living, watch the old lips and loves
expire,

And talking, tears shall take thy breath
between:
This is the end of every man's desire. 40

The burden of sad sayings. In that day
Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours, and
tell
Thy times and ways and words of love, and
say
How one was dear, and one desirable,
And sweet was life to hear and sweet to
smell; 45
But now with lights reverse the old hours
retire,
And the last hour is shod with fire from
hell:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in spring,
White rain and wind among the tender
trees; so
A summer of green sorrows gathering;
Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,
With sad face set towards the year, that sees
The charred ash drop out of the dropping pyre,
And winter wan with many maladies: ss
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight
And out of love, beyond the reach of hands,
Changed in the changing of the dark and
light,
They walk and weep about the barren
lands 60
Where no seed is, nor any garner stands,
Where in short breaths the doubtful days
respire,
And time's turned glass lets through the
sighing sands:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and
lust 65
Forsake thee, and the face of thy delight;
And underfoot the heavy hour strews dust,
And overhead strange weathers burn and
bite;
And where the red was, lo the bloodless
white;
And where truth was, the likeness of a
liar; 70

And where day was, the likeness of the
night:
This is the end of every man's desire.

L' ENVOY

Princes,¹ and ye whom pleasure quickeneth,
Heed well this rhyme before your pleasure
tire;
For life is sweet, but after life is death. 75
This is the end of every man's desire.
Pub. 1866.

The Garden of Proserpine

Here, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams,
I watch the green field growing 5
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep, 10
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers, 15
And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer; 20
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice, as
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes, 30
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

¹ Originally, in the *ballade*, the *envoy* was a kind of
dedication, usually addressed to a prince.

Pale, without name or number,
 In fruitless fields of corn,
 They bow themselves and slumber 35
 All night till light is born;
 And like a soul belated,
 In hell and heaven unmated,
 By cloud and mist abated
 Comes out of darkness morn. 40

Though one were strong as seven,
 He too with death shall dwell,
 Nor wake with wings in heaven,
 Nor weep for pains in hell;
 Though one were fair as roses, 45
 His beauty clouds and closes;
 And well though love reposes,
 In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
 Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
 Who gathers all things mortal 51
 With cold immortal hands;
 Her languid lips are sweeter
 Than Love's, who fears to greet her,
 To men that mix and meet her 55
 For many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
 She waits for all men born;
 Forgets the earth her mother,¹
 The life of fruits and corn; 60
 And spring and seed and swallow
 Take wing for her, and follow
 Where summer song rings hollow,
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither, 65
 The old loves with wearier wings,
 And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
 Dead dreams of days forsaken,
 Blind buds that snows have shaken, 70
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure;
 To-day will die to-morrow; 75
 Time stoops to no'han's lure;

¹ Proserpine's mother was Demeter, goddess of fruitfulness.

And love, grown faint and fretful,
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful 80
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be 85
 That no life lives forever;
 That dead men rise up never;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light, 90
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight;
 Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
 Nor days nor things diurnal:
 Only the sleep eternal 95
 In an eternal night.

Pub. 1866.

Hertha¹

Swinburne rated this poem highly, saying that he found in it "the most of lyric force and music combined with the most of condensed and clarified thought."

I am that which began;
 Out of me the years roll;
 Out of me God and man;
 I am equal and whole;
 God changes, and man, and the form of them 5
 bodily; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches, I 10
 was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam;
 Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn;
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast
 and bird; before God was, I am. 15

¹ The Teutonic earth-goddess.

Beside or above me
 Nought is there to go;
 Love or unlove me,
 Unknow me or know.
 I am that which unloves me and loves; I am
 stricken, and I am the blow.¹ 20

I the mark that is missed
 And the arrows that miss,
 I the mouth that is kissed
 And the breath in the kiss,
 The search, and the sought, and the seeker,
 the soul and the body that is. 25

I am that thing which blesses
 My spirit elate;
 That which caresses
 With hands uncreate
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the length
 of the measure of fate. 30

But what thing dost thou now,
 Looking Godward, to cry
 "I am I, thou art thou,
 I am low, thou art high"?
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him;
 find thou but thyself, thou art I. 35

I the grain and the furrow,
 The plough-cloven clod
 And the ploughshare drawn thorough,
 The germ and the sod,
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the
 sower, the dust which is God. 40

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
 Child, underground?
 Fire that impassioned thee,
 Iron that bound,
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all
 these hast thou known of or found? 45

Canst thou say in thine heart
 Thou hast seen with thine eyes
 With what cunning of art
 Thou wast wrought in what wise,
 By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen,
 and shown on my breast to the skies?

¹ For similarity of thought and expression, see Emerson's *Brahma*,

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee,
 Knowledge of me? 52
 Has the wilderness told it thee?
 Hast thou learnt of the sea?
 Hast thou communed in spirit with night?
 have the winds taken counsel with
 thee? 55

Have I set such a star
 To show light on thy brow
 That thou sawest from afar
 What I show to thee now?
 Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun
 and the mountains and thou? 60

What is here, dost thou know it?
 What was, hast thou known?
 Prophet nor poet
 Nor tripod¹ nor throne
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but
 only thy mother alone. 65

Mother, not maker,
 Born, and not made;
 Though her children forsake her,
 Allured or afraid,
 Praying prayers to the God of their fashion,
 she stirs not for all that have prayed.

A creed is a rod, 71
 And a crown is of night;
 But this thing is God,
 To be man with thy might,
 To grow straight in the strength of thy
 spirit, and live out thy life as the
 light. 75

I am in thee to save thee,
 As my soul in thee saith;
 Give thou, as I gave thee,
 Thy life-blood and breath,
 Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of
 thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving 81
 As mine were to thee;
 The free life of thy living,
 Be the gift of it free;
 Not as servant to lord, nor as master to
 slave, shalt thou give thee to me. 85
¹ of the Delphic oracle.

O children of banishment,
 Souls overcast,
 Were the lights ye see vanish meant
 Always to last,
 Ye would know not the sun overshadowing the
 shadows and stars overpast. 90

1 that saw where ye trod
 The dim paths of the night
 Set the shadow called God
 In your skies to give light;
 But the morning of manhood is risen, and
 the shadowless soul is in sight. 95

The tree many-rooted
 That swells to the sky
 With the frondage red-fruited,
 The life-tree am I;
 In the buds of your lives is the sap of my
 leaves: ye shall live and not die. 100

But the gods of your fashion
 That take and that give,
 In their pity and passion
 That scourge and forgive,
 They are worms that are bred in the bark
 that falls off; they shall die and not live.

My own blood is what stanches 106
 The wounds in my bark;
 Stars caught in my branches
 Make day of the dark,
 And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise
 shall tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under m
 The live roots of the tree,
 In my darkness the thunder
 Makes utterance of me;
 In the clash of my boughs with each other
 ye hear the waves sound of the sea. 115

That noise is of Time,
 As his feathers are spread
 And his feet set to climb
 Through the boughs overhead,
 And my foliage rings round him and rustles,
 and branches are bent with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages 121
 Blow through me and cease,

The war-wind that rages,
 The spring-wind of peace,
 Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses,
 ere one of my blossoms increase. 125

All sounds of all changes,
 All shadows and lights
 On the world's mountain-ranges
 And stream-riven heights,
 Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and lan-
 guage of storm-clouds on earth-shaking
 heights; 130

All forms of all faces,
 All works of all hands
 In unsearchable places
 Of time-stricken lands,
 All death and all life, and all reigns and all
 ruins, drop through me as sands. 135

Though sore be my burden
 And more than ye know,
 And my growth have no guerdon
 But only to grow,
 Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above
 me or deathworms below. 140

These too have their part in me,
 As I too in these;
 Such fire is at heart in me,
 Such sap is this tree's,
 Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of
 infinite lands and of seas. 145

In the spring-colored hours
 When my mind was as May's,
 There brake forth of me flowers
 By centuries of days,
 Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood,
 shot out from my spirit as rays. 150

And the sound of them springing
 And smell of their shoots
 Were as warmth and sweet singing
 And strength to my roots;
 And the lives of my children made perfect
 with freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but be; 156
 I have need not of prayer;

I have need of you free
 As your mouths of mine air;
 That my heart may be greater within me,
 beholding the fruits of me fair. 160

More fair than strange fruit is
 Of faiths ye espouse;
 In me only the root is
 That blooms in your boughs;
 Behold now your God that ye made you, to
 feed him with faith of your vows. 165

In the darkening and whitening
 Abysses adored,
 With dayspring and lightning
 For lamp and for sword,
 God thunders in heaven, and his angels are
 red with the wrath of the Lord. 170

O my sons, O too dutiful
 Toward gods not of me,
 Was not I enough beautiful?
 Was it hard to be free?
 For behold, I am with you, am in you and
 of you, look forth now and see. 175

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
 With miracles shod,
 With the fires of his thunders
 For raiment and rod,
 God trembles in heaven, and his angels are
 white with the terror of God. 180

For his twilight is come on him,
 His anguish is here;
 And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
 Grown gray from his fear;
 And his hour taketh hold on him stricken,
 the last of his infinite year. 185

Thought made him and breaks him,
 Truth slays and forgives;
 But to you, as time takes him,
 This new thing it gives,
 Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds
 upon freedom and lives. 190

For truth only is living,
 Truth only is whole,
 And the love of his giving

Man's polestar and pole;
 Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my
 body, and seed of my soul. 195

One birth of my bosom;
 One beam of mine eye;
 One topmost blossom
 That scales the sky;
 Man, equal and one with me, man that is
 made of me, man that is I. 200
 Pub. 1871.

To Walt Whitman in America

Send but a song oversea for us,
 Heart of their hearts who are free,
 Heart of their singer, to be for us
 More than our singing can be;
 Ours, in the tempest at error, 5
 With no light but the twilight of terror;
 Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine-leaves and grasses,
 And blown as a tree through and through
 With the winds of the keen mountain-
 passes, 10
 And tender as sun-smitten dew;
 Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes
 The wastes of your limitless lakes,
 Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic 15
 Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,
 With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,
 With thoughts as thunders in throng,
 With consonant ardors of chords
 That pierce men's souls as with swords 20
 And hale them hearing along,

Make us too music, to be with us
 As a word from a world's heart warm,
 To sail the dark as a sea with us,
 Full-sailed, outsinging the storm, 25
 A song to put fire in our ears
 Whose burning shall burn up tears,
 Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,
 A word in the wind of cheer, 30

- To consume as with lightning the carrion
That makes time foul for us here;
In the air that our dead things infest
A blast of the breath of the west,
Till east way as west way is clear. 35
- Out of the sun beyond sunset,
From the evening whence morning shall be,
With rollers in measureless onset,
With the van of the storming sea,
With the world-wide wind, with the breath 40
That breaks ships driven upon death,
With the passion of all things free,
- With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,
White myriads for death to bestride
In the charge of the ruining Atlantic 45
Where deaths by regiments ride,
With clouds and clamors of waters,
With a long note shriller than slaughter's
On the furrowless fields world-wide,
- With terror, with ardor and wonder, 50
With the soul of the season that wakes
When the weight of a whole year's thunder
In the tidestream of autumn breaks,
Let the flight of the wide-winged word
Come over, come in and be heard, 55
Take form and fire for our sakes.
- For a continent bloodless with travail
Here toils and brawls as it can,
And the web of it who shall unravel
Of all that peer on the plan; 60
Would fain grow men, but they grow not,
And fam be free, but they know not
One name for freedom and man?
- One name, not twain for division;
One thing, not twain, from the birth; 65
Spirit and substance and vision,
Worth more than worship is worth;
Unbehld, unadored, undivided,
The cause, the center, the mind,
The secret and sense of the earth. 70
- Here as a weakling in irons,
Here as a weanling in bands,
As a prey that the stake-net environs,
Our life that we looked for stands;
And the man-child naked and dear, 75
- Democracy, turns on us here
Eyes trembling with tremulous hands.
- It sees not what season shall bring to it
Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;
Few voices it hears yet sing to it, 80
Few pulses of hearts reaspire;
Foresees not time, nor forehears
The noises of imminent years,
Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:
- When crowned and weaponed and curbless
It shall walk without helm or shield 86
The bare burnt furrows and herbless
Of war's last flame-stricken field,
Till godlike, equal with time,
It stand in the sun sublime, 90
In the godhead of man revealed.
- Round your people and over them
Light like raiment is drawn,
Close as a garment to cover them
Wrought not of mail nor of lawn; 95
Here, with hope hardly to wear,
Naked nations and bare
Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.
- Chains are here, and a prison,
Kings, and subjects, and shame. 100
If the God upon you be arisen,
How should our songs be the same?
How, in confusion of change,
How shall we sing, in a strange
Land, songs praising his name? 105
- God is buried and dead to us,
Even the spirit of earth,
Freedom, so have they said to us,
Some with mocking and mirth,
Some with heartbreak and tears, no
And a God without eyes, without ears,
Who shall sing of him, dead in the birth?
- The earth-god Freedom, the lonely
Face lightening, the footprint unshod, us
Not as one man crucified only
Nor scourged with but one life's rod;
The soul that is substance of nations,
Reincarnate with fresh generations;
The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest 120
 Doth it live not at heart of all things.
 The one God and one spirit, a purest
 Life, fed from unstanchable springs?
 Within love, within hatred it is,
 And its seed in the stripe as the kiss, 125
 And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier
 Name of the soul's there is none;
 Surelier its labors, if slower,
 Than the meters of star or of sun; 130
 Slower than life into breath,
 Surelier than time into death,
 It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure
 Circling through season and clime, 135
 Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,
 Vision of virtue and crime;
 Till consummate with conquering eyes,
 A soul disembodied, it rise
 From the body transfigured of time. 140

Till it rise and remain and take station
 With the stars of the worlds that rejoice;
 Till the voice of its heart's exultation
 Be as theirs an invariable voice;
 By no discord of evil estranged, 145
 By no pause, by no breach in it changed,
 By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,
 With the spirit, the star, and the sod; 149
 With the kingless and king-stricken nations,
 With the cross, and the chain, and the rod;
 The most high, the most secret, most lonely,
 The earth-soul Freedom, that only
 Lives, and that only is God.
 Pub. 1871.

A Ballad of François Villon¹

Prince of All Ballad-Makers

Bird of the bitter bright gray golden morn,
 Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous years,
 First of us all and sweetest singer born,
 Whose far shrill note the world of new men
 hears

¹ The madcap poet of France (1431?-1484).

Cleave the cold shuddering shade as twi-
 light clears; 5
 When song new-born put off the old world's
 attire
 And felt its tune on her changed lips expire,
 Writ foremost on the roll of them that came
 Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name!

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,
 That clothed thy life with hopes and sins
 and fears,
 And gave thee stones for bread and tares for
 corn
 And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy
 starveling peers,
 Till death clipped close their flight with
 shameful shears; 15
 Till shifts came short and loves were hard to
 hire,
 When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling wire
 Could buy thee bread or kisses; when light
 fame
 Spurned like a ball and haled through brake
 and briar, 19
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name I

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled and
 torn!
 Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with light
 quick tears!
 Poor perfect voice, most blithe when most
 forlorn,
 That rings athwart the sea whence no man
 steers,
 Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells in
 our ears! 25
 What far delight has cooled the fierce desire
 That, like some ravenous bird, was strong
 to tire
 On that frail flesh and soul consumed with
 flame,
 But left more sweet than roses to respire,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name? 30

ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears and
 fire,
 A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;

Shame soiled thy song, and song assoiled
thy shame.
But from thy feet now death has washed the
mire,
Love reads out first at head of all our quire, 35
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name.
September, 1877.

On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot^x

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
Pass, followed one with love and each with
wonder:
The stormy sophist with his mouth of
thunder,
Clothed with loud words and mantled in the
might
Of darkness and magnificence of night; 5
And one whose eye could smite the night
in sunder,
Searching if light or no light were there-
under,
And found in love of loving-kindness light.
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
Still following Righteousness with deep
desire 10
Shone sole and stern before her and above
Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more
sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly
feet, —
The light of little children, and their
love.
Pub. 1882.

Hope and Fear

Beneath the shadow of dawn's aerial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own
sphere,
Hope from the front of youth in godlike
cheer
Looks Godward, past the shades where blind
men grope

¹ George Eliot died December 22, 1880; Carlyle, February 5, 1881.

Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams
can ope, 5
And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams
that Fear
At noon may rise and pierce the heart of
Hope.
Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and
yearn,
May Truth first purge her eyesight to dis-
cern 10
What once being known leaves time no
power to appal;
Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not,
learn
The kind wise word that falls from years
that fall —
"Hope thou not much, and fear thou not
at all."
Pub. 1882.

A Child's Future

What will it please you, my darling, here-
after to be?
Fame upon land will you look for, or glory
by sea?
Gallant your life will be always, and all of it
free.
Free as the wind when the heart of the twi-
light is stirred
Eastward, and sounds from the springs of the
sunrise are heard: 5
Free — and we know not another as infinite
word.
Darkness or twilight or sunlight may com-
pass us round,
Hate may arise up against us, or hope may
confound;
Love may forsake us; yet may not the spirit
be bound.
Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of
joy 10
Still may the soul be, and each to her strength
as a toy:
Free in the glance of the man as the smile of
the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit that
gives
Life, and without her is nothing that verily
lives:
Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon death
and forgives. 15
Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and afar
Glitters the blithe little face of you, round as
a star:

Liberty bless you and keep you to be as you
are.

England and liberty bless you and keep you
to be
Worthy the name of their child and the sight
of their sea; 20
Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears not, is
free.
Pub. 1882.

Walter Pater - 1839-1894

The interest in art and art criticism, which Ruskin had stimulated, culminated toward the close of the century in what was called the aesthetic movement. This movement had its artificial and frivolous aspect, typified by the early career of Oscar Wilde and satirized by Gilbert and Sullivan in *Patience*, but it was profoundly serious in its contribution to life through such writers as Bernard Bosanquet, Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), and Walter Horatio Pater.

The last named was born in the East End of London, August 4, 1839. His father, a physician who died when Walter was five years old, left him to be brought up by his mother, aunt, and grandmother in a house at Enfield, which he describes in *The Child in the House*. The predominantly feminine influences which governed his early life account in part for his remoteness from the world of virile and practical interests, and the fastidiousness and preoccupation with exquisite sensations and subtle distinctions which mark him as a critic. He was sent to King's School, Canterbury, and thence to Queen's College, Oxford. After two years of private teaching, he was elected fellow of Brasenose College in 1864. He lived most of his life in scholarly seclusion in Oxford, except for nine years when his literary fame drew him to London. This reputation rested on his criticisms of literature, subsequently collected in *Appreciations* (1889), but still more on *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873),¹ which he introduced a type of art criticism new and fascinating, which is called impressionistic, as distinguished from ethical, historical, or judicial, because it consists in rendering the sensations of the critic in the presence of a masterpiece. Pater's creative work was in the form of character sketches, of which Florian Deleal in *The Child in the House* (1878) is an example. A series of four such sketches made up the book *Imaginary Portraits* (1887), one of which, *Sebastian van Storck*, is an illuminating study of the Renaissance in Holland. *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) is an imaginary portrait carried to the length of a novel, the life of a cultivated Roman youth in the days of Marcus Aurelius. Pater's last book was *Plato and Platonism*, published the year before his death in 1894.

As a child Pater was drawn toward the church, but his philosophy in mature life was a cultivated paganism. He accepted the teaching of modern science as confirming the doctrine of Heraclitus that life is a continuous flux; and he drew the conclusion that we should spend the moments as they pass in multiplying and cherishing the most exquisite of our sen-

sations, which are all we know of the world without. This is the philosophy of Epicurus, obviously in striking contrast to the social striving which marks the chief Victorian poets and prose writers. The best expression of it is the Conclusion to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, which was withdrawn in the second edition but later restored. This doctrine of enlightened hedonism may be regarded as a refinement of Matthew Arnold's culture, though the latter takes care to warn us that if we wish to be perfect we must carry the rest of mankind along with us in our search for perfection. Pater has no social message; yet both Sebastian van Storck and Marius give their lives in sacrifice for others. It is as if Pater recognized that the highest discipline of life can be tested only by the willingness to renounce it. For the rest, it may be said that Pater's training made him one of the best critics, susceptible to the finest shades of aesthetic appeal in painting and poetry. He developed his own style as a fine art of expression, of which he gives an account in his essay on "Style" in *Appreciations*. His famous descriptions of paintings, Leonardo's Mona Lisa and Botticelli's Venus, are literally translations of beauty from one medium to another. In his recommendation of the love of beauty for itself and art for art's sake, Pater was the philosopher of the neo-pagan group of writers, such as Oscar Wilde and George Moore, who made the last decades of the century a period of reaction against the ideals characteristic of the Victorian Age.

Pater's works are published in ten volumes (1910). Selections are edited by E. E. Hale, Jr. (1901). The life by Thomas Wright (i vols., 1907) is standard. Shorter biographies are by Ferris Greenslet (1901), and A. C. Benson, *English Men of Letters* series (1911). A critical study by Edward Thomas appeared in 1913, and there are essays by Edmund Gosse (*Critical Kit-Kats*) and Arthur Symonds (*Studies in Prose and Verse*).

FROM *Studies in the History of The Renaissance* 1873

Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1873) is a collection of articles, written in previous years. It includes essays on the Old French story, *Aucassin and Nicolette*, on Pico della Mirandola, Sandro Botticelli, Luca della Robbia, the Poetry of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, the School of Giorgione, Joachim du Bellay, and Winckelmann. These studies are all illustrations of Pater's theory of criticism which he sets forth in the preface, and which he raises to a philosophy of life in the Conclusion. To be always on the alert for new forms of beauty, for new sources of pleasure in art and in life, and to translate their effects into exquisite, subtle prose, is the function of the critic.

PREFACE

Many attempts have been made by writers on art and poetry to define beauty in the abstract, to express it in the most general terms, to find a universal formula for it. The value of these attempts has most often been in the suggestive and penetrating things said by the

way. Such discussions help us very little to enjoy what has been well done in art or poetry, to discriminate between what is more and what is less excellent in them, or to use words like beauty, excellence, art, poetry, with a more precise meaning than they would otherwise have. Beauty, like all other qualities presented to human experience, is relative; and the definition of it becomes unmeaning and useless in proportion to its abstractness. To define beauty, not in the most abstract, but in the most concrete terms possible, to find, not a universal formula for it, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of aesthetics.

"To see the object as in itself it really is,"¹ has been justly said to be the aim of all true criticism whatever; and in aesthetic criticism the first step towards seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realize

¹ Matthew Arnold's dictum in *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*.

isc it distinctly. The objects with which aesthetic criticism deals — music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life — are indeed receptacles of so many powers or forces: they possess, like the products of nature, so many virtues or qualities. What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to me? What effect does it really produce on me? Does it give me pleasure? and if so, what sort or degree of pleasure? How is my nature modified by its presence, and under its influence? The answers to these questions are the original facts with which the aesthetic critic has to do; and, as in the study of light, of morals, of number, one must realise such primary data for oneself, or not at all. And he who experiences these impressions strongly, and drives directly at the analysis and discrimination of them, has no need to trouble himself with the abstract question what beauty is in itself, or what its exact relation to truth or experience — metaphysical questions, as unprofitable as metaphysical questions elsewhere. He may pass them all by as being, answerable or not, of no interest to him.

The esthetic critic, then, regards all the objects with which he has to do, all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life, as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations, each of a more or less peculiar or unique kind. This influence he feels, and wishes to explain, analysing it, and reducing it to its elements. To him, the picture, the landscape, the engaging personality in life or in a book, *La Gioconda*,¹ the hills of Carrara, Pico of Mirandola,¹ are valuable for their virtues, as we say, in speaking of a herb, a wine, a gem; for the property each has of affecting one with a special, a unique, impression of pleasure. Our education becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety. And the function of the aesthetic critic is to distinguish, analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair personality in life or

¹ The portrait (Mona Lisa) by Leonardo da Vinci, in the Louvre.

¹ Giovanni Pico, Count of Mirandola (1463-94), an Italian humanist upon whom Pater wrote one of his "studies."

in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure, to indicate what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced. His end is reached when he has disengaged that virtue, and noted it, as a chemist notes some natural element, for himself and others; and the rule for those who would reach this end is stated with great exactness in the words of a recent critic of Sainte-Beuve. — *De se borner a conduire de pres les belles choses, et a s'en nourrir en exquis amateurs, en humanistes accomplis*

What is important, then, is not that the critic should possess a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect, but a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects. He will remember always that beauty exists in many forms. To him all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal. In all ages there have been some excellent workmen, and some excellent work done. The question he asks is always: — In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself? where was the receptacle of its refinement, its elevation, its taste? "The ages are all equal," says William Blake, "but genius is always above its age."

Often it will require great nicety to disengage this virtue from the commoner elements with which it may be found in combination. Few artists, not Goethe or Byron even, work quite cleanly, casting off all debts, and leaving us only what the heat of their imagination has wholly fused and transformed. Take, for instance, the writings of Wordsworth. The heat of his genius, entering into the substance of his work, has crystallised a part, but only a part, of it; and in that great mass of verse there is much which might well be forgotten. But scattered up and down it, sometimes fusing and transforming entire compositions, like the stanzas on *Resolution and Independence*, and the Ode on the *Recollections of Childhood*, sometimes, as if at random, depositing a fine crystal here or there, in a matter it does not wholly search through and transform, we trace the action of his unique,

¹ To limit ourselves to knowing at firsthand beautiful things, and to cultivate ourselves as exquisite amateurs, as accomplished humanists.

incommunicable faculty, that strange, mystical sense of a life in natural things, and of man's life as a part of nature, drawing strength and color and character from local influences, from the hills and streams, and from natural sights and sounds. Well! that is the *virtue*, the active principle in Wordsworth's poetry; and then the function of the critic of Wordsworth is to follow up that active principle, to disengage it, to mark the degree in which it penetrates his verse.

The subjects of the following studies are taken from the history of the Renaissance, and touch what I think the chief points in that complex, many-sided movement. I have explained in the first of them what I understand by the word, giving it a much wider scope than was intended by those who originally used it to denote only that revival of classical antiquity in the fifteenth century which was but one of many results of a general excitement and enlightening of the human mind, of which the great aim and achievements of what, as Christian art, is often falsely opposed to the Renaissance, were another result. This outbreak of the human spirit may be traced far into the Middle Age itself, with its qualities already clearly pronounced, the care for physical beauty, the worship of the body, the breaking down of those limits which the religious system of the Middle Age imposed on the heart and the imagination. I have taken as an example of this movement, this earlier Renaissance within the Middle Age itself, and as an expression of its qualities, two little compositions in early French; not because they constitute the best possible expression of them, but because they help the unity of my series, inasmuch as the Renaissance ends also in France, in French poetry, in a phase of which the writings of Joachim du Bellay¹ are in many ways the most perfect illustration; the Renaissance thus putting forth in France an aftermath, a wonderful later growth, the products of which have to the full that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence; just as its earliest phases have the freshness which be-

longs to all periods of growth in art, the charm of *ascesis*, of the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth.

But it is in Italy, in the fifteenth century, that the interest of the Renaissance mainly lies, — in that solemn fifteenth century which can hardly be studied too much, not merely for its positive results in the things of the intellect and the imagination, its concrete works of art, its special and prominent personalities, with their profound aesthetic charm, but for its general spirit and character, for the ethical qualities of which it is a consummate type.

The various forms of intellectual activity which together make up the culture of an age, move for the most part from different starting-points, and by unconnected roads. As products of the same generation they partake, indeed, of a common character, and unconsciously illustrate each other, but of the producers themselves, each group is solitary, gaining what advantage or disadvantage there may be in intellectual isolation. Art and poetry, philosophy and the religious life, and that other life of refined pleasure and action in the open places of the world, are each of them confined to its own circle of ideas, and those who prosecute either of them are generally little curious of the thoughts of others. There come, however, from time to time, eras of more favorable conditions, in which the thoughts of men draw nearer together than is their wont, and the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture. The fifteenth century in Italy is one of these happier eras; and what is sometimes said of the age of Pericles is true of that of Lorenzo:¹ — it is an age productive in personalities, many-sided, centralised, complete. Here, artists and philosophers and those whom the action of the world has elevated and made keen, do not live in isolation, but breathe a common air, and catch light and heat from each other's thoughts. There is a spirit of general elevation and enlightenment in which all alike communicate. It is the unity of this spirit which gives unity to all the various products

¹ A French poet (1524-60), the subject of another of Pater's "studies."

¹ Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-92), who occupied in Florence a place similar to that of Pericles in Athens.

of the Renaissance; and it is to this intimate alliance with mind, this participation in the best thoughts which that age produced, that the art of Italy in the fifteenth century owes much of its grave dignity and influence....

CONCLUSION

This chapter was omitted from the second edition in 1877, but restored in 1888 with the note: "This brief Conclusion was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning." One of the changes, perhaps significant of some change in Pater's own attitude, is the introduction of the parenthetical clause, "at least among 'the children of this world,'" in the final paragraph.

Λέγει που 'Ηράκλειτος ότι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.¹

To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought. Let us begin with that which is without — our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, — the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names? But these elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it. Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them — the passage of the blood, the wasting and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain by every ray of light and sound — processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces. Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us; it rusts iron and ripens corn. Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven by many forces; and birth and gesture and death and the springing of violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations. That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours,

¹ "Heraclitus says that all things give way and nothing remains." (From Plato's *Cratylus*.)

under which we group them — a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it. This at least of flamelike our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways.

Or if we begin with the inward whirl of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye and fading of color from the wall, — the movement of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest, — but the race of the mid-stream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action. But when reflection begins to act upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like a trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions — color, odor, texture — in the mind of the observer. And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further; the whole scope of observation is dwarfed to the narrow chamber of the individual mind. Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world.

Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone

while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is. To such a tremulous wisp constantly reforming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it — a relic more or less fleeting — of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off — that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

Philosophiren, says Novalis, ist *dcplegmatisiren*, *vivificiren*.¹ The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit is to rouse, to startle it into sharp and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, — but for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colors, and curious odors, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in

those about us, and in the brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendor of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch. What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy of Comte,¹ or of Hegel,² or of our own. Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.

One of the most beautiful passages in the writings of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the *Confessions*, where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense. An undefinable taint of death had always clung about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biased by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire. Well! we are all *condamnés*, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve — *les hommes sont tous condamnés & mort avec des sursis indéfinis*; we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest — at least among "the children of this world" — in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding

¹ Auguste Comte (1798-1857) a French thinker whose "positive philosophy" was based on science.

² Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), a German philosopher whose idealism contrasts with Comte's positivism.

¹ "To be a philosopher is to cease to be sluggish, to become alive." Novalis was the pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg (died 1801).

that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion — that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake, has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

Sandro Botticelli

1870

This essay on the famous Italian painter of the fifteenth century (1437-1515) appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, for August, 1870. It was reprinted in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873. Botticelli had been noticed by Ruskin. This essay carried forward the appreciation which recognized the obscure Italian painter as one of the great artists of all time.

In Leonardo's treatise on painting only one contemporary is mentioned by name — Sandro Botticelli. This preeminence may be due to chance only, but to some will rather appear a result of deliberate judgment; for people have begun to find out the charm of Botticelli's work, and his name, little known in the last century, is quietly becoming important. In the middle of the fifteenth century he had already anticipated much of that meditative subtlety, which is sometimes supposed peculiar to the great imaginative workmen of its close. Leaving the simple religion which had occupied the followers of Giotto for a century, and the simple naturalism which had grown out of it, a thing of birds and flowers only, he sought inspiration in what to him were works of the modern world, the writings of Dante and Boccaccio, and in new readings of his own of classical stories: or, if he painted religious incidents, painted them with an undercurrent of original sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject. What is

the peculiar sensation, what is the peculiar quality of pleasure, which his work has the property of exciting in us, and which we cannot get elsewhere? For this, especially when he has to speak of a comparatively unknown artist, is always the chief question which a critic has to answer.

In an age when the lives of artists were full of adventure, his life is almost colorless. Criticism, indeed, has cleared away much of the gossip which Vasari¹ accumulated, has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia, and rehabilitated the character of Andrea del Castagno.³ But in Botticelli's case there is no legend to dissipate. He did not even go by his true name: Sandro is a nickname, and his true name is Filipepi, Botticelli being only the name of the goldsmith who first taught him art. Only two things happened to him, two things which he shared with other artists: — he was invited to Rome to paint in the Sistine Chapel, and he fell in later life under the influence of Savonarola,³ passing apparently almost out of men's sight in a sort of religious melancholy, which lasted till his death in 1515, according to the received date. Vasari says that he plunged into the study of Dante, and even wrote a comment on the *Divine Comedy*. But it seems strange that he should have lived on inactive so long; and one almost wishes that some document might come to light, which, fixing the date of his death earlier, might relieve one, in thinking of him, of his dejected old age.

He is before all things a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment, the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and color, the medium of abstract painting. So he becomes the illustrator of Dante. In a few rare examples of the edition of 1481, the blank spaces, left at the beginning of every canto for the hand of the illuminator, have been filled, as far as the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*, with im-

¹ Giorgio Vasari (1511-74), author of the lives of contemporary painters.

² Fra Filippo Lippi (1402-69), a Florentine painter, whose mistress, Lucrezia Buti, was the mother of Filippino Lippi. Andrea del Castagno (1390-1457) was also a Florentine artist.

³ Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98) whose preaching converted Florence for a time from its sins.

impressions of engraved plates, seemingly by
 way of experiment, for in the copy in the
 Bodleian Library, one of the three impres-
 sions it contains has been printed upside
 down, and much awry, in the midst of the
 luxurious printed page. Giotto, and the
 followers of Giotto, with their almost child-
 ish religious aim, had not learned to put that
 weight of meaning into outward things, light,
 color, everyday gesture, which the poetry of
 the *Divine Comedy* involves, and before the
 fifteenth century Dante could hardly have
 found an illustrator. Botticelli's illustra-
 tions are crowded with incident, blending,
 with a naive carelessness of pictorial prop-
 erty, three phases of the same scene into
 one plate. The grotesques, so often a
 stumbling-block to painters, who forget that
 the words of a poet, which only feebly pre-
 sent an image to the mind, must be lowered
 in key when translated into visible form,
 make one regret that he has not rather
 chosen for illustration the more subdued
 imagery of the *Purgatorio*. Yet in the scene
 of those who "go down quick into hell,"
 there is an inventive force about the fire
 taking hold on the upturned soles of the feet,
 which proves that the design is no mere
 translation of Dante's words, but a true paint-
 er's vision; while the scene of the Centaurs
 wins one at once for, forgetful of the actual
 circumstances of their appearance, Botticelli
 has gone off with delight on the thought
 of the Centaurs themselves, bright, small
 creatures of the woodland, with arch baby
 faces and mignon forms, drawing tiny bows.

Botticelli lived in a generation of natural-
 ists, and he might have been a mere natural-
 ist among them. There are traces enough in
 his work of that alert sense of outward things,
 which, in the pictures of that period, fills the
 lawns with delicate living creatures, and the
 hillsides with pools of water, and the pools
 of water with flowering reeds. But this was
 not enough for him; he is a visionary painter,
 and in his visionariness he resembles Dante.
 Giotto, the tried companion of Dante, Masac-
 cio, Ghirlandajo¹ even, do but transcribe,

with more or less refining, the outward
 image; they are dramatic, not visionary
 painters; they are almost impassive specta-
 tors of the action before them. But the
 genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps
 the data before it as the exponent of ideas,
 moods, visions of its own; in this interest
 it plays fast and loose with those data, reject-
 ing some and isolating others, and always
 combining them anew. To him, as to Dante,
 the scene, the color, the outward image or
 gesture, comes with all its incisive and im-
 portunate reality; but awakes in him, more-
 over, by some subtle law of his own structure,
 a mood which it awakes in no one else, of
 which it is the double or repetition, and which
 it clothes, that all may share it, with visible
 circumstance.

But he is far enough from accepting the
 conventional orthodoxy of Dante which,
 referring all human action to the simple
 formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves
 an insoluble element of prose in the depths of
 Dante's poetry. One picture of his, with the
 portrait of the donor, Matteo Palmieri, be-
 low, had the credit or discredit of attracting
 some shadow of ecclesiastical censure. This
 Matteo Palmieri (two dim figures move
 under that name in contemporary history)
 was the reputed author of a poem, still un-
 edited, *La Citta Divina*,¹ which represented
 the human race as an incarnation of those
 angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were
 neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies, a
 fantasy of that earlier Alexandrian philo-
 sophy about which the Florentine intellect
 in that century was so curious. Botticelli's
 picture may have been only one of those
 familiar compositions in which religious
 reverie has recorded its impressions of the
 various forms of beatified existence—*Glorias*,
 as they were called, like that in which Giotto
 painted the portrait of Dante; but somehow
 it was suspected of embodying in a picture
 the wayward dream of Palmieri, and the
 chapel where it hung was closed. Artists
 so entire as Botticelli are usually careless
 about philosophical theories, even when the
 philosopher is a Florentine of the fifteenth
 century, and his work a poem in *terza rima*.

¹ Tommaso Guidi, called Masaccio (1401-28), and
 Domenico di Tommaso, called Ghirlandajo (1449-94),
 were painters contemporary with Botticelli.

¹ The Divine City.

But Botticelli, who wrote a commentary on Dante, and became the disciple of Savonarola, may well have let such theories come and go across him. True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment with which he infuses his profane and sacred persons, comely, and in a certain sense like angels, but with a sense of displacement or loss about them — the wistfulness of exiles, conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains, which runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy.

So just what Dante scorns as unworthy alike of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts, that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals. He thus sets for himself the limits within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work. His interest is neither in the untempered goodness of Angelico's saints, nor the untempered evil of Orcagna's *Inferno*; but with men and women, in their mixed and uncertain condition, always attractive, clothed sometimes by passion with a character of loveliness and energy, but saddened perpetually by the shadow upon them of the great things from which they shrink. His morality is all sympathy; and it is this sympathy, conveying into his work somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity, which makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

It is this which gives to his Madonnas their unique expression and charm. He has worked out in them a distinct and peculiar type, definite enough in his own mind, for he has painted it over and over again, sometimes one might think almost mechanically, as a pastime during that dark period when his thoughts were so heavy upon him. Hardly any collection of note is without one of these circular pictures, into which the attendant angels depress their heads so naively. Perhaps you have sometimes wondered why those peevish-looking Madonnas, conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty,

attract you more and more, and often come back to you when the Sistine Madonna and the Virgins of Fra Angelico are forgotten. At first, contrasting them with those, you may have thought that there was something in them mean or abject even, for the abstract lines of the face have little nobleness, and the color is wan. For with Botticelli she too, though she holds in her hands the "Desire of all nations," is one of those who are neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies; and her choice is on her face. The white light on it is cast up hard and cheerless from below, as when snow lies upon the ground, and the children look up with surprise at the strange whiteness of the ceiling. Her trouble is in the very caress of the mysterious child, whose gaze is always far from her, and who has already that sweet look of devotion which men have never been able altogether to love, and which still makes the born saint an object almost of suspicion to his earthly brethren. Once, indeed, he guides her hand to transcribe in a book the words of her exaltation, the Ave, and the *Magnificat*, and the *Gaude Maria*, and the young angels, glad to rouse her for a moment from her dejection, are eager to hold the inkhorn and to support the book. But the pen almost drops from her hand, and the high cold words have no meaning for her, and her true children are those others, among whom, in her rude home, the intolerable honor came to her, with that look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces which you see in startled animals — gipsy children, such as those who, in Apennine villages, still hold out their long, brown arms to beg of you, but on Sundays become *enfants du ckaur*,¹ with their thick black hair nicely combed, and fair white linen on their sunburnt throats.

What is strangest is that he carries this sentiment into classical subjects, its most complete expression being a picture in the *Uffizi*,² of Venus rising from the sea, in which the grotesque emblems of the middle age, and a landscape full of its peculiar feeling, and even its strange draperies, powdered all

¹ choir boys.

² Literally, the offices; now a great art gallery in Florence.

¹ Andrea di Cione (1308-68) painted the frescoes depicting hell on the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa.

over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies, frame a figure that reminds you of the faultless nude studies of Ingres. At first, perhaps, you are attracted only by a quaintness of design, which seems to recall all at once whatever you have read of Florence in the fifteenth century; afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject, and that the color is cadaverous or at least cold. And yet, the more you come to understand what imaginative coloring really is, that all color is no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit, the better you will like this peculiar quality of color; and you will find that quaint design of Botticelli's a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks themselves even of the finest period. Of the Greeks as they really were, of their difference from ourselves, of the aspects of their outward life, we know far more than Botticelli, or his most learned contemporaries; but for us long familiarity has taken off the edge of the lesson, and we are hardly conscious of what we owe to the Hellenic spirit. But in pictures like this of Botticelli's you have a record of the first impression made by it on minds turned back towards it, in almost painful aspiration, from a world in which it had been ignored so long; and in the passion, the energy, the industry of realization, with which Botticelli carries out his intention, is the exact measure of the legitimate influence over the human mind of the imaginative system of which this is perhaps the central myth. The light is indeed cold — mere sunless dawn; but a later painter would have cloyed you with sunshine; and you can see the better for that quietness in the morning air each long promontory, as it slopes down to the water's edge. Men go forth to their labors until the evening; but she is awake before them, and you might think that the sorrow in her face was at the thought of the whole long day of love yet to come. An emblematical figure of the wind blows hard across the grey water, moving forward the dainty-lipped shell on which she sails, the sea "showing his teeth," as it moves, in thin

lines of foam, and sucking in, one by one, the falling roses, each severe in outline, plucked off short at the stalk, but embrowned a little, as Botticelli's flowers always are. Botticelli meant all this imagery to be altogether pleasurable; and it was partly an incompleteness of resources, inseparable from the art of that time, that subdued and chilled it. But this predilection for minor tones counts also; and what is unmistakable is the sadness with which he has conceived the goddess of pleasure, as the depositary of a great power over the lives of men.

I have said that the peculiar character of Botticelli is the result of a blending in him of a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition, its attractiveness, its investiture at rarer moments in a character of loveliness and energy, with his consciousness of the shadow upon it of the great things from which it shrinks, and that this conveys into his work somewhat more than painting usually attains of the true complexion of humanity. He paints the story of the goddess of pleasure in other episodes besides that of her birth from the sea, but never without some shadow of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers. He paints Madonnas, but they shrink from the pressure of the divine child, and plead in unmistakable undertones for a warmer, lower humanity. The same figure — tradition connects it with Simonetta, the Mistress of Giuliano de' Medici¹ — appears again as Judith,² returning home across the hill country, when the great deed is over, and the moment of revulsion come, when the olive branch in her hand is becoming a burthen; as *Justice*, sitting on a throne, but with a fixed look of self-hatred which makes the sword in her hand seem that of a suicide; and again as *Veritas*, in the allegorical picture of *Calumnia*, where one may note in passing the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus. We might trace the same sentiment through his engravings; but his share in them is

¹The brother of Lorenzo, who was killed in the conspiracy of the Pazzi, in 1478.

²Judith of Bethulia saved her city from the Assyrians by seducing their commander, Holofernes, and cutting off his head while he slept. The story is told in the book of *Judith*, in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

doubtful, and the object of this brief study has been attained, if I have defined aright the temper in which he worked.

But, after all, it may be asked, is a painter like Botticelli — a secondary painter, a proper subject for general criticism? There are a few great painters, like Michelangelo of Leonardo, whose work has become a force in general culture, partly for this very reason that they have absorbed into themselves all such workmen as Sandro Botticelli, and, over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism, general criticism may be very well employed in that sort of interpretation which adjusts the position of these men to general culture, whereas smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment. But, besides those great men, there is a certain number of artists who have a distinct faculty of their own by which they convey to us a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere; and these, too, have their place in general culture, and must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm strongly, and are often the object of a special diligence and a consideration wholly affectionate, just because there is not about them the stress of a great name and authority. Of this select number Botticelli is one. He has the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise, which belong to the earlier Renaissance itself, and make it perhaps the most interesting period in the history of the mind. In studying his work one begins to understand to how great a place in human culture the art of Italy had been called.

Wordsworth 1874

Pater's essay on Wordsworth is an excellent example of his impressionistic method of criticism that leads to the discovery of hidden beauties. It may be compared with Matthew Arnold's, and with Coleridge's treatment of the same subject. It was first published in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1874, and was later included in *Appreciations* (1889).

Some English critics at the beginning of the present century had a great deal to say con-

cerning a distinction, of much importance, as they thought, in the true estimate of poetry, between the *Fancy*, and another more powerful faculty — the *Imagination*. This metaphysical distinction, borrowed originally from the writings of German philosophers, and perhaps not always clearly apprehended by those who talked of it, involved a far deeper and more vital distinction, with which indeed all true criticism more or less directly has to do, the distinction, namely, between higher and lower degrees of intensity in the poet's perception of his subject, and in his concentration of himself upon his work. Of those who dwelt upon the metaphysical distinction between the *Fancy* and the *Imagination*, it was Wordsworth who made the most of it, assuming it as the basis for the final classification of his poetical writings; and it is in these writings that the deeper and more vital distinction, which, as I have said, underlies the metaphysical distinction, is most needed, and may best be illustrated.

For nowhere is there so perplexed a mixture as in Wordsworth's own poetry, of work touched with intense and individual power, with work of almost no character at all. He has much conventional sentiment, and some of that insincere poetic diction, against which his most serious critical efforts were directed: the reaction in his political ideas, consequent on the excesses of 1795,^{xm} makes him, at times, a mere declaimer on moral and social topics; and he seems, sometimes, to force an unwilling pen, and write by rule. By making the most of these blemishes it is possible to obscure the true aesthetic value of his work, just as his life also, a life of much quiet delicacy and independence, might easily be placed in a false focus, and made to appear a somewhat tame theme in illustration of the more obvious parochial virtues. And those who wish to understand his influence, and experience his peculiar savor, must bear with patience the presence of an alien element in Wordsworth's work, which never coalesced with what is really delightful in it, nor underwent his special power. Who that values his writings most has not felt the intrusion there, from

⁵⁰ 'The Reien of Terror in France, for which 1794 is the correct date.

time to time, of something tedious and prosaic? Of all poets equally great, he would gain most by a skillfully made anthology. Such a selection would show, in truth, not so much what he was, or to himself or others seemed to be, as what, by the more energetic and fertile quality in his writings, he was ever tending to become. And the mixture in his work, as it actually stands, is so perplexed that one fears to miss the least promising composition even, lest some precious morsel should be lying hidden within — the few perfect lines, the phrase, the single word perhaps, to which he often works up mechanically through a poem, almost the whole of which may be tame enough. He who thought that in all creative work the larger part was given passively, to the recipient mind, who waited so dutifully upon the gift, to whom so large a measure was sometimes given, had his times also of desertion and relapse; and he has permitted the impress of these too to remain in his work. And this duality there — the fitfulness with which the higher qualities manifest themselves in it, gives the effect in his poetry of a power not altogether his own, or under his control, which comes and goes when it will, lifting or lowering a matter, poor in itself; so that that old fancy which made the poet's art an enthusiasm, a form of divine possession, seems almost literally true of him.

This constant suggestion of an absolute duality between higher and lower moods, and the work done in them, stimulating one always to look below the surface, makes the reading of Wordsworth an excellent sort of training toward the things of art and poetry. It begets in those who, coming across him in youth, can bear him at all, a habit of reading between the lines, a faith in the effect of concentration and collectedness of mind in the fight appreciation of poetry, an expectation of things, in this order, coming to one by means of a right discipline of the temper as well as of the intellect. He meets us with the promise that he has much, and something very peculiar, to give us, if we will follow a certain difficult way, and seems to have the secret of a special and privileged state of mind. And those who have undergone his

influence, and followed this difficult way, are like people who have passed through some initiation, a *ttisciplina arcani*,¹ by submitting to which they become able constantly to distinguish in art, speech, feeling, manners, that which is organic, animated, expressive, from that which is only conventional, derivative, inexpressive.

But although the necessity of selecting these precious morsels for oneself is an opportunity for the exercise of Wordsworth's peculiar influence, and induces a kind of just criticism and true estimate of it, yet the purely literary product would have been more excellent, had the writer himself purged away that alien element. How perfect would have been the little treasury, shut between the covers of how thin a book! Let us suppose the desired separation made, the electric thread untwined, the golden pieces, great and small, lying apart together.² What are the peculiarities of this residue? What special sense does Wordsworth exercise, and what instincts does he satisfy? What are the subjects and the motives which in him excite the imaginative faculty? What are the qualities in things and persons which he values, the impression and sense of which he can convey to others, in an extraordinary way?

An intimate consciousness of the expression of natural things, which weighs, listens, penetrates, where the earlier mind passed roughly by, is a large element in the complexion of modern poetry. It has been remarked as a fact in mental history again and again. It reveals itself in many forms; but is strongest and most attractive in what is strongest and most attractive in modern literature. It is exemplified, almost equally, by writers as unlike each other as Senancour³ and Theophile Gautier;⁴ as a singular chapter in the history of the human mind, its growth might be traced from Rousseau to Chateaubriand, from

¹ discipline in mysteries.

² Since this essay was written, such selections have been made, with excellent taste, by Matthew Arnold and Professor Knight. (Pater.)

³ Fitiienne Pivert de Senancour (1770-1846), a French mystic, author of *Obermann*.

⁴ Theophile Gautier (1811-72), a French romantic novelist, poet, and critic, author of *Mademoiselle de Maupin*.

Chateaubriand to Victor Hugo: it has doubtless some latent connection with those pantheistic theories which locate an intelligent soul in material things, and have largely exercised men's minds in some modern systems of philosophy: it is traceable even in the graver writings of historians: it makes as much difference between ancient and modern landscape art, as there is between the rough masks of an early mosaic and a portrait by Reynolds or Gainsborough. Of this new sense, the writings of Wordsworth are the central and elementary expression: he is more simply and entirely occupied with it than any other poet, though there are fine expressions of precisely the same thing in so different a poet as Shelley. There was in his own character a certain contentment, a sort of inborn religious placidity, seldom found united with a sensibility so mobile as his, which was favorable to the quiet, habitual observation of inanimate, or imperfectly animate, existence. His life of eighty years is divided by no very profoundly felt incidents: its changes are almost wholly inward, and it falls into broad, untroubled, perhaps somewhat monotonous spaces. What it most resembles is the life of one of those early Italian or Flemish painters, who, just because their minds were full of heavenly visions, passed, some of them, the better part of sixty years in quiet, systematic industry. This placid life matured a quite unusual sensibility, really innate in him, to the sights and sounds of the natural world — the flower and its shadow on the stone, the cuckoo and its echo. The poem of *Resolution and Independence* is a storehouse of such records: for its fullness of imagery it may be compared to Keats's *Saint Agnes' Eve*. To read one of his longer pastoral poems for the first time, is like a day spent in a new country: the memory is crowded for a while with its precise and vivid incidents —

The pliant harebell swinging in the breeze
On some gray rock; —
The single sheep and the one blasted tree
And the bleak music from that old stone wall; —
In the meadows and the lower ground
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn; —
And that green corn all day is rustling in thine ears.

Clear and delicate at once, as he is in the outlining of visible imagery, he is more clear and delicate still, and finely scrupulous, in the noting of sounds; so that he conceives of noble sound as even moulding the human countenance to nobler types, and as something actually "profaned" by color, by visible form, or image. He has a power likewise of realizing, and conveying to the consciousness of the reader, abstract and elementary impressions — silence, darkness, absolute motionlessness: or, again, the whole complex sentiment of a particular place, the abstract expression of desolation in the long white road, of peacefulness in a particular folding of the hills. In the airy building of the brain, a special day or hour even, comes to have for him a sort of personal identity, a spirit or angel given to it, by which, for its exceptional insight, or the happy light upon it, it has a presence in one's history, and acts there, as a separate power or accomplishment, and he has celebrated in many of his poems the "efficacious spirit," which, as he says, resides in these "particular spots" of time.

It is to such a world, and to a world of congruous meditation thereon, that we see him retiring in his but lately published poem of *The Recluse* — taking leave, without much count of costs, of the world of business, of action and ambition, as also of all that for the majority of mankind counts as sensuous enjoyment.

And so it came about that this sense of a life in natural objects, which in most poetry is but a rhetorical artifice, is with Wordsworth the assertion of what for him is almost literal fact. To him every natural object seemed to possess more or less of a moral or spiritual life, to be capable of a companionship with man, full of expression, of inexplicable affinities and delicacies of intercourse. An emanation, a particular spirit, belonged, not to the moving leaves or water only, but to the distant peak of the hills arising suddenly, by some change of perspective, above the nearer horizon, to the passing space of light across the plain, to the lichen-druoidic stone even, for a certain weird fellowship in it with the moods of men. It was like a "survival," in the peculiar intellectual tern-

perament of a man of letters at the end of the eighteenth century, of that primitive condition, which some philosophers have traced in the general history of human culture, wherein all outward objects alike, including even the works of men's hands, were believed to be endowed with animation, and the world was "full of souls" — that mood in which the old Greek gods were first begotten, and which had many strange after-growths.

In the early ages, this belief, delightful as its effects on poetry often are, was but the result of a crude intelligence. But, in Wordsworth, such power of seeing life, such perception of a soul, in inanimate things, came of an exceptional susceptibility to the impressions of eye and ear, and was, in its essence, a kind of sensuousness. At least, it is only in a temperament exceptionally susceptible on the sensuous side, that this sense of the expressiveness of outward things comes to be so large a part of life. That he awakened "a sort of thought in sense," is Shelley's just estimate of this element in Wordsworth's poetry.

And it was through nature, thus ennobled by a semblance of passion and thought, that he approached the spectacle of human life. Human life, indeed, is, for him, at first, only an additional, accidental grace on an expressive landscape. When he thought of man, it was of man as in the presence and under the influence of these effective natural objects, and linked to them by many associations. The close connection of man with natural objects, the habitual association of his thoughts and feelings with a particular spot of earth, has sometimes seemed to degrade those who are subject to its influence, as if it did but reinforce that physical connection of our nature with the actual lime and clay of the soil, which is always drawing us nearer to our end. But for Wordsworth, these influences tended to the dignity of human nature, because they tended to tranquilize it. By raising nature to the level of human thought he gives it power and expression: he subdues man to the level of nature, and gives him thereby a certain breadth and coolness and solemnity. The leech-gatherer on the

moor, the woman "stepping westward," are for him natural objects, almost in the same sense as the aged thorn, or the hchened rock on the heath. In this sense the leader of the "Lake School," in spite of an earnest pre-occupation with man, his thoughts, his destiny, is the poet of nature. And of nature, after all, in its modesty. The English lake country has, of course, its grandeurs. But the peculiar function of Wordsworth's genius, as carrying in it a power to open out the soul of apparently little or familiar things, would have found its true test had he become the poet of Surrey, say! and the prophet of its life. The glories of Italy and Switzerland, though he did write a little about them, had too potent a material life of their own to serve greatly his poetic purpose.

Religious sentiment, consecrating the affections and natural regrets of the human heart, above all, that pitiful awe and care for the perishing human clay, of which relic-worship is but the corruption, has always had much to do with localities, with the thoughts which attach themselves to actual scenes and places. Now what is true of it everywhere, is truest of it in those secluded valleys where one generation after another maintains the same abiding-place; and it was on this side, that Wordsworth apprehended religion most strongly. Consisting, as it did so much, in the recognition of local sanctities, in the habit of connecting the stones and trees of a particular spot of earth with the great events of life, till the low walls, the green mounds, the half-obliterated epitaphs seemed full of voices, and a sort of natural oracles, the very religion of these people of the dales appeared but as another link between them and the earth, and was literally a religion of nature. It tranquilized them by bringing them under the placid rule of traditional and narrowly localized observances. "Grave livers," they seemed to him, under this aspect, with stately speech, and something of that natural dignity of manners, which underlies the highest courtesy.

And, seeing man thus as a part of nature, elevated and solemnized in proportion as his daily life and occupations brought him into companionship with permanent natural ob-

jects, his very religion forming new links for him with the narrow limits of the valley, the low vaults of his church, the rough stones of his home, made intense for him now with profound sentiment, Wordsworth was able to appreciate passion in the lowly. He chooses to depict people from humble life, because, being nearer to nature than others, they are on the whole more impassioned, certainly more direct in their expression of passion, than other men: it is for this direct expression of passion, that he values their humble words. In much that he said in exaltation of rural life, he was but pleading indirectly for that sincerity, that perfect fidelity to one's own inward presentations, to the precise features of the picture within, without which any profound poetry is impossible. It was not for their tameness, but for this passionate sincerity, that he chose incidents and situations from common life, "related in a selection of language really used by men." He constantly endeavors to bring his language near to the real language of men: to the real language of men, however, not on the dead level of their ordinary intercourse, but in select moments of vivid sensation, when this language is winnowed and ennobled by excitement. There are poets who have chosen rural life as their subject, for the sake of its passionless repose, and times when Wordsworth himself extols the mere calm and dispassionate survey of things as the highest aim of poetical culture. But it was not for such passionless calm that he preferred the scenes of pastoral life; and the meditative poet, sheltering himself, as it might seem, from the agitations of the outward world, is in reality only clearing the scene for the great exhibitions of emotion, and what he values most is the almost elementary expression of elementary feelings.

And so he has much for those who value highly the concentrated presentment of passion, who appraise men and women by their susceptibility to it, and art and poetry as they afford the spectacle of it. Breaking from time to time into the pensive spectacle of their daily toil, their occupations near to nature, come those great elementary feelings, lifting and solemnizing their language and giving it a natural music. The great, dis-

tinguishing passion came to Michael by the sheepfold, to Ruth by the wayside, adding these humble children of the furrow to the true aristocracy of passionate souls. In this respect, Wordsworth's work resembles most that of George Sand, in those of her novels which depict country life. With a penetrative pathos, which puts him in the same rank with the masters of the sentiment of pity in literature, with Meinhold¹ and Victor Hugo, he collects all the traces of vivid excitement which were to be found in that pastoral world — the girl who rung her father's knell; the unborn infant feeling about its mother's heart; the instinctive touches of children; the sorrows of the wild creatures, even — their homesickness, their strange yearnings; the tales of passionate regret that hang by a ruined farm-building, a heap of stones, a deserted sheepfold; that gay, false, adventurous, outer world, which breaks in from time to time to bewilder and deflower these quiet homes; not "passionate sorrow" only, for the overthrow of the soul's beauty, but the loss of, or carelessness for personal beauty even, in those whom men have wronged — their pathetic wanness; the sailor "who, in his heart, was half a shepherd on the stormy seas"; the wild woman teaching her child to pray for her betrayer; incidents like the making of the shepherd's staff, or that of the young boy laying the first stone of the sheepfold; — all the pathetic episodes of their humble existence, their longing, their wonder at fortune, their poor pathetic pleasures, like the pleasures of children, won so hardly in the struggle for bare existence; their yearning toward each other, in their darkened houses, or at their early toil. A sort of biblical depth and solemnity hangs over this strange, new, passionate, pastoral world, of which he first raised the image, and the reflection of which some of our best modern fiction has caught from him.

He pondered much over the philosophy of his poetry, and reading deeply in the history of his own mind, seems at times to have passed the borders of a world of strange

¹Jean-Guillaume Meinhold (1797-1857), a German novelist and poet.

speculations, inconsistent enough, had he cared to note such inconsistencies, with those traditional beliefs, which were otherwise the object of his devout acceptance. Thinking of the high value he set upon customariness, upon all that is habitual, local, rooted in the ground, in matters of religious sentiment, you might sometimes regard him as one tethered down to a world, refined and peaceful indeed, but with no broad outlook, a world protected, but somewhat narrowed, by the influence of received ideas. But he is at times also something very different from this, and something much bolder. A chance expression is overheard and placed in a new connection, the sudden memory of a thing long past occurs to him, a distant object is relieved for a while by a random gleam of light — accidents turning up for a moment what lies below the surface of our immediate experience — and he passes from the humble graves and lowly arches of "the little rock-like pile" of a Westmoreland church, on bold trains of speculative thought, and comes, from point to point, into strange contact with thoughts which have visited, from time to time, far more venturesome, perhaps errant, spirits.

He had pondered deeply, for instance, on those strange reminiscences and forebodings which seem to make our lives stretch before and behind us, beyond where we can see or touch anything, or trace the lines of connection. Following the soul, backwards and forwards, on these endless ways, his sense of man's dim, potential powers became a pledge to him, indeed, of a future life, but carried him back also to that mysterious notion of an earlier state of existence — the fancy of the Platonists — the old heresy of Origen. It was in this mood that he conceived those oft-reiterated regrets for a half-ideal childhood, when the relics of Paradise still clung about the soul — a childhood, as it seemed, full of the fruits of old age, lost for all, in a degree, in the passing away of the youth of the world, lost for each one, over again, in the passing away of actual youth. It is this ideal childhood which he celebrates in his famous *Ode on the Recollections of Childhood*, and some other poems which may be grouped

around it, such as the lines on *Tintern Abbey*, and something like what he describes was actually truer of himself than he seems to have understood; for his own most delightful poems were really the instinctive productions of earlier life, and most surely for him, "the first diviner influence of this world" passed away, more and more completely, in his contact with experience.

Sometimes as he dwelt upon those moments of profound, imaginative power, in which the outward object appears to take color and expression, a new nature almost, from the prompting of the observant mind, the actual world would, as it were, dissolve and detach itself, flake by flake, and he himself seemed to be the creator, and when he would the destroyer, of the world in which he lived — that old isolating thought of many a brain-sick mystic of ancient and modern times.

At other times, again, in those periods of intense susceptibility, in which he appeared to himself as but the passive recipient of external influences, he was attracted by the thought of a spirit of life in outward things, a single, all-pervading mind in them, of which man, and even the poet's imaginative energy, are but moments — that old dream of the *antma mundi*? the mother of all things and their grave, in which some had desired to lose themselves, and others had become indifferent to the distinctions of good and evil. It would come, sometimes, like the sign of the *macrocosm*¹ to Faust in his cell: the network of man and nature was seen to be pervaded by a common, universal life: a new, bold thought lifted him above the furrow, above the green turf of the Westmoreland churchyard, to a world altogether different in its vagueness and vastness, and the narrow glen was full of the brooding power of one universal spirit.

And so he has something, also, for those who feel the fascination of bold speculative ideas, who are really capable of rising upon them to conditions of poetical thought. He uses them, indeed, always with a very fine apprehension of the limits within which alone philosophical imaginings have any place in true poetry; and using them only for poetical

¹ soul of the world. ² the universe.

purposes, is not too careful even to make them consistent with each other. To him, theories which for other men bring a world of technical diction, brought perfect form and expression, as in those two lofty books of the *Prelude*, which describe the decay and the restoration of Imagination and Taste. Skirting the borders of this world of bewildering heights and depths, he got but the first exciting influence of it, that joyful enthusiasm which great imaginative theories prompt, when the mind first comes to have an understanding of them, and it is not under the influence of these thoughts that his poetry becomes tedious or loses its blitheness. He keeps them, too, always within certain ethical bounds, so that no word of his could offend the simplest of those simple souls which are always the largest portion of mankind. But it is, nevertheless, the contact of these thoughts, the speculative boldness in them, which constitutes, at least for some minds, the secret attraction of much of his best poetry — the sudden passage from lowly thoughts and places to the majestic forms of philosophical imagination, the play of these forms over a world so different, enlarging so strangely the bounds of its humble churchyards, and breaking such a wild light on the graves of christened children.

And these moods always brought with them faultless expression. In regard to expression, as with feeling and thought, the duality of the higher and lower moods was absolute. It belonged to the higher, the imaginative mood, and was the pledge of its reality, to bring the appropriate language with it. In him, when the really poetical motive worked at all, it united, with absolute justice, the word and the idea; each, in the imaginative flame, becoming inseparably one with the other, by that fusion of matter and form which is the characteristic of the highest poetical expression. His words are themselves thought and feeling; not eloquent, or musical words merely, but that sort of creative language which carries the reality of what it depicts, directly, to the consciousness.

The music of mere meter performs but a limited, yet a very peculiar and subtly as-

certained function, in Wordsworth's poetry. With him, meter is but an additional grace, accessory to that deeper music of words and sounds, that moving power, which they exercise in the nobler prose no less than in formal poetry. It is a sedative to that excitement, an excitement sometimes almost painful, under which the language, alike of poetry and prose, attains a rhythmical power, independent of metrical combination, and dependent rather on some subtle adjustment of the elementary sounds of words themselves to the image or feeling they convey. Yet some of his pieces, pieces prompted by a sort of half-playful mysticism, like the *Daffodils* and *The Two April Mornings*, are distinguished by a certain quaint gaiety of meter, and rival by their perfect execution, in this respect, similar pieces among our own Elizabethan, or contemporary French poetry. And those who take up these poems after an interval of months, or years perhaps, may be surprised at finding how well old favorites wear, how their strange, inventive turns of diction or thought still send through them the old feeling of surprise. Those who lived about Wordsworth were all great lovers of the older English literature, and oftentimes there came out in him a noticeable likeness to our earlier poets. He quotes unconsciously, but with new power of meaning, a clause from one of Shakespeare's sonnets; and, as with some other men's most famous work, the *Ode on the Recollections of Childhood* had its anticipator.¹ He drew something too from the unconscious mysticism of the old English language itself, drawing out the inward significance of its racy idiom, and the not wholly unconscious poetry of the language used by the simplest people under strong excitement — language, therefore, at its origin.

The office of the poet is not that of the moralist, and the first aim of Wordsworth's poetry is to give the reader a peculiar kind of pleasure. But through his poetry, and through this pleasure in it, he does actually convey to the reader an extraordinary wisdom in the things of practice. One lesson, if men

¹ Henry Vaughan, in *The Retreat*. (Pater.) The poem appears on page 434 of Volume I.

must have lessons, he conveys more clearly than all, the supreme importance of contemplation in the conduct of life.

Contemplation — impassioned contemplation — that, is with Wordsworth the end-in-itself, the perfect end. We see the majority of mankind going most often to definite ends, lower or higher ends, as their own instincts may determine; but the end may never be attained, and the means not be quite the right means, great ends and little ones alike being, for the most part, distant, and the ways to them, in this dim world, somewhat vague. Meantime, to higher or lower ends, they move too often with something of a sad countenance, with hurried and ignoble gait, becoming, unconsciously, something like thorns, in their anxiety to bear grapes; it being possible for people, in the pursuit of even great ends, to become themselves thin and impoverished in spirit and temper, thus diminishing the sum of perfection in the world, at its very sources. We understand this when it is a question of mean, or of intensely selfish ends — of Grandet, or Javert.¹ We think it bad morality to say that the end justifies the means, and we know how false to all higher conceptions of the religious life is the type of one who is ready to do evil that good may come. We contrast with such dark, mistaken eagerness, a type like that of Saint Catherine of Siena, who made the means to her ends so attractive, that she has won for herself an undying place in the *House Beautiful*, not by her rectitude of soul only, but by its "fairness" — by those quite different qualities which commend themselves to the poet and the artist.

Yet, for most of us, the conception of means and ends covers the whole of life, and is the exclusive type or figure under which we represent our lives to ourselves. Such a figure, reducing all things to machinery, though it has on its side the authority of that old Greek moralist² who has fixed for succeeding generations the outline of the theory of right living, is too like a mere picture or description of men's lives as we actually find

them, to be the basis of the higher ethics. It covers the meanness of men's daily lives, and much of the dexterity and the vigor with which they pursue what may seem to them the good of themselves or of others; but not the intangible perfection of those whose ideal is rather in *being* than in *doing* — not those *manners* which are, in the deepest as in the simplest sense, *morals*, and without which one cannot so much as offer a cup of water to a poor man without offense — not the part of "antique Rachel," sitting in the company of Beatrice;³ and even the moralist might well endeavor rather to withdraw men from the too exclusive consideration of means and ends, in life.

Against this predominance of machinery in our existence, Wordsworth's poetry, like all great art and poetry, is a continual protest. Justify rather the end by the means, it seems to say: whatever may become of the fruit, make sure of the flowers and the leaves. It was justly said, therefore, by one who had meditated very profoundly on the true relation of means to ends in life, and on the distinction between what is desirable in itself and what is desirable only as machinery, that when the battle which he and his friends were waging had been won, the world would need more than ever those qualities which Wordsworth was keeping alive and nourishing.³

That the end of life is not action but contemplation — *being* as distinct from *doing* — a certain disposition of the mind: is, in some shape or other, the principle of all the higher morality. In poetry, in art, if you enter into their true spirit at all, you touch this principle, in a measure: these, by their very sterility, are a type of beholding for the mere joy of beholding. To treat life in the spirit of art, is to make life a thing in which means and ends are identified: to encourage such treatment, the true moral significance of art and poetry. Wordsworth, and other poets who have been like him in ancient or more recent times, are the masters, the experts, in

¹ Characters in Balzac's *Eugenie Grandet* and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.
² Aristotle.

¹ See Dante, *Purgatorio*, xxvii.

³ See an interesting paper, by Mr. John Morley, on "The Death of Mr. Mill," *Fortnightly Review*, June, 1873. (Pater.)

this art of impassioned contemplation. Their work is, not to teach lessons, or enforce rules, or even to stimulate us to noble ends; but to withdraw the thoughts for a little while from the mere machinery of life, to fix them, with appropriate emotions, on the spectacle of those great facts in man's existence which no machinery affects, "on the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature" — on "the operations of the elements and the appearances of the visible universe, on storm and sunshine, on the revolutions of the seasons, on cold and heat, on loss of friends and kindred, on injuries and resentments, on gratitude and hope, on fear and sorrow." To witness this spectacle with appropriate emotions is the aim of all culture; and of these emotions poetry like Wordsworth's is a great nourisher and stimulant. He sees nature full of sentiment and excitement; he sees men and women as parts of nature, passionate, excited, in strange grouping and connection with the grandeur and beauty of the natural world: — images, in his own words, "of man suffering, amid awful forms and powers."

Such is the figure of the more powerful and original poet, hidden away, in part, under those weaker elements in Wordsworth's poetry, which for some minds determine their entire character; a poet somewhat bolder and more passionate than might at first sight be supposed, but not too bold for true poetical taste; an unimpassioned writer, you might sometimes fancy, yet thinking the chief aim, in life and art alike, to be a certain deep emotion; seeking most often the great elementary passions in lowly places; having at least this condition of all impassioned work, that he aims always at an absolute sincerity of feeling and diction, so that he is the true forerunner of the deepest and most passionate poetry of our own day; yet going back also, with something of a protest against the conventional fervor of much of the poetry popular in his own time, to those older English poets, whose unconscious likeness often comes out in him.

The Child in the House 1878

Published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, August, 1878, with the words "Imaginary Portrait" prefixed to the title. The sketch is generally assumed to be to some extent spiritually, though by no means literally, autobiographical.

As Florian Dealeal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighborhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit — in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favorable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualized house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there — of which,

indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture — half, tint and trace and accident of homely color and form, from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives), really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates — descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms — might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there — the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight — an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures,

glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of colored silks, among its lumber — a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighboring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness of special fineness in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in some degree, we see inwardly; and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the roadside, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumors of the town, among high garden-walls, bright all summer-time with golden-rod and brown-and-golden wall-flower — *flos parietis*, as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was used in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighboring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darkneses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells — a citadel of peace in

the heart of the trouble — all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognized imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the bird-cage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like ram; while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us, with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the rock for ever," giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. The realities and passions, the rumors of the greater world without, steal in upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities, the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences — our various experiences of the coming and going of bodily pain, for instance — belong

to this or the other well-remembered place in the material habitation — that little white room with the window across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind, with just that particular catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it, on gusty mornings; and the early habitation thus gradually becomes a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents — the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow — become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Flonan, what all this had determined was a peculiarly strong sense of home — so forcible a motive with all of us — prompting to us our customary love of the earth, and the larger part of our fear of death, that revulsion we have from it, as from something strange, untried, unfriendly; though life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and final banishment from home is a thing bitterer still, the looking forward to but a short space, a mere childish *& o fter* and dessert of it, before the end, being so great a resource of effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in lack of that, some power of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least — dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents like those I have been speaking of so mechanically determine it; its essence being indeed the early familiar, as constituting our ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security. Out of so many possible conditions, just this for you and that for me, brings ever the unmistakable realization of the delightful *che sot*;² this for the Englishman, for me and you, with the closely drawn white curtain and the shaded lamp; that, quite other, for the wandering Arab, who folds his tent every morning, and makes his sleeping-place among haunted ruins or in old tombs.

With Flonan then the sense of home became singularly intense, his good fortune being that the special character of his home was in

¹ lunch. ² being at home.

itself so essentially homelike. As after many wanderings I have come to fancy that some parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen, the true landscape, true home-counties, by right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in the yellow of the sand below their gorse-bushes, and of a certain gray-blue mist after rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther south; so I think that the sort of house I have described, with precisely those proportions of red-brick and green, and with a just perceptible monotony in the subdued order of it, for its distinguishing note, is for Englishmen at least typically homelike. And so for Florian that general human instinct was reinforced by this special home-likeness in the place his wandering soul had happened to light on, as, in the second degree, its body and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony between his soul and its physical environment became, for a time at least, like perfectly played music, and the life led there singularly tranquil and filled with a curious sense of self-possession. The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place, came to count for much in the generation and correcting of his thoughts, and afterwards as a salutary principle of restraint in all his wanderings of spirit. The wistful yearning towards home, in absence from it, as the shadows of evening deepened, and he followed in thought what was doing there from hour to hour, interpreted to him much of a yearning and regret he experienced afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the larger world without, as at windows left ajar unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the

sentiments of beauty and pain — recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them — and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him — the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright color and choice form — the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang, — marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, "the lust of the eye," as the Preacher says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people's surprise, real tears, once, of relief from long-strung, childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow's feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumor of its breezes, with the glossy black-birds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the color in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions of his recognition of the element of pain in things — incidents, now and again, which seemed suddenly to awake in him the whole force of that sentiment which Goethe has called the *Weltschmerz*,¹ and in which the concentrated sorrow of the world seemed suddenly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay in

¹ world-pain.

an old book-case, of which he cared to remember one picture — a woman sitting, with hands bound behind her, the dress, the cap, the hair, folded with a simplicity which touched him strangely, as if not by her own hands, but with some ambiguous care at the hands of others — Queen Marie Antoinette, on her way to execution — we all remember David's drawing, meant merely to make her ridiculous. The face that had been so high had learned to be mute and resistless; but out of its very resistlessness seemed now to call on men to have pity, and forbear; and he took note of that, as he closed the book, as a thing to look at again, if he should at any time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again, he would never quite forget the appeal in the small sister's face, in the garden under the lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on her sleeve. He could trace back to the look then noted a certain mercy he conceived always for people in fear, even of little things, which seemed to make him, though but for a moment, capable of almost any sacrifice of himself. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed, who had had their sorrows, lived about him; and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there are those who pass their days, as a matter of course, in a sort of "going quietly." Most poignantly of all he could recall, in unfading minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair, sounding bitterly through the house, and struck into his soul for ever, of an aged woman, his father's sister, come now to announce his death in distant India; how it seemed to make the aged woman like a child again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the little sorrows of the dumb animals too — of the white angora, with a dark tail like an ermine's, and a face like a flower, who fell into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism, and came to have a hundred different expressions of voice — how it grew worse and worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning of pain, the little soul flickered away from the body, quite worn to

death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse, — that he too was become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's-nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon — a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers — flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fit* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams at night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open rudely in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards, summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to

him absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old cabinet. Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him: and the longing for some undivind, entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his house of thought. There were times when he could think of the necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favor of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our

human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly he came more and more to be unable to care for or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in any wise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them; but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable clear light in the new morning, through which sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling — the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer work-day, with the school-books opened earlier and later; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it — and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow

crab-apples left in the cool, old parlor, he remembered it the more, and how the colors struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflections; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it — how it had then been with him — puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burnt his hand badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remembered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing — a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards, there would come another sort of curious questioning how the last impressions of eye and ear might happen to him, how they would find him — the scent of the last flower, the soft yellowness of the last morning, the last recognition of some object of affection, hand or voice, it could not be but that the latest look of the eyes, before their final closing, would be strangely vivid, one would go with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of the wistful bystander, impressed how deeply on one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail retiring of all things, great or little, away from one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical beauty mingled itself early the fear of death — the fear of death intensified by the desire of beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed upon dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at the Morgue in Paris, or in that fair cemetery at Munich, where all the dead must go and lie in state before burial, behind glass windows, among the flowers and incense and holy candles — the aged clergy with their sacred ornaments, the young men in their dancing-shoes and spotless white linen — after which visits, those waxen, resistless faces would always live with him for many days, making the broadest sunshine sickly. The child had heard indeed of the death of his father, and

how, in the Indian station, a fever had taken him, so that though not in action he had yet died as a soldier; and hearing of the "resurrection of the just," he would think of him as still abroad in the world, somehow, for his protection — a grand though perhaps rather terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's things, like the figure in the picture of Joshua's Vision in the Bible — and of that round which the mourners moved so softly, and afterwards with such solemn singing, as but a worn-out garment left at a deserted lodging. So it was, until on a summer day he walked with his mother through a fair churchyard. In a bright dress he rambled among the graves, in the gay weather, and so came, in one corner, upon an open grave for a child — a dark space on the brilliant grass — the black mould heaped up round it, weighing down the little jeweled branches of the dwarf rosebushes in flower. And therewith came, full-grown, never wholly to leave him, with the certainty that even children do sometimes die, the physical horror of death, with its wholly selfish recoil from the association of lower forms of life, and the suffocating weight above. No benign, grave figure in beautiful soldier's things any longer abroad in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great goodwill towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning — an odd, irreconcilable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain

presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves — the *revenants* — pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the somber questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing clement in life. To Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that system of biblical ideas in which he had been brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope," a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things, the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early preoccupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and founts of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something

he desired to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment, sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained — a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intense and more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage, youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking — a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction — a complementary strain or burden,¹ applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realize and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts. Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree, mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life bor-

¹ bass under-part.

rowed a sacred color and significance; the very colors of things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle, full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility — the desire of physical beauty — a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music — these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left his home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come, had been a little careless about others even, in his strong desire for it — when Lewis fell sick, for instance, and they must wait still two days longer. At last the morning came, very fine, and all things — the very pavement with its dust, at

the roadside — seemed to have a white, pearl-like luster in them. They were to travel by a favorite road on which he had often walked a certain distance, and on one of those two prisoner days, when Lewis was sick, had walked farther than ever before, in his great desire to reach the new place. They had started and gone a little way when a pet bird was found to have been left behind, and must even now — so it presented itself to him — have already all the appealing fierceness and wild self-pity at heart of one left by others to perish of hunger in a closed house; and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardly less stormy distress. But as he passed in search of it from room to room, lying so pale, with a look of meekness in their denudation, and at last through that little stripped white room, the aspect of the place touched him like the face of one dead; and a clinging back towards it came over him, so intense that he knew it would last long, and spoiling all his pleasure in the realization of a thing so eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bird found, but himself in an agony of homesickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into the rural distance, so fondly speculated on, of that favorite country road.

William Ernest Henley • 1849-1903

In a short, heroic life, fighting physical disabilities, Henley made a distinguished name for himself as editor, critic, and poet. He and his close friend and collaborator, R. L. Stevenson, represent best the stoical poets of the closing decades of the century. His *Hospital Sketches* (1873-75), written in Edinburgh Infirmary (where Henley's remaining leg was amputated, in an attempt to check his tuberculosis, by the father of antiseptic surgery, Joseph Lister), stand out among his striking achievements.

Henley was discerning and progressive. He was one of the first to recognize the ability of Whistler, the American painter, and of Rodin, the French sculptor, both of whom were considered revolutionary in their art and their ideas. In his poems he used subjects often shunned as being painful, and made them beautiful in ordinary language, using "free verse," long before it became a vogue. In everything that Henley did rang the note that life, necessarily hard at times, was nevertheless worth living, and that it could be lived with gusto by anyone who showed courage.

For his life, see L. C. Cornford (1913). See also Francis Thompson's essay.

FROM In Hospital

i

Enter Patient

The morning mists still haunt the stony street;

The northern summer air is shrill and cold;
And lo, the Hospital, gray, quiet, old,
Where Life and Death like friendly chafFersers meet.

Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom 5

A small, strange child — so aged yet so young! -

Her little arm besplinted and beslung,
Precedes me gravely to the waiting-room.
I limp behind, my confidence all gone.

The gray-haired soldier-porter waves me on, 10

And on I crawl, and still my spirits fail:

A tragic meanness seems so to environ
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,
Cold, naked, clean — half-workhouse and half-gaol.

2.

Waiting

A square, squat room (a cellar on promotion),

Drab to the soul, drab to the very daylight;

Plasters astray in unnatural-looking tin-ware;

Scissors and lint and apothecary's jars.

Here, on a bench a skeleton would writhe from, 5

Angry and sore, I wait to be admitted:

Wait till my heart is lead upon my stomach,
While at their ease two dressers do their chores.

One has a probe — it feels to me a crow-bar.

A small boy sniffs and shudders after bluestone.¹ 10

A poor old tramp explains his poor old ulcers.

Life is (I think) a blunder and a shame.

¹ Blue vitriol, sometimes used as a vomiting agent.

4

Before

Behold me waiting — waiting for the knife.

A little while, and at a leap I storm

The thick, sweet mystery of chloroform,
The drunken dark, the little death-m-hfe.

The gods are good to me: I have no wife, 5

No innocent child, to think of as I near

The fateful minute; nothing ail-too dear

Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.

Yet I am tremulous and a trifle sick,

And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little: 10

My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.

Here comes the basket? Thank you. I am ready.

But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:

You carry Ciesar and his fortunes — steady!

23

Music

Down the quiet eve,

Thro' my window with the sunset

Pipes to me a distant organ

Foolish ditties,

And, as when you change 5

Pictures in a magic lantern,

Books, beds, bottles, floors, and ceiling

Fade and vanish,

And I'm well once more...

August flares adust and torrid. 10

But my heart is full of April

Sap and sweetness.

In the quiet eve

I am loitering, longing, dreaming...

Dreaming, and a distant organ 15

Pipes me ditties.

I can see the shop,

I can smell the sprinkled pavement,

Where she serves — her chestnut chignon¹

Thrills my senses! 20

O, the sight and scent,

Wistful eve and perfumed pavement!

¹ knot of hair.

In the distance pipes an organ . . .
The sensation

Comes to me anew, 25
And my spirit for a moment
Thro' the music breathes the blessed
Airs of London.

18

Discharged

Carry me out
Into the wind and the sunshine,
Into the beautiful world.

O, the wonder, the spell of the streets!
The stature and strength of the horses, 5
The rustle and echo of footfalls,
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!
A swift tram floats huge on us ...
It's a dream?
The smell of the mud in my nostrils o
Blows brave — like a breath of the sea!

As of old,
Ambulant, undulant drapery,
Vaguely and strangely provocative,
Flutters and beckons. O, yonder — 15
Is it? — the gleam of a stocking!
Sudden, a spire

Wedged in the mist! O, the houses,
The long lines of lofty, gray houses,
Cross-hatched with shadow and light! 20
These are the streets. . . .
Each is an avenue leading
Whither I will!

Free . . . !
Dizzy, hysterical, faint, 25
I sit, and the carriage rolls on with me
Into the wonderful world.
1873-75.

Invictus^x

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

¹ unconquered.

In the fell clutch of circumstance 5
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade, m
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate: 15
I am the captain of my soul.
Pub. 1888.

I. M.

Margaritas Sorori¹
1886

Stevenson concludes his essay, *A Christmas Sermon*, by quoting this poem, with the following comment: "From a recent book of verse, where there is more than one such beautiful and manly poem, I take this memorial piece: it says better than I can, what I love to think; let it be our parting word."

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, gray city 5
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley 10
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing
night —
Night with her train of stars 15
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
¹ "In Memoriam. To my sister Margaret."

Some late lark singing,
 Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
 The sundown splendid and serene,
 Death.
 Pub. 1888.

On the Way to Kew

On the way to Kew,¹
 By the river old and gray,
 Where in the Long Ago
 We laughed and loitered so,
 I met a ghost today,
 A ghost that told of you —
 A ghost of low replies
 And sweet inscrutable eyes,
 Coming up from Richmond
 As you used to do.

By the river old and gray,
 The enchanted Long Ago
 Murmured and smiled anew.
 On the way to Kew,
 March had the laugh of May,
 The bare boughs looked aglow,
 And old immortal words
 Sang in my breast like birds,
 Coming up from Richmond
 As I used with you.

With the life of Long Ago
 Lived my thought of you.
 By the river old and gray,
 Flowing his appointed way,
 As I watched I knew
 What is so good to know —
 Not in vain, not in vain,
 Shall I look for you again,
 Coming up from Richmond
 On the way to Kew.
 Pub. 1888.

FROM London Voluntaries

To Charles Whibley
 in

Down through the ancient Strand
 The spirit of October, mild and boon

¹ On the Thames, between London and Richmond.

20 And sauntering, takes his way
 This golden end of afternoon,
 As though the corn stood yellow in all the
 land,
 5 And the ripe apples dropped to the harvest-
 moon.

Lo! the round sun, half-down the western
 slope —
 Seen as along an unglazed telescope —
 Lingers and lolls, loth to be done with day:
 Gifting the long, lean, lanky street 10
 And its abounding confluences of being
 With aspects generous and bland;
 Making a thousand harnesses to shine
 As with new ore from some enchanted mine,
 And every horse's coat so full of sheen i<;
 10 He looks new-tailored, and every 'bus feels
 clean,

And never a hansom but is worth the feeing;
 And every jeweller within the pale
 Offers a real Arabian Night for sale;
 And even the roar 20
 Of the strong streams of toil, that pause and
 pour

Eastward and westward, sounds suffused —
 Seems as it were bemused
 And blurred, and like the speech
 Of lazy seas on a lotus-haunted beach — 25
 With this enchanted lustrousness,
 This mellow magic, that (as a man's caress
 Brings back to some faded face, beloved
 before,

A heavenly shadow of the grace it wore
 Ere the poor eyes were minded to beseech) 30
 Old things transfigures, and you hail and bless
 Their looks of long-lapsed loveliness once
 more:

Till Clement's,¹ angular and cold and staid,
 Gleams forth in glamor's very stuffs arrayed;
 And Bride's,² her aery, unsubstantial charm 35
 Through flight on flight of springing, soaring
 stone

Grown flushed and warm,
 Laughs into life full-mooded and fresh-blown;
 And the high majesty of Paul's³
 Uplifts a voice of living light, and calls — 40

¹ The Church of St. Clement Danes, built in the middle of the Strand.

² St. Bride's.

³ St. Paul's. All three churches were built by Sir Christopher Wren in the seventeenth century.

Calls to his millions to behold and see
How goodly this his London Town can be!

For earth and sky and air
Are golden everywhere,
And golden with a gold so suave and fine 45
The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.
Trafalgar Square

(The fountains volleying golden glaze)
Shines like an angel-market. High aloft¹
Over his couchant Lions, in a haze 50
Shimmering and bland and soft,
A dust of chrysopraxe,
Our Sailor takes the golden gaze
Of the saluting sun, and flames superb,
As once he flamed it on his ocean round. 55
The dingy dreariness of the picture-place
Turned very nearly bright,
Takes on a luminous transiency of grace,
And shows no more a scandal to the ground.
The very blind man pottering on the kerb 60
Among the posies and the ostrich feathers²
And the rude voices touched with all the
weathers

Of the long, varying year,
Shares in the universal alms of light.
The windows, with their fleeting, flickering
fires, 65
The height and spread of frontage shining
sheer,

The quiring signs, the rejoicing roofs and
spires —

'Tis El Dorado — El Dorado plain,
The Golden City! And when a girl goes by,
Look! as she turns her glancing head, 70
A call of gold is floated from her ear!
Golden, all golden! In the golden glory,
Long-lapsing down a golden coasted sky,

¹ A reference to the famous Nelson column, with the bronze lions by Landseer at the base.
² of the street hawkers.

The day, not dies, but seems
Dispersed in wafts and drifts of gold, and
shed 75

Upon a past of golden song and story
And memories of gold and golden dreams.
Pub. 1892.

PROLOGUE TO Rhymes and Rhythms

Something is dead ...
The grace of sunset solitudes, the march
Of the solitary moon, the pomp and power
Of round on round of shining soldier-stars
Patrolling space, the bounties of the sun — 5
Sovran, tremendous, unimaginable —
The multitudinous friendliness of the sea,
Possess no more — no more.

Something is dead...
The autumn rain-rot deeper and wider soaks
And spreads, the burden of winter heavier
weighs, ii
His melancholy close and closer yet
Cleaves, and those incantations of the spring
That made the heart a center of miracles
Grow formal, and the wonder-working hours
Arise no more — no more. 16

Something is dead ...
'Tis time to creep in close about the fire
And tell gray tales of what we were, and
dream

Old dreams and faded, and as we may rejoice
In the young life that round us leaps and
laughs, 21

A fountain in the sunshine, in the pride
Of God's best gift to us twain returns,
Dear heart, no more — no more.

Pub. 1892.

Robert Louis Stevenson • 1850-1894

The later years of the nineteenth century witnessed revivals of dignified romantic fiction, and of the personal essay. In both these revivals, Robert Louis Stevenson bore a prominent part. Like Scott he was handicapped in body, and thus impelled to take up writing as a kind of compensation — and naturally he chose romance. Moreover, he was by temperament one of those authors who, like Goldsmith and Thackeray, enjoy the most friendly relations with their readers. He was naturally a personal essayist. But with a sense of prose literature as an art higher than had prevailed among his predecessors, he did not mingle the two forms, the novel and the essay, in the same work.

Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, November 13, 1850. His father, an engineer and light-house builder, wished his only son to follow this family profession, but Stevenson's health was too precarious. He went to the University of Edinburgh and studied law, but his inclination was strong for literature. For his future work he put himself through a strenuous course of experiments, "playing the sedulous ape to Hasditt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire." He thus consciously acquired a style which, under all these various influences, became entirely his own. His essay *On Some Technical Elements in English Style* (1887) is the most acute and penetrating study of a subject on which many others have written.

Stevenson published his first critical essays in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1874. The next year he joined the colony of painters in Paris and the Forest of Fontainebleau, where he wrote the charming series of papers which bear the title *Virginibus Puemque*. In 1876 he made a canoe trip through the rivers and canals of Belgium and northern France, which gave him the material for *An Inland Voyage* (1878). A journey through the Cevennes Mountains resulted in *Travels with a Donkey* (1879). While in Fontainebleau he fell in love with an American lady, Mrs. Osborne, who lived in California. Though his father disapproved of the affair and cut off his allowance, he crossed the ocean and the continent as an emigrant, and married the lady. This experience gave him subject matter for his narratives *Across the Plains*, *The Amateur Emigrant*, and *The Silverado Squatters* (1883).

After his father's forgiveness and the consequent improvement in his financial condition, he returned to Europe, and sought health at Davos-Platz, Hyeres, and Bournemouth. He wrote some excellent short stories, *A Lodging for the Night*, *The Sire de Maletrotis Door*, and *Markheim*, but his first success in longer fiction was *Treasure Island* (1881). His reputation was consolidated by *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Kidnapped*, both published in 1886. After his father's death, in 1887, he crossed the Atlantic again, and spent a winter at Saranac Lake, in the Adirondacks, where he wrote *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) and the series of essays among which appeared *The Lantern Bearers* and *Pulvis et Umbra*. The next year he sailed with his family from San Francisco for the South Sea Islands. The voyage ended at Apia, Samoa, where he made his home for the rest of his life. Among his latest works are *David Balfour* (1893), a sequel to *Kidnapped*, a group of stories called *Island Nights Entertainments* (1893), and *The Ebb Tide* (1894).

For Stevenson, romance satisfied a spiritual need. As Henry James said of him: "He would say we ought to make believe that the extraordinary is the best part of life even if it were not, and to do so because the finest feelings — suspense, daring, decision, passion, curiosity, gallantry, eloquence, friendship — are involved in it, and it is of infinite importance that the tradition of these precious things should not perish." In the first of the

essays which follow, he states his view of romance, as a philosophy both of life and of art, and he returns to the subject in *The Lantern Bearers*, which is a protest against the naturalistic movement which was sweeping across Europe, dignified by the great names of Balzac, Tolstoy, and Zola. The intellectual force behind naturalism was science. As the scientist was seeking as his goal a complete account of the universe in terms of mathematical and mechanical relations, so the naturalist, or realist, was trying to give a complete account of the portion of the world which fell under his observation; and, following the example of the scientist, he tended to limit his vision to the material things which were perceived by his senses. Stevenson grew up after Darwin's *Origin of Species* had appeared in 1859, when natural science furnished the intellectual background of the age. The account which science gives of the universe and of man's place in it, he recognized as "appalling"; but his romantic spirit turned into a finely tempered stoicism. Even in the face of certain defeat he declared that it was part of human nature to play the game valiantly and honorably. And this impulse is to him a symbol that the striving of the race is not in vain.

The Biographical Edition of Stevenson's works is published in twenty-seven volumes. His letters, in four volumes, were edited by Sidney Colvin (1911) and his life was written by his cousin, Graham Balfour (1901). There is a critical biography by John A. Steuart (1914) and brief studies by Frank Swinnerton (1913) and Lloyd Osbourne (1914). Essays are by Sir Leslie Stephen in *Studies of a Biographer* and Henry James in *Partial Portraits*.

A Gossip on Romance

1882.

Published in *Longman's Magazine* for November, 1882, and in the collection called *Memories and Portraits*. The essay is of special value as presenting the principles which underlay Stevenson's work as a reviver of the prose romance.

In anything fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story — if it be a story — repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye. It was for this last pleasure that we read so closely, and loved our books so dearly, in the bright, troubled period of boyhood. Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident, like a pig for truffles. For my part, I liked a story to begin with an old way-side inn where, "towards the close of the year 17—," several gentlemen in three-cocked

hats were playing bowls. A friend of mine preferred the Malabar coast in a storm, with a ship beating to westward, and a scowling fellow of herculean proportions striding along the beach, he, to be sure, was a pirate. This was further afield than my home-keeping fancy loved to travel, and designed altogether for a larger canvas than the tales that I affected. Give me a highwayman and I was full to the brim; a Jacobite would do, but the highwayman was my favorite dish. I can still hear that merry clatter of the hoofs along the moonlit lane; night and the coming of day are still related in my mind with the doings of John Rann or Jerry Abershaw;¹ and the words "postchaise," the "great North road," "ostler," and "nag," still sound in my ears like poetry. One and all, at least, and each with his particular fancy, we read story-books in childhood, not for eloquence or character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident. That quality was not mere bloodshed or wonder. Although each of these was welcome in its place, the charm for the sake of which we read depended on something different from either. My elders used to read novels aloud; and I can still remember four different pas-

¹ Outlaws.

sages which I heard, before I was ten, with the same keen and lasting pleasure. One I discovered long afterwards to be the admirable opening of *What will be Do with It?*¹ It was no wonder that I was pleased with that. The other three still remain unidentified. One is a little vague, it was about a dark, tall house at night, and people groping on the stairs by the light that escaped from the open door of a sickroom. In another, a lover left a ball, and went walking in a cool, dewy park, whence he could watch the lighted windows and the figures of the dancers as they moved. This was the most sentimental impression I think I had yet received, for a child is somewhat deaf to the sentimental. In the last, a poet, who had been tragically wrangling with his wife, walked forth on the sea-beach on a tempestuous night and witnessed the horrors of a wreck.² Different as they are, all these early favorites have a common note — they have all a touch of the romantic.

Drama is the poetry of conduct, romance the poetry of circumstance. The pleasure that we take in life is of two sorts — the active and the passive. Now we are conscious of a great command over our destiny; anon we are lifted up by circumstance, as by a breaking wave, and dashed we know not how into the future. Now we are pleased by our conduct, anon merely pleased by our surroundings. It would be hard to say which of these modes of satisfaction is the more effective, but the latter is surely the more constant. Conduct is three parts of life, they say; but I think they put it high. There is a vast deal in life and letters both which is not immoral, but simply a-moral; which either does not regard the human will at all, or deals with it in obvious and healthy relations; where the interest turns, not upon what a man shall choose to do, but on how he manages to do it; not on the passionate slips and hesitations of the conscience, but on the problems of the body and of the practical intelligence, in clean, open-air adventure, the shock of arms or the diplomacy of life. With

such material as this it is impossible to build a play, for the serious theater exists solely on moral grounds, and is a standing proof of the dissemination of the human conscience. But it is possible to build upon this ground the most joyous of verses, and the most lively, beautiful, and buoyant tales.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots again seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable, "miching mallecho."¹ The inn at Burford Bridge, with its arbors and green garden and silent, eddying river — though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma — still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters, some further business smolders, waiting for its hour. The old Hawes Inn at the Queen's Ferry makes a similar call upon my fancy. There it stands, apart from the town, beside the pier, in a climate of its own, half inland, half marine — in front, the ferry bubbling with the tide and the guardship swinging to her anchor; behind,

¹ By Bulwer-Lytton (1858).

² Since traced by many obvious correspondents to the gallery of Charles Kingsley. (Stevenson.)

¹ sneaking mischief, from *Hamlet*, m, ii, 147.

the old garden with the trees. Americans seek it already for the sake of Lovel and Oldbuck, who dined there at the beginning of *The Antiquary*. But you need not tell me — that is not all; there is some story, unrecorded or not yet complete, which must express the meaning of that inn more fully. So it is with names and faces; so it is with incidents that are idle and inconclusive in themselves, and yet seem like the beginning of some quaint romance, which the all-careless author leaves untold. How many of these romances have we not seen determined at their birth; how many people have met us with a look of meaning in their eye, and sunk at once into trivial acquaintances; to how many places have we not drawn near, with express intimations — "here my destiny awaits me" — and we have but dined there and passed on! I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man of the hour had not yet come, but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry, fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford.¹

Now this is one of the natural appetites with which any lively literature has to count. The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. The dulllest of clowns tells, or tries to tell, himself a story, as the feeblest of children uses invention in his play; and even as the imaginative grown person, joining in the game, at once enriches it with many delightful circumstances, the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to

satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream. The right kind of thing should fall out in the right kind of place; the right kind of thing should follow; and not only the characters talk aptly and think naturally, but all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music. The threads of a story come from time to time together, and make a picture in the web; the characters fall from time to time into some attitude to each other or to nature, which stamps the story home like an illustration. Crusoe recoiling from the footprint, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears, — these are each culminating moments in the legend, and each has been printed on the mind's eye forever. Other things we may forget; we may forget the words, although they are beautiful; we may forget the author's comment, although perhaps it was ingenious and true, but these epoch-making scenes, which put the last mark of truth upon a story and fill up at one blow our capacity for sympathetic pleasure, we so adopt into the very bosom of our mind that neither time nor tide can efface or weaken the impression. This, then, is the plastic part of literature: to embody character, thought, or emotion in some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking to the mind's eye. This is the highest and hardest thing to do in words; the thing which, once accomplished, equally delights the schoolboy and the sage, and makes, in its own right, the quality of epics. Compared with this, all other purposes in literature, except the purely lyrical or the purely philosophic, are bastard in nature, facile of execution, and feeble in result. It is one thing to write about the inn at Burford, or to describe scenery with the word-painters; it is quite another to seize on the heart of the suggestion and make a country famous with a legend. It is one thing to remark and to dissect, with the most cutting logic, the complications of life and of the human spirit; it is quite another to give them body and blood in the story of Ajax or of Hamlet. The first is literature, but the second is something besides, for it is likewise art.

¹ Since the above was written I have tried to launch the boat with my own hand in *Kidnapped*. Some day, perhaps, I may try a rattle at the shutters. (Stevenson.)

English people of the present day are apt, I know not why, to look somewhat down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate. It is thought clever to write a novel with no story at all, or at least with a very dull one. Reduced even to the lowest terms, a certain interest can be communicated by the art of narrative, a sense of human kinship stirred; and a kind of monotonous fitness, comparable to the words and air of "Sandy's Mull," preserved among the infinitesimal occurrences recorded. Some people work in this manner, with even a strong touch. Mr. Trollope's inimitable clergymen arise to the mind in this connection. But even Mr. Trollope does not confine himself to chronicling small beer. Mr. Crawley's collision with the bishop's wife, Mr. Melnettes dallying in the deserted banquet-room,¹ are typical incidents, epically conceived, fitly embodying a crisis. Or again look at Thackeray. If Rawdon Crawley's blow were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader. The end of *Esmond* is a yet wider excursion from the author's customary fields, the scene at Castlewood is pure Dumas; the great and wily English borrower has here borrowed from the great unblushing French thief; as usual, he has borrowed admirably well, and the breaking of the sword rounds off the best of all his books with a manly, martial note. But perhaps nothing can more strongly illustrate the necessity for marking incident than to compare the living fame of *Robinson Crusoe* with the discredit of *Clarissa Harlowe*. *Clarissa* is a book of a far more startling import, worked out, on a great canvas, with inimitable courage and unflagging art. It contains wit, character, passion, plot, conversations full of spirit and insight, letters sparkling with unstrained humanity; and if the death of the heroine be somewhat frigid and artificial, the last days of the hero strike the only note of what we now call Byronism, between the Elizabethans and Byron himself.

¹ Crawley in *The Last Chronicle of Bar set*, Melnettes (incorrect for Mcmottet) in *The Way We Live Now*.

And yet a little story of a shipwrecked sailor, with not a tenth part of the style nor a thousandth part of the wisdom, exploring none of the arcana of humanity and deprived of the perennial interest of love, goes on from edition to edition, while *Clarissa* lies upon the shelves unread. A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignorance, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase. If he had heard a letter from *Clarissa*, would he have been fired with the same chivalrous ardor? I wonder. Yet *Clarissa* has every quality that can be shown in prose, one alone excepted — pictorial or picture-making romance. While *Robinson* depends, for the most part and with the overwhelming majority of its readers, on the charm of circumstance.

In the highest achievements of the art of words, the dramatic and the pictorial, the moral and romantic interest, rise and fall together by a common and organic law. Situation is animated with passion, passion clothed upon with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other. This is high art; and not only the highest art possible in words, but the highest art of all, since it combines the greatest mass and diversity of the elements of truth and pleasure. Such are epics, and the few prose tales that have the epic weight. But as from a school of works, aping the creative, incident and romance are ruthlessly discarded, so may character and drama be omitted or subordinated to romance. There is one book, for example, more generally loved than Shakespeare, that captivates in

childhood, and still delights in age — I mean the *Arabian Nights* — where you shall look in vain for moral or for intellectual interest. No human face or voice greets us among that wooden crowd of kings and genies, sorcerers and beggarmen. Adventure, in the most naked terms, furnishes forth the entertainment, and is found enough. Dumas approaches perhaps nearest of any modern to these Arabian authors, in the purely material charm of some of his romances. The early part of *Monte Cristo*, down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect storytelling; the man never breathed who shared these moving incidents without a tremor; and yet Faria is a thing of packthread and Dantes little more than a name. The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural and dull, but as for these early chapters, I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance. It is very thin and light, to be sure, as on a high mountain; but it is brisk and clear and sunny in proportion. I saw the other day, with envy, an old and very clever lady setting forth on a second or third voyage into *Monte Cristo*. Here are stories which powerfully affect the reader, which can be reperused at any age, and where the characters are no more than puppets. The bony fist of the showman visibly propels them; their springs are an open secret; their faces are of wood; their bellies filled with bran; and yet we thrillingly partake of their adventures. And the point may be illustrated still further. The last interview between Lucy and Richard Feverel¹ is pure drama; more than that, it is the strongest scene, since Shakespeare, in the English tongue. Their first meeting by the river, on the other hand, is pure romance; it has nothing to do with character; it might happen to any other boy and maiden, and be none the less delightful for the change. And yet I think he would be a bold man who should choose between these passages. Thus in the same book we may have two scenes, each capital in its order: in the one, human passion, deep calling unto deep, shall utter its genuine voice; in the second, according

circumstances, like instruments in tune, shall build up a trivial but desirable incident, such as we love to prefigure for ourselves; and in the end, in spite of the critics, we may hesitate to give the preference to either. The one may ask more genius — I do not say it does, but at least the other dwells as clearly in the memory.

True romantic art, again, makes a romance of all things. It reaches into the highest abstraction of the ideal; it does not refuse the most pedestrian realism. *Robinson Crusoe* is as realistic as it is romantic; both qualities are pushed to an extreme, and neither suffers. Nor does romance depend upon the material importance of the incidents. To deal with strong and deadly elements, banditti, pirates, war and murder, is to conjure with great names, and, in the event of failure, to double the disgrace. The arrival of Haydn and Consuelo at the Canon's villa¹ is a very trifling incident; yet we may read a dozen boisterous stones from beginning to end, and not receive so fresh and stirring an impression of adventure. It was the scene of *Crusoe* at the wreck, if I remember rightly, that so bewitched my blacksmith. Nor is the fact surprising. Every single article the castaway recovers from the hulk is "a joy for ever" to the man who reads of them. They are the things that should be found, and bare enumeration stirs the blood. I found a glimmer of the same interest the other day in a new book, *The Sailor's Sweetheart*, by Mr. Clark Russell. The whole business of the brig *Morning Star* is very rightly felt and spiritedly written; but the clothes, the books, and the money satisfy the reader's mind like things to eat. We are dealing here with the old cut-and-dry, legitimate interest of treasure trove. But even treasure trove can be made dull. There are few people who have not groaned under the plethora of goods that fell to the lot of the Swiss Family Robinson, that dreary family. They found article after article, from milk kine to pieces of ordnance, a whole consignment; but no informing taste had presided over the selection, — there was no smack or relish in the invoice, and these riches left the fancy cold. The box of goods in Verne's

¹ In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

¹ In George Sand's *Consuelo*.

*Mysterious Island*¹ is another case in point: there was no gusto and no glamour about that; it might have come from a shop. But the two hundred and seventy-eight Australian sovereigns on board the *Morning Star* fell upon me like a surprise that I had expected; whole vistas of secondary stories, besides the one in hand, radiated forth from that discovery, as they radiate from a striking particular in life; and I was made for the moment as happy as a reader has a right to be.

To come at all at the nature of this quality of romance, we must bear in mind the peculiarity of our attitude to any art. No art produces illusion; in the theater we never forget that we are in the theater; and while we read a story, we sit wavering between two minds, now merely clapping our hands at the merit of the performance, now condescending to take an active part in fancy with the characters. This last is the triumph of romantic story-telling: when the reader consciously plays at being the hero, the scene is a good scene. Now in character studies the pleasure that we take is critical; we watch, we approve, we smile at incongruities, we are moved to sudden heats of sympathy for courage, suffering, or virtue. But the characters are still themselves, they are not us; the more clearly they are depicted, the more widely do they stand away from us, the more imperiously do they thrust us back into our place as a spectator. I cannot identify myself with Rawdon Crawley or with Eugene de Rastignac,² for I have scarce a hope or fear in common with them. It is not character but incident that woos us out of our reserve. Something happens as we desire to have it happen to ourselves; some situation, that we have long dallied with in fancy, is realized in the story with enticing and appropriate details. Then we forget the characters; then we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience; and then, and then only, do we say we have been reading a romance. It is not only pleasurable things that we imagine

¹ Jules Verne (1828-1905) was a popular writer who exploited the superstitions of science, in many stories, of which *The Mysterious Island* (1870) was one.

² Crawley in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*; Rastignac in Balzac's *Père Goriot* and other tales.

in our day-dreams; there are lights in which we are willing to contemplate even the idea of our own death, — ways in which it seems as if it would amuse us to be cheated, wounded, or calumniated. It is thus possible to construct a story, even of tragic import, in which every incident, detail, and trick of circumstance shall be welcome to the reader's thoughts. Fiction is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there that he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him at every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics. *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses, as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake*, or that direct, romantic opening — one of the most spirited and poetical in literature — "The stag at eve had drunk his fill." The same strength and the same weaknesses adorn and disfigure the novels. In that ill-written, ragged book, *The Pirate*, the figure of Cleveland — cast up by the sea on the resounding foreland of Dunrossness — moving, with the blood on his hands and the Spanish words on his tongue, among the simple islanders — singing a serenade under the window of his Shetland mistress — is conceived in the very highest manner of romantic invention. The words of his song, "Through groves of palm," sung in such a scene and by such a lover, clench, as in a nutshell, the emphatic contrast upon which the tale is built. In *Guy Mannering*, again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry

Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

"I remember the tune well," he says, 'though I cannot guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.' He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel. . . . She immediately took up the song —

"'Are these the links of Forth,' she said;
'Or are they the crooks of Dee,
Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head
That I so fain would see?"

"'By heaven!' said Bertram, 'it is the very ballad.'"

On this quotation two remarks fall to be made. First, as an instance of modern feeling for romance, this famous touch of the flageolet and the old song is selected by Miss Braddon for omission. Miss Braddon's idea of a story, like Mrs. Todgers's idea of a wooden leg, were something strange to have expounded. As a matter of personal experience, Meg's appearance to old Mr. Bertram on the road, the ruins of Dorncleugh, the scene of the flageolet, and the Dominie's recognition of Harry, are the four strong notes that continue to ring in the mind after the book is laid aside. The second point is still more curious. The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: "A damsel who, close behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shambling sentence. It is not merely bad English, or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.

Certainly the contrast is remarkable; and it is one that throws a strong light upon the subject of this paper. For here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching

with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and not only frequently weak, but frequently wrong in points of drama. In character parts, indeed, and particularly in the Scotch, he was delicate, strong, and truthful; but the trite, obliterated features of too many of his heroes have already wearied two generations of readers. At times his characters will speak something far beyond propriety with a true heroic note; but on the next page

they will be wading wearily forward with an ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole of words. The man who could conceive and write the character of Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot,¹ as Scott has conceived and written it, had not only splendid romantic, but splendid tragic gifts. How comes it, then, that he could so often fob us off with languid, inarticulate twaddle?

It seems to me that the explanation is to be found in the very quality of his surprising merits. As his books are play to the reader, so were they play to him. He conjured up the romantic with delight, but he had hardly patience to describe it. He was a great day-dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly a great artist; hardly, in the manful sense, an artist at all. He pleased himself, and so he pleases us. Of the pleasures of his art he tasted fully; but of its toils and vigils and distresses never man knew less. A great romantic — an idle child.

The Lantern-Bearers

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for February, 1888, and reprinted in *Across the Plains*, 1892. It contains an amplification of Stevenson's doctrine of romance, and his attitude toward the realistic school of fiction.

These boys congregated every autumn about a certain easterly fisher-village, where they tasted in a high degree the glory of ex-
« in *The Antiquary*.

istence. The place was created seemingly on purpose for the diversion of young gentlemen. A street or two of houses, mostly red and many of them tiled; a number of fine trees clustered about the manse and the kirk-yard, and turning the chief street into a shady alley; many little gardens more than usually bright with flowers; nets a-drying, and fisher-wives scolding in the backward parts; a smell of fish, a genial smell of seaweed; whiffs of blowing sand at the street corners; shops with golf-balls and bottled lollipops; another shop with penny pickwicks (that remarkable cigar) and the *London Journal*, dear to me for its startling pictures, and a few novels, dear for their suggestive names: such, as well as memory serves me, were the ingredients of the town. These, you are to conceive posted on a spit between two sandy bays, and sparsely flanked with villas — enough for the boys to lodge in with their subsidiary parents, not enough (not yet enough) to cocknify the scene: a haven in the rocks in front: in front of that, a file of grey islets: to the left, endless links and sand-wreaths, a wilderness of hiding-holes, alive with popping rabbits and soaring gulls, to the right, a range of seaward crags, one rugged brow beyond another; the ruins of a mighty and ancient fortress on the brink of one; coves between — now charmed into sunshine quiet, now whistling with wind and clamorous with bursting surges; the dens and sheltered hollows redolent of thyme and southernwood, the air at the cliff's edge brisk and clean and pungent of the sea — in front of all, the Bass Rock, tilted seaward like a doubtful bather, the surf ringing it with white, the solan-geese hanging round its summit like a great and glittering smoke. This choice piece of sea-board was sacred, besides, to the wrecker; and the Bass, in the eye of fancy, still flew the colors of King James; and in the ear of fancy the arches of Tantallon still rang with horse-shoe iron, and echoed to the commands of Bell-the-Cat.¹

There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but

the embarrassment of pleasure. You might golf if you wanted, but I seem to have been better employed. You might secrete yourself in the Lady's Walk, a certain sunless dingle of elders, all mossed over by the damp as green as grass, and dotted here and there by the stream-side with roofless walls, the cold homes of anchorites. To fit themselves for life, and with a special eye to acquire the art of smoking, it was even common for the boys to harbor there; and you might have seen a single penny pickwick, honestly shared in lengths with a blunt knife, bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Again, you might join our fishing-parties, where we sat perched as thick as solan-geese, a covey of little anglers, boy and girl, angling over each other's heads, to the much entanglement of lines and loss of podleys and consequent shrill recrimination — shrill as the geese themselves. Indeed, had that been all, you might have done this often, but though fishing be a fine pastime, the podley is scarce to be regarded as a dainty for the table; and it was a point of honor that 'a boy should eat all that he had taken. Or again, you might climb the Law, where the whale's jawbone stood landmark in the buzzing wind, and behold the face of many counties, and the smoke "and spires of many towns, and the sails of distant ships. You might bathe, now in the flaws of fine weather, that we pathetically call our summer, now in a gale of wind, with the sand scourging your bare hide, your clothes thrashing abroad from underneath their guardian stone, the froth of the great breakers casting you headlong ere it had drowned your knees. Or you might explore the tidal rocks, above all in the ebb of spring, when the very roots of the hills were for the nonce discovered; following my leader from one group to another, groping in slippery tangle for the wreck of ships, wading in pools after the abominable creatures of the sea, and ever with an eye cast backward on the march of the tide and the menaced line of your retreat. And then you might go Crusoeing, a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging perhaps a house under the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware, and cooking apples there — if they

¹ The nickname of Archibald Douglas, fifth Earl of Angus, died 1514. He entertained Marmion, in Scott's poem, at his castle of Tantallon.

were truly apples, for I sometimes suppose the merchant must have played us off with some inferior and quite local fruit, capable of resolving, in the neighborhood of fire, into mere sand and smoke and iodine; or perhaps pushing to Tantallon, you might lunch on sandwiches and visions in the grassy court, while the wind hummed in the crumbling turrets; or clambering along the coast, eat geans¹ (the worst, I must suppose, in Christendom) from an adventurous gean-tree that had taken root under a cliff, where it was shaken with an ague of east wind, and silvered after gales with salt, and grew so foreign among its bleak surroundings that to eat of its produce was an adventure in itself.

There are mingled some dismal memories with so many that were joyous. Of the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Cauty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody — horror! — the fisher-wife herself, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even today (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight. She was lodged in the little old jail in the chief street, but whether or no she died there, with a wise terror of the worst, I never inquired. She had been tipling, it was but a dingy tragedy; and it seems strange and hard that, after all these years, the poor crazy sinner should be still pilloried on her cart in the scrap-book of my memory. Nor shall I readily forget a certain house in the Quadrant where a visitor died, and a dark old woman continued to dwell alone with the dead body; nor how this old woman conceived a hatred to myself and one of my cousins, and in the dread hour of the dusk, as we were clambering on the garden-walls, opened a window in that house of mortality and cursed us in a shrill voice and with a marrowy choice of language. It was a pair of very colorless urchins that fled down the lane from this remarkable experience! But I recall with a more doubtful sentiment, compounded out of fear and exultation, the coil of equinoctial tempests;

¹ wild cherries.

trumpeting squalls, scouring flaws of rain; the boats with their reefed lug-sails scudding for the harbor mouth, where danger lay, for it was hard to make when the wind had any east in it; the wives clustered with blowing shawls at the pierhead, where (if fate was against them) they might see boat and husband and sons — their whole wealth and their whole family — engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbors forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and she squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Msenad.

These are things that I recall with interest; but what my memory dwells upon the most I have been all this while withholding. It was a sport peculiar to the place, and indeed to a week or so of our two months' holiday there. Maybe it still flourishes in its native spot, for boys and their pastimes are swayed by periodic forces inscrutable to man; so that tops and marbles reappear in their due season, regular like the sun and moon, and the harmless art of knucklebones has seen the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the United States. It may still flourish in its native spot, but nowhere else, I am persuaded; for I tried myself to introduce it ort Tweedside, and was defeated lamentably, its charm being quite local, like a country wine that cannot be exported.

The idle manner of it was this:

Toward the end of September, when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigor of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers, their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen

used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we had certainly an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, and to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious "Have you got your lantern?" and a gratified "Yes!" That was the shibboleth, and very needful too, for, as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognize a lantern-bearer, unless (like the pole-cat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them — for the cabin was usually locked; or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull's-eye discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk. Woe is me that I may not give some specimens — some of their foresights of life, or deep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature, these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public; a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a

bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.

2

It is said that a poet has died young in the breast of the most stolid. It may be contended, rather, that this (somewhat minor) bard in almost every case survives, and is the spice of life to his possessor. Justice is not done to the versatility and the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination. His life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud; there will be some golden chamber at the heart of it, in which he dwells delighted; and for as dark as his pathway seems to the observer, he will have some kind of a bull's-eye at his belt.

It would be hard to pick out a career more cheerless than that of Dancer, the miser, as he figures in the "Old Bailey" Reports,¹ a prey to the most sordid persecutions, the butt of his neighborhood, betrayed by his hired man, his house beleaguered by the impish school-boy, and he himself grinding and fuming and impotently fleeing to the law against these pin-pricks. You marvel at first that anyone should willingly prolong a life so destitute of charm and dignity; and then you call to memory that had he chosen, had he ceased to be a miser, he could have been freed at once from these trials, and might have built himself a castle and gone escorted by a squadron. For the love of more recondite joys, which we cannot estimate, which, it may be, we should envy, the man had willingly forgone both comfort and consideration. "His mind to him a kingdom was"; and sure enough, digging into that mind, which seems at first a dust-heap, we unearth some priceless jewels. For Dancer must have had the love of power and the disdain of using it, a noble character in itself; disdain of many pleasures, a chief part of what is commonly called wisdom; disdain of the inevitable end, that finest trait of mankind; scorn of men's opinions, another element of virtue; and at the back of all, a conscience just like yours and mine, whining like a cur, swindling like a thimble-rigger, but still pointing (there or thereabout) to some

¹ A jail in London.

conventional standard. Here were a cabinet portrait to which Hawthorne perhaps had done justice; and yet not Hawthorne either, for he was mildly minded, and it lay not in him to create for us that throb of the miser's pulse, his fretful energy of gusto, his vast arms of ambition clutching in he knows not what: insatiable, insane, a god with a muck-rake. Thus, at least, looking in the bosom of the miser, consideration detects the poet in the full tide of life, with more, indeed, of the poetic fire than usually goes to epics; and tracing that mean man about his cold hearth, and to and fro in his uncomfortable house, spies within him a blazing bonfire of delight. And so with others, who do not live by bread alone, but by some cherished and perhaps fantastic pleasure; who are meat salesmen to the external eye, and possibly to themselves are Shakespeares, Napoleons, or Beethovens; who have not one virtue to rub against another in the field of active life, and yet perhaps, in the life of contemplation, sit with the saints. We see them on the street, and we can count their buttons; but Heaven knows in what they pride themselves! Heaven knows where they have set their treasure!

There is one fable that touches very near the quick of life; the fable of the monk who passed into the woods, heard a bird break into song, hearkened for a trill or two, and found himself on his return a stranger at his convent gates; for he had been absent fifty years, and of all his comrades there survived but one to recognize him. It is not only in the woods that this enchanter carols, though perhaps he is native there. He sings in the most doleful places. The miser hears him and chuckles, and the days are moments. With no more apparatus than an ill-smelling lantern I have evoked him on the naked links. All life that is not merely mechanical is spun out of two strands: seeking for that bird and hearing him. And it is just this that makes life so hard to value, and the delight of each so incommunicable. And just a knowledge of this, and a remembrance of those fortunate hours in which the bird has sung to us, that fills us with such wonder when we turn the pages of the realist. There, to be sure, we find a picture of life in so far

as it consists of mud and of old iron, cheap desires and cheap fears, that which we are ashamed to remember and that which we are careless whether we forget, but of the note of that time-devouring nightingale we hear no news.

The case of these writers of romance is most obscure. They have been boys and youths; they have lingered outside the window of the beloved, who was then most probably writing to someone else; they have sat before a sheet of paper, and felt themselves mere continents of congested poetry, not one line of which would flow; they have walked alone in the woods, they have walked in cities under the countless lamps; they have been to sea, they have hated, they have feared, they have longed to knife a man, and maybe done it; the wild taste of life has stung their palate. Or, if you deny them all the rest, one pleasure at least they have tasted to the full — their books are there to prove it — the keen pleasure of successful literary composition. And yet they fill the globe with volumes, whose cleverness inspires me with despairing admiration, and whose consistent falsity to all I care to call existence, with despairing wrath. If I had no better hope than to continue to revolve among the dreary and petty businesses, and to be moved by the paltry hopes and fears with which they surround and animate their heroes, I declare I would die now. But there has never an hour of mine gone quite so dully yet, if it were spent waiting at a railway junction, I would have some scattering thoughts, I could count some grains of memory, compared to which the whole of one of these romances seems but dross.

These writers would retort (if I take them properly) that this was very true; that it was the same with themselves and other persons of (what they call) the artistic temperament; that in this we were exceptional, and should apparently be ashamed of ourselves; but that our works must deal exclusively with (what they call) the average man, who was a prodigious dull fellow, and quite dead to all but the paltriest considerations. I accept the issue. We can only know others by ourselves. The artistic temperament (a plague

on the expression!) does not make us different from our fellowmen, or it would make us incapable of writing novels; and the average man (a murrain on the word!) is just like you and me, or he would not be average. It was Whitman who stamped a kind of Birmingham sacredness upon the latter phrase; but Whitman knew very well, and showed very nobly, that the average man was full of joys and full of poetry of his own. And this harping on life's dulness and man's meanness is a loud profession of incompetence; it is one of two things: the cry of the blind eye, *I cannot see*, or the complaint of the dumb tongue, *cannot utter*. To draw a life without delights is to prove I have not realized it. To picture a man without some sort of poetry — well, it goes near to prove my case, for it shows an author may have little enough. To see Dancer only as a dirty, old, small-minded, impotently fuming man, in a dirty house, besieged by Harrow boys, and probably beset by small attorneys, is to show myself as keen an observer as... the Harrow boys. But these young gentlemen (with a more becoming modesty) were content to pluck Dancer by the coat-tails; they did not suppose they had surprised his secret or could put him living in a book: and it is there my error would have lain. Or say that in the same romance — I continue to call these books romances, in the hope of giving pain — say that in the same romance, which now begins really to take shape, I should leave to speak of Dancer, and follow instead the Harrow boys; and say that I came on some such business as that of my lantern-bearers on the links, and described the boys as very cold, spat upon by flurries of rain, and drearily surrounded, all of which they were; and their talk as silly and indecent, which it certainly was. I might upon these lines, and had I Zola's genius, turn out, in a page or so, a gem of literary art, render the lantern-light with the touches of a master, and lay on the indecency with the ungrudging hand of love; and when all was done, what a triumph would my picture be of shallowness and dulness! how it would have missed the point! how it would have belied the boys! To the ear of the stenographer, the talk is merely silly and

indecent; but ask the boys themselves, and they are discussing (as it is highly proper they should) the possibilities of existence. To the eye of the observer they are wet and cold and drearily surrounded; but ask themselves, and they are in the heaven of recondite pleasure, the ground of which is an ill-smelling lantern.

3

For, to repeat, the ground of a man's joy is often hard to hit. It may hinge at times upon a mere accessory, like the lantern, it may reside, like Dancer's in the mysterious inwards of psychology. It may consist with perpetual failure, and find exercise in the continued chase. It has so little bond with externals (such as the observer scribbles in his note-book) that it may even touch them not; and the man's true life, for which he consents to live, lie altogether in the field of fancy. The clergyman, in his spare hours, may be winning battles, the farmer sailing ships, the banker reaping triumph in the arts: all leading another life, plying another trade from that they chose; like the poet's house-builder, who, after all, is cased in stone,

By his fireside, as impotent fancy prompts,
Rebuilds it to his liking.

In such a case the poetry runs underground. The observer (poor soul, with his documents!) is all abroad. For to look at the man is but to court deception. We shall see the trunk from which he draws his nourishment; but he himself is above and abroad in the green dome of foliage, hummed through by winds and nested in by nightingales. And the true realism were that of the poets, to climb up after him like a squirrel, and catch some glimpse of the heaven for which he lives. And the true realism, always and everywhere, is that of the poets to find out where joy resides, and give it a voice far beyond singing.

For to miss the joy is to miss all. In the joy of the actors lies the sense of any action. That is the explanation, that the excuse. To one who has not the secret of the lanterns, the scene upon the links is meaningless. And hence the haunting and truly spectral unreality of realistic books. Hence, when we read the English realists, the incredulous

wonder with which we observe the hero's constancy under the submerging tide of dulness, and how he bears up with his jibbing sweet-heart, and endures the chatter of idiot girls, and stands by his whole unfeatured wildness of an existence, instead of seeking relief in drink or foreign travel. Hence in the French, in that meat-market of middle-aged sensuality, the disgusted surprise with which we see the hero drift sidelong, and practically quite untempted, into every description of misconduct and dishonor. In each, we miss the personal poetry, the enchanted atmosphere, that rainbow work of fancy that clothes what is naked and seems to ennoble what is base; in each, life falls dead like dough, instead of soaring away like a balloon into the colors of the sunset; each is true, each inconceivable; for no man lives in the external truth, among salts and acids, but in the warm, phantasmagoric chamber of his brain, with the painted windows and the storied walls.

Of this falsity we have had a recent example from a man who knows far better — Tolstoy's *Powers of Darkness*. Here is a piece full of force and truth, yet quite untrue. For before Mikita was led into so dire a situation he was tempted, and temptations are beautiful at least in part; and a work which dwells on the ugliness of crime and gives no hint of any loveliness in the temptation, sins against the modesty of life, and even when a Tolstoy writes it, sinks to melodrama. The peasants are not understood; they saw their life in fairer colors; even the deaf girl was clothed in poetry for Mikita, or he had never fallen. And so, once again, even an Old Bailey melodrama, without some brightness of poetry and luster of existence, falls into the inconceivable and ranks with fairy tales.

4

In nobler books we are moved with something like the emotions of life; and this emotion is very variously provoked. We are so moved when Levine labors in the field,¹ when Andre² sinks beyond emotion, when Richard

¹ In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

² In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

Feverel and Lucy Dcsborough meet beside the river,¹ when Antony, "not cowardly, puts off his helmet,"² when Kent has infinite pity on the dying Lear, when, in Dostoevsky's *Dcsptsed and Rejected*, the uncomplaining hero drains his cup of suffering and virtue. These are notes that please the great heart of man. Not only love, and the fields, and the bright face of danger, but sacrifice and death and unmerited suffering humbly supported, touch in us the vein of the poetic. We love to think of them, we long to try them, we are humbly hopeful that we may prove heroes also.

We have heard, perhaps, too much of lesser matters. Here is the door, here is the open air.

I fur in anttquam silvam.

Pulvis et Umbra

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for April, 1888, and reprinted in the 1892 collection called *Across the Plains*. The title ("Dust and a Shadow") is from an ode of Horace's (iv, 7): "When we descend where father .Eneas, rich Tullus, and Ancus abide, we become dust and a shade." This essay, like Pater's Conclusion to *Studies in the Renaissance*, suggests a reconstruction of ethical thought in the light of the discoveries of science, but along very different lines.

We look for some reward of our endeavors and are disappointed, not success, not happiness, not even peace of conscience, crowns our ineffectual efforts to do well. Our frailties are invincible, our virtues barren; the battle goes sore against us to the going down of the sun. The canting moralist tells us of right and wrong; and we look abroad, even on the face of our small earth, and find them change with every climate, and no country where some action is not honored for a virtue and none where it is not branded for a vice; and we look in our experience, and find no vital congruity in the wisest rules, but at the best a municipal fitness. It is not strange

¹ In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

² In Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

³ Let us go into the ancient wood.

if we are tempted to despair of good. We ask too much. Our religions and moralities have been trimmed to flatter us, till they are all emasculate and sentimentalized, and only please and weaken. Truth is of a rougher strain. In the harsh face of life, faith can read a bracing gospel. The human race is a thing more ancient than the Ten Commandments; and the bones and revolutions of the Kosmos, in whose joints we are but moss and fungus, more ancient still.

Of the Kosmos in the last resort, science reports many doubtful things and all of them appalling. There seems no substance to this solid globe on which we stamp — nothing but symbols and ratios. Symbols and ratios carry us and bring us forth and beat us down; gravity, that swings the incommensurable suns and worlds through space, is but a figment varying inversely as the squares of distances; and the suns and worlds themselves, imponderable figures of abstraction — NH₃ and H₂O. Consideration dares not dwell upon this view; that way madness lies; science carries us into zones of speculation where there is no habitable city for the mind of man.

But take the Kosmos with a grosser faith, as our senses give it us. We behold space sown with rotatory islands, suns and worlds and the shards and wrecks of systems; some, like the sun, still blazing; some rotting, like the earth; others, like the moon, stable in desolation. All of these we take to be made of something we call matter — a thing which no analysis can help us to conceive, to whose incredible properties no familiarities can reconcile our minds. This stuff, when not purified by the lustration of fire, rots uncleanly into something we call life; seized through all its atoms with a pediculous malady; swelling in tumors that become independent, sometimes even (by an abhorrent prodigy) locomotory; one splitting into millions, millions cohering into one, as the malady proceeds through varying stages. This vital putrescence of the dust, used as we are to it, yet strikes us with occasional disgust, and the profusion of worms in a piece of ancient turf, or the air of a marsh darkened

with insects, will sometimes check our breathing so that we aspire for cleaner places. But none is clean: the moving sand is infected with lice; the pure spring, where it bursts out of the mountain, is a mere issue of worms; even in the hard rock the crystal is forming.

In two main shapes this eruption covers the countenance of the earth: the animal and the vegetable: one in some degree the inversion of the other: the second rooted to the spot; the first coming detached out of its natal mud, and scurrying abroad with the myriad feet of insects, or towering into the heavens on the wings of birds — a thing so incomprehensible that, if it be well considered, the heart stops. To what passes with the anchored vermin, we have little clue; doubtless they have their joys and sorrows, their delights and killing agonies — it appears not how. But of the locomotory, to which we ourselves belong, we can tell more. These share with us a thousand miracles: the miracles of sight, of hearing, of the projection of sound, things that bridge space; the miracles of memory and reason, by which the present is conceived, and when it is gone its image kept living in the brains of man and brute; the miracle of reproduction, with its imperious desires and staggering consequences. And to put the last touch upon this mountain mass of the revolting and the inconceivable, all these prey upon each other, lives tearing other lives in pieces, cramming them inside themselves, and by that summary process growing fat: the vegetarian, the whale, perhaps the tree, not less than the lion of the desert — for the vegetarian is only the eater of the dumb.

Meanwhile our rotary island loaded with predatory life, and more drenched with blood, both animal and vegetable, than ever mutinied ship, scuds through space with unimaginable speed, and turns alternate cheeks to the reverberation of a blazing world ninety million miles away.

What a monstrous specter is this man, the disease of the agglutinated dust, lifting alternate feet or lying drugged with slumber; killing, feeding, growing, bringing forth small

copies of himself; grown upon with hair like grass, fitted with eyes that move and glitter in his face; a thing to set children screaming; — and yet looked at nearer, known as his fellows know him, how surprising are his attributes! Poor soul, here for so little, cast among so many hardships, filled with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent, savagely surrounded, savagely descended, irremediably condemned to prey upon his fellow lives: who should have blamed him had he been of a piece with his destiny and a being merely barbarous? And we look and behold him instead filled with imperfect virtues: infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea; singling out his friends and his mate with cordial affection; bringing forth in pain, rearing with long-suffering solicitude, his young. To touch the heart of his mystery, we find in him one thought, strange to the point of lunacy: the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbor, to his God; an ideal of decency, to which he would rise if it were possible; a limit of shame below which, if it be possible, he will not stoop. The design in most men is one of conformity; here and there, in picked natures, it transcends itself and soars on the other side, arming martyrs with independence; but in all, in their degrees, it is a bosom thought: — not in man alone, for we trace it in dogs and cats whom we know fairly well, and doubtless some similar point of honor sways the elephant, the oyster, and the louse, of whom we know so little: — but in man, at least, it sways with so complete an empire that merely selfish things come second, even with the selfish; and appetites are starved, fears are conquered, pains supported; that almost the dullest shrinks from the reproof of a glance, although it were a child's; and all but the most cowardly stand amid the risks of war; and the more noble, having strongly conceived an act as due to their ideal, affront and embrace death. Strange enough if, with their singular origin and perverted practice, they think they are to be rewarded in some

future life; stranger still, if they are persuaded of the contrary, and think this blow which they solicit will strike them senseless for eternity. I shall be reminded what a tragedy of misconception and misconduct man at large presents — of organized injustice, cowardly violence, and treacherous crime, and of the damning imperfections of the best. They cannot be too darkly drawn. Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiring, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labor.

If the first view of this creature, stalking in his rotatory isle, be a thing to shake the courage of the stoutest, on this nearer sight he startles us with an admiring wonder. It matters not where we look, under what climate we observe him, in what state of society, in what depth of ignorance, burthened with what erroneous morality; by campfires in Assiniboia, the snow powdering his shoulders, the wind plucking his blanket, as he sits, passing the ceremonial calumet and uttering his grave opinions like a Roman senator; in ships at sea, a man inured to hardship and vile pleasures, his brightest hope a fiddle in a tavern and a bedizened trull who sells herself to rob him, and he for all that simple, innocent, cheerful, kindly, like a child, constant to toil, brave to drown, for others; in the slums of cities, moving among indifferent millions to mechanical employments, without hope of change in the future, with scarce a pleasure in the present, and yet true to his virtues, honest up to his lights, kind to his neighbors, tempted perhaps in vain by the bright gin-palace, perhaps long suffering with the drunken wife that ruins him; in India (a woman this time) kneeling with broken cries and streaming tears, as she drowns her child in the sacred river; in the brothel, the discard of society, living mainly on strong drink, fed with affronts, a fool, a thief, the comrade of thieves, and even here keeping the point of honor and the touch of pity, often repaying the world's scorn with service, often

standing firm upon a scruple, and at a certain cost rejecting riches: — everywhere some virtue cherished or affected, everywhere some decency of thought and carriage, everywhere the ensign of man's ineffectual goodness:— ah! if I could show you this! If I could show you these men and women, all the world over, in every stage of history, under every abuse of error, under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, still obscurely fighting the lost fight of virtue, still clinging, in the brothel or on the scaffold, to some rag of honor, the poor jewel of their souls! They may seek to escape, and yet they cannot; it is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom; they are condemned to some nobility, all their lives long, the desire of good is at their heels, the implacable hunter.

Of all earth's meteors, here at least is the most strange and consoling: that this ennobled lemur, this hair-crowned bubble of the dust, this inheritor of a few years and sorrows, should yet deny himself his rare delights, and add to his frequent pains, and live for an ideal, however misconceived. Nor can we stop with man. He stands no longer like a thing apart. Close at his heels we see the dog, prince of another genus; and in him too we see dumbly testified the same cultus of an unattainable ideal, the same constancy in failure. Does it stop with the dog? We look at our feet where the ground is blackened with the swarming ant; a creature so small, so far from us in the hierarchy of brutes, that we can scarce trace and scarce comprehend his doings; and here also, in his ordered politics and rigorous justice, we see confessed the law of duty and the fact of individual sin. Does it stop, then, with the ant? Rather this desire of well-doing and this doom of frailty run through all the grades of life: rather is this earth, from the frosty top of Everest to the next margin of the internal fire, one stage of ineffectual virtues and one temple of pious tears and perseverance. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together. It is the common and the god-like law of life. The browsers, the biters, the barkers, the hairy coats of field and forest, the squirrel in the oak, the thou-

sand-footed creeper in the dust, as they share with us the gift of life, share with us the love of an ideal; strive like us — like us are tempted to grow weary of the struggle — to do well; like us receive at times unmerited refreshment, visitings of support, returns of courage; and are condemned like us to be crucified between that double law of the members and the will. Are they like us, I wonder, in the timid hope of some reward, some sugar with the drug? do they, too, stand aghast at unrewarded virtues, at the sufferings of those whom, in our partiality, we take to be just, and the prosperity of such as in our blindness we call wicked? It may be, and yet God knows what they should look for. Even while they look, even while they repent, the foot of man treads them by thousands in the dust, the yelping hounds burst upon their trail, the bullet speeds, the knives are heating in the den of the vivisectionist; or the dew falls, and the generation of a day is blotted out. For these are creatures compared with whom our weakness is strength, our ignorance wisdom, our brief span eternity.

And as we dwell, we living things, in our isle of terror and under the imminent hand of death, God forbid it should be man the erected, the reasoner, the wise in his own eyes — God forbid it should be man that wearies in well-doing, that despairs of unrewarded effort, or utters the language of complaint. Let it be enough for faith, that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: surely not all in vain.

A Christmas Sermon

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for December, 1888. As a statement of philosophy of life, it may be taken as in the broad sense autobiographical.

By the time this paper appears, I shall have been talking for twelve months, and it is thought I should take my leave in a formal and seasonable manner. Valedictory eloquence is rare, and death-bed sayings have not often hit the mark of the occasion.

Charles Second, wit and skeptic, a man whose life had been one long lesson in human incredulity, an easy-going comrade, a maneuvering king — remembered and embodied all his wit and skepticism along with more than his usual good-humor in the famous "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying."

I

An unconscionable time a-dying — there is the picture ("I am afraid, gentlemen,") of your life and of mine. The sands run out, and the hours are "numbered and imputed," and the days go by, and when the last of these finds us, we have been a long time dying, and what else? The very length is something, if we reach that hour of separation undishonored, and to have lived at all is doubtless (in the soldierly expression) to have served. There is a tale in Tacitus of how the veterans mutinied in the German wilderness; of how they mobbed Germanicus,¹ clamoring to go home; and of how, seizing their general's hand, these old war-worn exiles passed his finger along their toothless gums. *Sunt lacryma rerum*:² this was the most eloquent of the songs of Simeon.³ And when a man has lived to a fair age, he bears his marks of service. He may have never been remarked upon the breach at the head of the army, at least he shall have lost his teeth on the camp bread.

The idealism of serious people in this age of ours is of a noble character. It never seems to them that they have served enough; they have a fine impatience of their virtues. It were perhaps more modest to be singly thankful that we are no worse. It is not only our enemies, those separate characters — it is we ourselves who know not what we do; — thence springs the glimmering hope that perhaps we do better than we think: that to scramble through this random business with hands reasonably clean, to have played the part of a man or woman with

some reasonable fulness, to have often resisted the diabolic, and at the end to be still resisting it, is for the poor human soldier to have done right well. To ask to see some fruit of our endeavor is but a transcendental way of serving for reward; and what we take to be contempt of self is only greed of hire.

And again if we require so much of ourselves, shall we not require much of others?

If we do not genially judge our own deficiencies, is it not to be feared we shall be even stern to the trespasses of others? And he who (looking back upon his own life) can see no more than that he has been unconscionably long a-dying, will he not be tempted to think his neighbor unconscionably long of getting hanged? It is probable that nearly all who think of conduct at all, think of it too much; it is certain we all think too much of sin. We are not damned for doing wrong, but for not doing right; Christ would never hear of negative morality; *thou shalt* was ever his word, with which he superseded *thou shalt not*. To make our idea of morality center on forbidden acts is to defile the imagination and to introduce into our judgments of our fellow-men a secret element of gusto. If a thing is wrong for us, we should not dwell upon the thought of it; or we shall soon dwell upon it with inverted pleasure. If we cannot drive it from our minds — one thing of two: either our creed is in the wrong and we must more indulgently remodel it; or else, if our morality be in the right, we are criminal lunatics and should place our persons in restraint. A mark of such unwholesomely divided minds is the passion for interference with others: the Fox without the Tail was of this breed, but had (if his biographer is to be trusted) a certain antique civility now out of date. A man may have a flaw, a weakness, that unfits him for the duties of life, that spoils his temper, that threatens his integrity, or that betrays him into cruelty. It has to be conquered; but it must never be suffered to engross his thoughts. The true duties lie all upon the farther side, and must be attended to with a whole mind so soon as this preliminary clearing of the decks has been effected. In order that he may be kind and honest, it may be needful

¹ Caesar Germanicus (15 B.C.-ry, A.D.), victor in several campaigns against the Germans. The story is told in the *Germania* of the Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus (55-117).

² Our history has its tragedies (literally, tears).

³ See St. Luke ii 29.

he should become a total abstainer; let him become so then, and the next day let him forget the circumstance. Trying to be kind and honest will require all his thoughts; a mortified appetite is never a wise companion; in so far as he has had to mortify an appetite, he will still be the worse man, and of such an one a great deal of cheerfulness will be required in judging life, and a great deal of humility in judging others.

It may be argued again that dissatisfaction with our life's endeavor springs in some degree from dulness. We require higher tasks, because we do not recognize the height of those we have. Trying to be kind and honest seems an affair too simple and too inconsequential for gentlemen of our heroic mold; we had rather set ourselves to something bold, arduous, and conclusive; we had rather found a schism or suppress a heresy, cut off a hand or mortify an appetite. But the task before us, which is to co-endure with out existence, is rather one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is that of patience. There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled.

To be honest, to be kind — to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation — above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself — here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy. He has an ambitious soul who would ask more: he has a hopeful spirit who should look in such an enterprise to be successful. There is indeed one element in human destiny that not blindness itself can controvert: whatever else we are intended to do, we are not intended to succeed; failure is the fate allotted. It is so in every art and study; it is so above all in the continent art of living well. Here is a pleasant thought for the year's end or for the end of life: Only self-deception will be satisfied, and there need be no despair for the despairer.

2

But Christmas is not only the mile-mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of

self-examination: it is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. A man dissatisfied with his endeavors is a man tempted to sadness. And in the midst of the winter, when his life runs lowest and he is reminded of the empty chairs of his beloved, it is well he should be condemned to this fashion of the smiling face. Noble disappointment, noble self-denial are not to be admired, not even to be pardoned, if they bring bitterness. It is one thing to enter the kingdom of heaven maim; another to maim yourself and stay without. And the kingdom of heaven is of the childlike, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters and the builders and the judges, have lived long and done sternly and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if we should lose it. Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties. And it is the trouble with moral men that they have neither one nor other. It was the moral man, the Pharisee, whom Christ could not away with. If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say "give them up," for they may be all you have, but conceal them like a vice, lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.

A strange temptation attends upon man: to keep his eye on pleasures, even when he will not share in them; to aim all his morals against them. This very year a lady (singular iconoclast!) proclaimed a crusade against dolls; and the racy sermon against lust is a feature of the age. I venture to call such moralists insincere. At any excess or perversion of a natural appetite, their lyre sounds of itself with relishing denunciations; but for all displays of the truly diabolic — envy, malice, the mean lie, the mean silence, the calumnious truth, the backbiter, the petty tyrant, the peevish poisoner of family life — their standard is quite different. These are wrong, they will admit, yet somehow not so wrong; there is no zeal in their assault on them, no secret element of gusto warms up the sermon; it is for things not wrong in

themselves that they reserve the choicest of their indignation. A man may naturally disclaim all moral kinship with the Reverend Mr. Zola or the hobgoblin old lady of the dolls; for these are gross and naked instances. And yet in each of us some similar element resides. The sight of a pleasure in which we cannot or else will not share moves us to a particular impatience. It may be because we are envious, or because we are sad, or because we dislike noise and romping — being so refined, or because — being so philosophic — we have an overweighing sense of life's gravity: at least, as we go on in years, we are all tempted to frown upon our neighbor's pleasures. People are nowadays so fond of resisting temptations; here is one to be resisted. They are fond of self-denial; here is a propensity that cannot be too peremptorily denied. There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbors good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbor is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy — if I may.

3

Happiness and goodness, according to canting moralists, stand in the relation of effect and cause. There was never anything less proved or less probable: our happiness is never in our own hands; we inherit our constitution; we stand buffed among friends and enemies; we may be so built as to feel a sneer or an aspersion with unusual keenness, and so circumstanced as to be unusually exposed to them; we may have nerves very sensitive to pain, and be afflicted with a disease very painful. Virtue will not help us, and it is not meant to help us. It is not even its own reward, except for the self-centered and — I had almost said — the unamiable. No man can pacify his conscience; if quiet be what he want, he shall do better to let that organ perish from disuse. And to avoid the penalties of the law, and the minor *capitis diminutio*¹ of social ostracism, is an affair of wisdom — of cunning, if you will — and not of virtue.

In his own life, then, a man is not to expect

¹ loss of prestige.

happiness, only to profit by it gladly when it shall arise; he is on duty here; he knows not how or why, and does not need to know; he knows not for what hire, and must not ask. Somehow or other, though he does not know what goodness is, he must try to be good; somehow or other, though he cannot tell what will do it, he must try to give happiness to others. And no doubt there comes in here a frequent clash of duties. How far is he to make his neighbor happy? How far must he respect that smiling face, so easy to cloud, so hard to brighten again? And how far, on the other side, is he bound to be his brother's keeper and the prophet of his own morality? How far must he resent evil?

The difficulty is that we have little guidance; Christ's sayings on the point being hard to reconcile with each other, and (the most of them) hard to accept. But the truth of his teaching would seem to be this: in our own person and fortune, we should be ready to accept and to pardon all; it is *our* cheek we are to turn, *our* coat that we are to give away to the man who has taken *our* cloak. But when another's face is buffeted, perhaps a little of the lion will become us best. That we are to suffer others to be injured, and stand by, is not conceivable and surely not desirable. Revenge, says Bacon, is a kind of wild justice; its judgments at least are delivered by an insane judge; and in our own quarrel we can see nothing truly and do nothing wisely. But in the quarrel of our neighbor, let us be more bold. One person's happiness is as sacred as another's; when we cannot defend both, let us defend one with a stout heart. It is only in so far as we are doing this, that we have any right to interfere: the defence of B is our only ground of action against A. A has as good a right to go to the devil, as we to go to glory; and neither knows what he does.

The truth is that all these interventions and denunciations and militant mongerings of moral half-truths, though they be sometimes needful, though they are often enjoyable, do yet belong to an inferior grade of duties. Ill-temper and envy and revenge find here an arsenal of pious disguises; this is the playground of inverted lusts. With a

little more patience and a little less temper, a gentler and wiser method might be found in almost every case; and the knot that we cut by some fine heady quarrel-scene in private life, or, in public affairs, by some denunciatory act against what we are pleased to call our neighbor's vices, might yet have been unwoven by the hand of sympathy.

4

To look back upon the past year, and see how little we have striven and to what small purpose; and how often we have been cowardly and hung back, or temerarious and rushed unwisely in; and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness: — it may seem a paradox, but in the bitterness of these discoveries, a certain consolation resides. Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is — so that to see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner-bell when he is hungry, fills him with surprising joys — this world is yet for him no abiding city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails him, year after year, he must thumb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go, there need be few illusions left about himself. *Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much:* — surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed. Nor will he complain at the summons which calls a defeated soldier from the field: defeated, ay, if he were Paul

or Marcus Aurelius¹ — but if there is still one inch of fight in his old spirit, undishonored, The faith which sustained him in his life-long blindness and life-long disappointment will scarce even be required in this last formality of laying down his arms. Give him a march with his old bones; there, out of the glorious sun-colored earth, out of the day and the dust and the ecstasy — there goes another Faithful Failure!

From a recent book of verse, where there is more than one such beautiful and manly poem, I take this memorial piece: it says better than I can, what I love to think; let it be our parting word:

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene.
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night —
Night, with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

¹ The Roman Emperor (121-180) whose *Meditations* is a compendium of Stoic philosophy.

² From *A Book of Verses*, by William Ernest Henley. D. Nutt, 1888. (Stevenson.)

Oscar Wilde - 1856-1900

Oscar O'Flahertie Fingal Wills Wilde was born in Dublin on October 15, 1856. Like Sheridan, he had brilliant parents, both of whom adored wit and society, and both of whom had solid accomplishments to their credit, his father as a physician, specialist in the treatment of the eye, his mother as a writer. Oscar first attended Trinity College, Dublin, but in 1874¹ entered Magdalen College, Oxford. He was a precocious and

brilliant student, specializing in the classics. At Oxford, in 1878, he won the Newdigate Prize for an original poem. At Oxford, too, he began the affectations which he cultivated throughout his life. In London, with his wit and his love of beauty — and with his knee breeches, flowing tie, and lily in his hand — he became the leader among the Esthetes, whom Du Maurier ridiculed in *Punch*, and Gilbert and Sullivan satirized in *Patience*. His manner was aped by many, and his *bons mots* were repeated everywhere. In 1891 Wilde visited the United States, where, besides entertaining audiences with his eccentricities and with his paradoxes, he was influential in spreading Ruskin's gospel of the need of art in everyday life. In 1895 he was convicted of homosexual immorality and was imprisoned for two years in Reading Gaol, not far from London. After his release, stripped of his reputation, ruined financially, broken in health, he went to Paris. There on November 30, 1900, he died in obscurity and was buried in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise.

Oscar Wilde's literary works divide themselves naturally into three groups. In the first group are his magazine articles, his poems, his two volumes of delightful fairy stories, his famous novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), and three strange plays, *Vera, or, The Nihilists* (1883), *The Duchess of Padua* (1891), and *Salome* (1891). *Salome*, written in French and acted in Paris two years later, is, despite its decadence, powerful, especially when played to the accompaniment of Strauss's music. The second group, covering four scant years, is composed of the four artificial comedies of manners upon which Wilde's reputation as a dramatist rests. They are *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1891); *A Woman of No Importance* (1893); *An Ideal Husband* (1895); and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). In the third division stands the moving poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), and *De Profundis*, a part of his autobiography published after his death.

The Ballad of Reading Gaol, written in Paris two years after Wilde's release from prison and two years before his death, is his most sincere piece of writing. It is in the tradition of the old English ballads and *The Ancient Mariner* (which it often echoes), but with a deep-felt emotion that could arise only from the poet's bitter experience. Wilde's intensity and compassion is rivaled only by the French artist Daumier in his picture of men in a prison yard.

Wilde's complete works are accessible in several editions. Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde: His Life and Confessions* (2. vols., 1910), and R. H. Sherard, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (1918), provide full accounts of his life.

The Ballad of Reading Gaol¹

t

He did not wear his scarlet coat,²
 For blood and wine are red,
 And blood and wine were on his hands
 When they found him with the dead,
 The poor dead woman whom he loved, 5
 And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men³
 In a suit of shabby gray;

A cricket cap was on his head,
 And his step seemed light and gay; 10
 But I never saw a man who looked
 So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
 With such a wistful eye
 Upon that little tent of blue 15
 Which prisoners call the sky,
 And at every drifting cloud that went
 With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring, 20
 And was wondering if the man had done
 A great or little thing,

¹ This is the normal spelling in England of "jail."

² The man, a member of the Royal Horse Guards of London, had been sentenced to death for murder. J Men waiting for their appeal to a higher court.

- And at every wandering cloud that trailed
Its raveled fleeces by.
- He did not wring his hands, as do
Those witless men who dare 110
To try to rear the changeling Hope
In the cave of black Despair;
He only looked upon the sun,
And drank the morning air.
- He did not wring his hands nor weep, 115
Nor did he peak or pine,
But he drank the air as though it held
Some healthful anodyne;
With open mouth he drank the sun
As though it had been wine! 120
- And I and all the souls in pain,
Who tramped the other ring,
Forgot if we ourselves had done
A great or little thing,
And watched with gaze of dull amaze 125
The man who had to swing.
- And strange it was to see him pass
With a step so light and gay,
And strange it was to see him look
So wistfully at the day, 130
And strange it was to think that he
Had such a debt to pay.
- For oak and elm have pleasant leaves
That in the springtime shoot;
But grim to see is the gallows-tree, 135
With its adder-bitten root,
And, green or dry, a man must die
Before it bears its fruit!
- The loftiest place is that seat of grace
For which all worldlings try; 140
But who would stand in hempen band
Upon a scaffold high,
And through a murderer's collar take
His last look at the sky?
- It is sweet to dance to violins 145
When love and life are fair;
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
Is delicate and rare;
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air! 150
- So with curious eyes and sick surmise
We watched him day by day,
And wondered if each one of us
Would end the self-same way,
For none can tell to what red hell 155
His sightless soul may stray.
- At last the dead man walked no more
Amongst the Trial Men,
And I knew that he was standing up
In the black dock's dreadful pen, 160
And that never would I see his face
In God's sweet world again.
- Like two doomed ships that pass in storm
We had crossed each other's way,
But we made no sign, we said no word — 165
We had no word to say —
For we did not meet in the holy night,
But in the shameful day.
- A prison wall was round us both,
Two outcast men we were. 170
The world had thrust us from its heart,
And God from out His care;
And the iron gin¹ that waits for Sin
Had caught us in its snare.
- 3
- In Debtors' Yard² the stones are hard, 175
And the dripping wall is high,
So it was there he took the air
Beneath the leaden sky,
And by each side a warder walked, 180
For fear the man might die.
- Or else he sat with those who watched
His anguish night and day;
Who watched him when he rose to weep,
And when he crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey. 186
- The governor was strong upon
The Regulations Act;³
The doctor said that death was but
A scientific fact; 190
- ¹ trap.
² Where men who had been put in prison for debt
took their exercise.
³ Act of Parliament regulating and "humanizing"
prisons.

- And twice a day the chaplain called,
And left a little tract.
- And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer.
His soul was resolute, and held 195
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's hands were near.
- But why he said so strange a thing
No warder dared to ask; 200
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given at his task,
Must set a lock upon his lips,
And make his face a mask.
- Or else he might be moved, and try 205
To comfort or console —
And what should human Pity do
Pent up in Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace in such a place
Could help a brother's soul? 210
- With slouch and swing around the ring
We trod the Fools' Parade!
We did not care — we knew we were
The Devil's Own Brigade,
And shaven head and feet of lead 215
Make a merry masquerade.
- We tore the tarry rope to shreds¹
With blunt and bleeding nails;
We rubbed the doors, and scrubbed the floors,
And cleaned the shining rails; 220
And, rank by rank, we soaped the plank,
And clattered with the pails.
- We sewed the sacks, we broke the stones,
We turned the dusty drill,
We banged the tins, and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on the mill; 226
But in the heart of every man
Terror was lying still.
- So still it lay that every day
Crawled like a weed-clogged wave; 230
And we forgot the bitter lot
That waits for fool and knave,
- Till once, as we tramped in from work,
We passed an open grave.
- With yawning mouth the yellow hole 235
Gaped for a living thing;
The very mud cried out for blood
To the thirsty asphalt ring.
And we knew that ere one dawn grew fair
Some prisoner had to swing 240
- Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom.
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom;
And each man trembled as he crept 245
Into his numbered tomb.
- That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear, 250
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.
- He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land;
The watchers watched him as he slept, 255
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand.
- But there is no sleep when men must weep
Who never yet have wept; 260
So we — the fool, the fraud, the knave —
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.
- Alas! it is a fearful thing 265
To feel another's guilt!
For, right within, the sword of Sin
Pierced to its poisoned hilt,
And as molten lead were the tears we shed
For the blood we had not spilt. 270
- The warders with their shoes of felt
Crept by each padlocked door,
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,
Gray figures on the floor,
And wondered why men knelt to pray 275
Who never prayed before.

¹ To make oakum for calking the seams of wooden vessels.

- All through the night we knelt and prayed,
Mad mourners of a corse!
The troubled plumes of midnight were
The plumes upon a hearse; 280
And bitter wine upon a sponge
Was the savor of Remorse.
- The gray cock crew, the red cock crew,
But never came the day;
And crooked shapes of Terror crouched, 285
In the corners where we lay;
And each evil sprite that walks by night
Before us seemed to play.
- They glided past, they glided fast,
Like travelers through a mist; 290
They mocked the moon in a rigadoon¹
Of delicate turn and twist,
And with formal pace and loathsome grace
The phantoms kept their tryst.
- With mop and mow,² we saw them go, 295
Slim shadows hand and hand;
About, about, in ghostly rout
They trod a saraband;³
And the damned grotesques made arabesques,
Like the wind upon the sand! 300
- With the pirouettes of marionettes,
They tripped on pointed tread,
But with flutes of Fear they filled the ear,
As their grisly masque they led,
And loud they sang, and long they sang, 305
For they sang to wake the dead.
- "Oho!" they cried, "*the world is wide,
But fettered limbs go lame!*
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game, 310
But he does not win who flays with Sin
In the secret House of Shame."
- No things of air these antics were,
That frolicked with such glee;
To men whose lives were held in gyves, 315
And whose feet might not go free,
Ah! wounds of Christ! they were living things,
Most terrible to see.
- ¹ a gay dance.
² mop and mow are old words meaning *gnaïace*. Cf.
J. Fletcher's "What mops and mows it makes."
³ a dignified dance.
- Around, around, they waltzed and wound;
Some wheeled in smirking pairs; 320
With the mincing step of a demirep¹
Some sidled up the stairs;
And with subtle sneer, and fawning leer,
Each helped us at our prayers.
- The morning wind began to moan, 325
But still the night went on;
Through its giant loom the web of gloom
Crept till each thread was spun;
And, as we prayed, we grew afraid
Of the Justice of the Sun. 330
- The moaning wind went wandering round
The weeping prison-wall;
Till like a wheel of turning steel
We felt the minutes crawl.
O moaning wind! what had we done 335
To have such a seneschal?
- At last I saw the shadowed bars,
Like a lattice wrought in lead,
Move right across the whitewashed wall
That faced my three-plank bed, 340
And I knew that somewhere in the world
God's dreadful dawn was red.
- At six o'clock we cleaned our cells,
At seven all was still,
But the sough and swing of a mighty wing
The prison seemed to fill, 346
For the Lord of Death with icy breath,
Had entered in to kill.
- He did not pass in purple pomp,
Nor ride a moon-white steed. 350
Three yards of cord and a sliding board
Are all the gallows' need;
So with rope of shame the Herald came
To do the secret deed.
- We were as men who through a fen
Of filthy darkness grope — 355
We did not dare to breathe a prayer,
Or to give our anguish scope;
Something was dead in each of us,
And what was dead was Hope. 360
- For man's grim Justice goes its way,
And will not swerve aside.
¹ one of doubtful reputation.

- It slays the weak, it slays the strong,
It has a deadly stride;
With iron heel it slays the strong, 365
The monstrous parricide!
- We waited for the stroke of eight;
Each tongue was thick with thirst.
For the stroke of eight is the stroke of Fate
That makes a man accursed, 370
And Fate will use a running noose
For the best man and the worst.
- We had no other thing to do,
Save to wait for the sign to come;
So, like things of stone in a valley lone, 375
Quiet we sat and dumb;
But each man's heart beat thick and quick,
Like a madman on a drum!
- With sudden shock the prison-clock
Smote on the shivering air, 380
And from all the gaol rose up a wail
Of impotent despair,
Like the sound that frightened marshes hear
From some leper in his lair.
- And as one sees most fearful things 385
In the crystal of a dream,
We saw the greasy hempen rope
Hooked to the blackened beam,
And heard the prayer the hangman's snare
Strangled into a scream. 390
- And all the woe that moved him so
That he gave that bitter cry,
And the wild regrets, and the bloody sweats,
None knew so well as I;
For he who lives more lives than one 395
More deaths than one must die.
- 4
- There is no chapel on the day
On which they hang a man;
The chaplain's heart is far too sick,
Or his face is far too wan, 400
Or there is that written in his eyes
Which none should look upon.
- So they kept us close till nigh on noon,
And then they rang the bell,
And the warders with their jingling keys 405
Opened each listening cell,
- And down the iron stair we tramped,
Each from his separate hell.
- Out into God's sweet air we went,
But not in wonted way, 410
For this man's face was white with fear,
And that man's face was gray,
And I never saw sad men who looked
So wistfully at the day.
- I never saw sad men who looked 415
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
We prisoners called the sky,
And at every careless cloud that passed
In happy freedom by. 420
- But there were those amongst us all
Who walked with downcast head,
And knew that, had each got his due,
They should have died instead;
He had but killed a thing that lived, 425
Whilst they had killed the dead.
- For he who sins a second time
Wakes a dead soul to pain,
And draws it from its spotted shroud,
And makes it bleed again, 430
And makes it bleed great gout¹ of blood,
And makes it bleed in vain!
- Like ape or clown, in monstrous garb
With crooked arrows starred,²
Silently we went round and round 435
The slippery asphalt yard;
Silently we went round and round,
And no man spoke a word.
- Silently we went round and round,
And through each hollow mind 440
The Memory of dreadful things
Rushed like a dreadful wind,
And Horror stalked before each man,
And Terror crept behind.
- The warders strutted up and down, 445
And kept their herd of brutes;
Their uniforms were spick and span,
And they wore their Sunday suits,
- ¹ drops.
² English convicts had on their uniforms, instead of stripes, crudely drawn arrow-heads.

But we knew the work they had been at, By the quicklime on their boots.	450	For flowers have been known to heal A common man's despair.	
For where a grave had opened wide, There was no grave at all — Only a stretch of mud and sand By the hideous prison-wall, And a little heap of burning lime, That the man should have his pall.	455	So never will wine-red rose or white, Petal by petal, fall On that stretch of mud and sand that lies By the hideous prison-wall, To tell the men who tramp the yard That God's Son died for all.	495
For he has a pall, this wretched man, Such as few men can claim; Deep down below a prison-yard, Naked for greater shame, He lies, with fetters on each foot, Wrapped in a sheet of flame I	460	Yet though the hideous prison-wall Still hems him round and round, And a spirit may not walk by night That is with fetters bound, And a spirit may but weep that lies In such unholy ground,	500
And all the while the burning lime Eats flesh and bone away — It eats the brittle bone by night, And the soft flesh by day; It eats the flesh and bone by turns, But it eats the heart away.	465	He is at peace — this wretched man — At peace, or will be soon; There is no thing to make him mad, Nor does Terror walk at noon, For the lampless Earth in which he lies Has neither Sun nor Moon.	505 510
For three long years they will not sow Or root or seedling there; For three long years the unblessed spot Will sterile be and bare, And look upon the wondering sky With unapproachful stare.	470	They hanged him as a beast is hanged; They did not even toll A requiem that might have brought Rest to his startled soul, But hurriedly they took him out, And hid him in a hole.	515
They think a murderer's heart would taint Each simple seed they sow. It is not true! God's kindly earth Is kindlier than men know, And the red rose would but blow more red, The white rose whiter blow.	476 480	They stripped him of his canvas clothes, And gave him to the flies; They mocked the swollen purple throat, And the stark and staring eyes; And with laughter loud they heaped the shroud In which their convict lies.	520
Out of his mouth a red, red rose! Out of his heart a white! For who can say by what strange way, Christ brings His will to light, Since the barren staff the pilgrim bore ¹ Bloomed in the great Pope's sight?	485	The chaplain would not kneel to pray By his dishonored grave, Nor mark it with that blessed Cross That Christ for sinners gave, Because the man was one of those Whom Christ came down to save.	525
But neither milk-white rose nor red May bloom in prison air — The shard, the pebble, and the flint, Are what they give us there;	490	Yet all is well; he has but passed To Life's appointed bourne; And alien tears will fill for him Pity's long-broken urn, For his mourners will be outcast men, And outcasts always mourn.	530

¹ Tannhauser's pilgrim staff, which blossomed after Pope Urban in the thirteenth century refused to forgive him for living with Venus.

- 5
I know not whether laws be right, 535
Or whether laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in jaii
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long. 540
- But this I know, that every law
That men have made for man,
Since first man took his brother's life,
And the sad world began,
But straws¹ the wheat and saves the chaff 545
With a most evil fan.
- This too I know — and wise it were
If each could know the same —
That every prison that men build
Is built with bricks of shame, 550
And bound with bars lest Christ should see
How men their brothers maim.
- With bars they blur the gracious moon,
And blind the goodly sun;
And they do well to hide their hell, 555
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor son of Man
Ever should look upon!
- The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison-air; 560
It is only what is good in man
That wastes and withers there.
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the warder is Despair.
- For they starve the little frightened child 565
Till it weeps both night and day;
And they scourge the weak, and flog the fool,
And gibe the old and gray,
And some grow mad, and all grow bad,
And none a word may say. 570
- Each narrow cell in which we dwell
Is a foul and dark latrine,
And the fetid breath of living Death
Chokes up each grated screen,
And all, but Lust, is turned to dust 575
In Humanity's machine.
- ¹ Throws away the wheat instead of the straw.
- The brackish water that we drink
Creeps with a loathsome slime,
And the bitter bread they weigh in scales
Is full of chalk and lime, 580
And Sleep will not lie down, but walks
Wild-eyed, and cries to Time.
- But though lean Hunger and green Thirst
Like asp and adder fight,
We have little care of prison fare, 585
For what chills and kills outright
Is that every stone one lifts by day
Becomes one's heart at night.
- With midnight always in one's heart,
And twilight in one's cell, 590
We turn the crank, or tear the rope,
Each in his separate hell,
And the silence is more awful far
Than the sound of a brazen bell.
- And never a human voice comes near 595
To speak a gentle word;
And the eye that watches through the door
Is pitiless and hard;
And by all forgot, we rot and rot,
With soul and body marred. 600
- And thus we rust Life's iron chain,
Degraded and alone;
And some men curse, and some men weep,
And some men make no moan;
But God's eternal laws are kind 605
And break the heart of stone.
- And every human heart that breaks,
In prison-cell or yard,
Is as that broken box that gave
Its treasure to the Lord, 610
And filled the unclean leper's house
With the scent of costliest nard.¹
- Ah! happy they whose hearts can break
And peace of pardon win!
How else may man make straight his plan
And cleanse his soul from sin? 616
How else but through a broken heart
May Lord Christ enter in?

¹ Spikenard, the costly ointment, which a woman who came to Simon the leper's house poured from an alabaster box upon Christ's head. See St. Mark xiv, 3.

And he of the swollen purple throat, And the stark and staring eyes, Waits for the holy hands that took The Thief ¹ to Paradise; And a broken and a contrite heart The Lord will not despise.	620	6 In Reading gaol by Reading town There is a pit of shame, And in it lies a wretched man Eaten by teeth of flame, In a burning winding-sheet he lies, And his grave has got no name.	640
The man in red ² who reads the law Gave him three weeks of life, Three little weeks in which to heal His soul of his soul's strife, And cleanse from every blot of blood The hand that held the knife.	625 630	And there, till Christ call forth the dead, In silence let him lie. No need to waste the foolish tear, Or heave a windy sigh; The man had killed the thing he love--!, And so he had to die.	645
And with tears of blood he cleansed the hand, The hand that held the steel — For only blood can wipe out blood, And only tears can heal — And the crimson stain that was of Cain Became Christ's snow-white seal.	63-5	And all men kill the thing they love. By all let this be heard, Some do it with a bitter look, Some with a flattering word, The coward does it with a kiss, The brave man with a sword! 1896.	650 1898.

¹ Who was crucified next to Christ. See St Luke xxii, 43.

² The juduy, in red robe, who passes the death sentence.

Lady Windermere's Fan

Lady Windermere's Fan, like *The School for Scandal*, is a literary descendant of Restoration comedy. It is a comedy of manners and of wit. Sheridan, as we have seen, introduced into this type of comedy a certain amount of sentiment, even though he was attacking the growing sentimentality of the drama; and he surpassed most Restoration playwrights in making his plot compact. Wilde went even further. Many situations in *Lady Windermere's Fan* are essentially emotional, only kept within limits by his skill in leading up to, and retreating from, the scene; and his skillfully articulated plot is one of the most brilliant examples of sheer craftsmanship in the British theater. To what he had inherited from Restoration drama, Wilde added what he had learned from the artificial, but "well-made," plays of the French dramatists Scribe and Sardou.

In addition, Wilde followed the new movement of his time by giving this comedy the air of a "problem play," of a "play with ideas," by introducing, in most cases naturally, epigrams and comments upon life. But it is Wilde's wit and especially his tight technique, rather than his treatment of social problems, that make this play memorable.

Wilde uses the stage-directions of the early nineteenth century playwrights. L, R., c. mean, obviously, left, right, center. E. is exit, or entrance' u. is up-stage, the rear of the set; down, the front, or toward the footlights.

For the drama of the period, see the accounts by A. Henderson and by S. Jameson; also W. Archer, *English Dramatists of To-day*

Dramatis Persona

LORD WINDERMERE
LORD DARLINGTON
LORD AUGUSTUS LORTON
MR. CECIL GRAHAM
MR. DUMBY
MR. HOPPER

PARKER, *butler*
LADY WINDERMERE
THE DUCHESS OF BERWICK
LADY AGATHA CARLISLE
LADY PLYMDALE

LADY JEDBURGH
LADY STUTFIELD
MRS. COWPER-COWPER
MRS. ERLYNNE
ROSALIE, *maid*

THE SCENES OF THE PLAY

ACT I. MORNING-ROOM IN LORD WINDERMERE'S HOUSE
ACT II. DRAWING-ROOM IN LORD WINDERMERE'S HOUSE
ACT III. LORD DARLINGTON'S ROOMS
ACT IV. SAME AS ACT I

TIME — The Present
PLACE — London

The action of the play takes place within twenty-four hours, beginning on a Tuesday afternoon at five o'clock, and ending the next day at 1.30 P.M.

ACT I

SCENE — *Morning-room of LORD WINDERMERE'S house in Carleton House Terrace. Doors c. and R. Bureau with books and papers R. Sofa with small tea-table L. Window opening on to terrace L. Table R.*

LADY WINDERMERE is at table R. *Arranging roses in a blue bowl.*

(Enter PARKER.)

Parker. Is your ladyship at home this afternoon?

Lady W. Yes — who has called?

Parker. Lord Darlington, my lady.

Lady W. (*hesitates for a moment*). Show him up — and I'm at home to anyone who calls.

Parker. Yes, my lady. (Exit c.)

Lady W. It's best for me to see him before to-night. I'm glad he's come.

(Enter PARKER c.)

Parker. Lord Darlington.

(Enter LORD D. c. Exit PARKER.)

Lord D. How do you do, Lady Windermere?

Lady W. How do you do, Lord Darling, ton? No, I can't shake hands with you. My hands are all wet with these roses.

Aren't they lovely? They came up from Selby this morning.

Lord D. They are quite perfect. (*Sees a fan lying on the table.*) And what a wonderful fan! May I look at it?

Lady W. Do. Pretty, isn't it! It's got my name on it, and everything. I have only just seen it myself. It's my husband's birthday present to me. You know to-day is my birthday?

Lord D. No? Is it really?

Lady W. Yes, I'm of age to-day. Quite an important day in my life, isn't it? That is why I am giving this party to-night. Do sit down. (*Still arranging flowers*)

Lord D. (*sitting down*). I wish I had known it was your birthday, Lady Windermere. I would have covered the whole street in front of your house with flowers to walk on. They are made for you. (*A short pause.*)

Lady W. Lord Darlington, you annoyed me last night at the Foreign Office. I am afraid you are going to annoy me again.

Lord D. I, Lady Windermere?

(Enter PARKER and FOOTMAN c. with tray and tea-things.)

Lady W. Put it there, Parker. That will do. (*Wipes her hands with her pocket-handkerchief, goes to tea-table L. and sits down.*) Won't you come over, Lord Darlington?

(Exit PARKER c.)

Lord D. (takes chair and goes across L. c.).
I am quite miserable, Lady Windermere.
You must tell me what I did.

(Sits down at table L.)

Lady W. Well, you kept paying me elaborate compliments the whole evening.

Lord D. (smiling). Ah, nowadays we are all of us so hard up, that the only pleasant things to pay are compliments. They're the only things we can pay.

Lady W. (shaking her head). No, I am talking very seriously. You mustn't laugh, I am quite serious. I don't like compliments, and I don't see why a man should think he is pleasing a woman enormously when he says to her a whole heap of things that he doesn't mean.

Lord D. Ah, but I did mean them.

(Takes tea which she offers him.)

Lady W. {gravely}. I hope not. I should be sorry to have to quarrel with you, Lord Darlington. I like you very much, you know that. But I shouldn't like you at all if I thought you were what most other men are. Believe me, you are better than most other men, and I sometimes think you pretend to be worse.

Lord D. We all have our little vanities, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. Why do you make that your special one? *(Still seated at table L.)*

Lord D. (still seated L. c.). Oh, nowadays so many conceited people go about Society pretending to be good, that I think it shows rather a sweet and modest disposition to pretend to be bad. Besides, there is this to be said. If you pretend to be good, the world takes you very seriously. If you pretend to be bad, it doesn't. Such is the astounding stupidity of optimism.

Lady W. Don't you want the world to take you seriously, then, Lord Darlington?

Lord D. No, not the world. Who are the people the world takes seriously? All the dull people one can think of, from the bishops down to the bores. I should like you to take me very seriously, Lady Windermere, you more than anyone else in life.

Lady W. Why — why me?

Lord D. {after a slight hesitation}. Because I think we might be great friends. Let us be

great friends. You may want a friend some day.

Lady W. Why do you say that?

Lord D. Oh! — we all want friends at times.

Lady W. I think we're very good friends already, Lord Darlington. We can always remain so as long as you don't——

Lord D. Don't what?

Lady W. Don't spoil it by saying extravagant, silly things to me. You think I am a Puritan, I suppose? Well, I have something of the Puritan in me. I was brought up like that. I am glad of it. My mother died when I was a mere child. I lived always with Lady Julia, my father's eldest sister, you know. She was stern to me, but she taught me, what the world is forgetting, the difference that there is between what is right and what is wrong. She allowed of no compromise. allow of none.

Lord D. My dear Lady Windermere!

Lady W. (leaning back on the sofa). You look on me as being behind the age. — Well, I am! I should be sorry to be on the same level as an age like this.

Lord D. You think the age very bad?

Lady W. Yes. Nowadays people seem to look on life as a speculation. It is not a speculation. It is a sacrament. Its ideal is Love. Its purification is sacrifice.

Lord D. {smiling}. Oh, anything is better than being sacrificed!

Lady W. (leaning forward). Don't say that.

Lord D. I do say it. I feel it — I know it.

(Enter PARKER c.)

Parker. The men want to know if they are to put the carpets on the terrace for to-night, my lady?

Lady W. You don't think it will rain, Lord Darlington, do you?

Lord D. I won't hear of its raining on your birthday!

Lady W. Tell them to do it at once, Parker. *(Exit PARKER c.)*

Lord D. {still seated}. Do you think, then — of course I am only putting an imaginary instance — do you think, that in the case of a young married couple, say about two years married, if the husband suddenly becomes the

intimate friend of a woman of — well, more than doubtful character, is always calling upon her, lunching with her, and probably paying her bills — do you think that the wife should not console herself?

Lady W. (frowning). Console herself?

Lord D. Yes, I think she should — I think she has the right.

Lady W. Because the husband is vile should the wife be vile also?

Lord D. Vileness is a terrible word, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. It is a terrible thing, Lord Darlington.

Lord D. Do you know I am — afraid that good people do a great deal of harm in this world. Certainly the greatest harm they do is that they make badness of such extraordinary importance. It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious. I take the side of the charming, and you, Lady Windermere, can't help belonging to them.

Lady W. Now, Lord Darlington. (*Rising and crossing R., front of him*) Don't stir, I am merely going to finish my flowers.

(*Goes to table R. c*)

Lord D. (rising and moving chair). And I must say I think you are very hard on modern life, Lady Windermere. Of course there is much against it, I admit. Most women, for instance, nowadays, are rather mercenary.

Lady W. Don't talk about such people.

Lord D. Well, then, setting mercenary people aside, who, of course, are dreadful, do you think seriously that women who have committed what the world calls a fault should never be forgiven?

Lady W. (standing at table). I think they should never be forgiven.

Lord D. And me? Do you think that there should be the same laws for men as there are for women?

Lady W. Certainly!

Lord D. I think life too complex a thing to be settled by these hard-and-fast rules.

Lady W. If we had "these hard-and-fast rules," we should find life much more simple.

Lord D. You allow of no exceptions?

Lady W. None!

Lord D. Ah, what a fascinating Puritan you are, Lady Windermere!

Lady W. The adjective was unnecessary, Lord Darlington.

Lord D. I couldn't help it. I can resist everything except temptation.

Lady W. You have the modern affectation of weakness.

Lord D. (looking at her). It's only an affectation, Lady Windermere.

(*Enter PARKER c.*)

Parker. The Duchess of Berwick and Lady Agatha Carlisle. (*Exit PARKER c.*)

(*Enter the DUCHESS OF B. and LADY A. C. c.*)

Duchess of B. (coming down c, and shaking hands). Dear Margaret, I am so pleased to see you. You remember Agatha, don't you? (*Crossing L. c.*) How do you do, Lord Darlington? I won't let you know my daughter, you are far too wicked.

Lord D. Don't say that, Duchess. As a wicked man I am a complete failure. Why, there are lots of people who say I have never really done anything wrong in the whole course of my life. Of course they only say it behind my back.

Duchess of B. Isn't he dreadful? Agatha, this is Lord Darlington. Mind you don't believe a word he says. (*LORD DARLINGTON crosses R. c.*) No, no tea, thank you, dear. (*Crosses and sits on sofa*) We have just had tea at Lady Markby's. Such bad tea, too. It was quite undrinkable. I wasn't at all surprised. Her own son-in-law supplies it. Agatha is looking forward so much to your ball to-night, dear Margaret.

Lady W. (seated L. c.) Oh, you mustn't think it is going to be a ball, Duchess. It is only a dance in honor of my birthday. A small and early.

Lord D. (standing L. c.). Very small, very early, and very select, Duchess.

Duchess of B. (On sofa L.) Of course it's going to be select. But we know *that*, dear Margaret, about *your* house. It is really one of the few houses in London where I can take Agatha, and where I feel perfectly secure about poor Berwick. I don't know what Society is coming to. The most dreadful

people seem to go everywhere. They certainly come to my parties — the men get quite furious if one doesn't ask them. Really, someone should make a stand against it.

Lady W. I will, Duchess, I will have no one in my house about whom there is any scandal.

Lord D. (R. c.). Oh, don't say that, Lady Windermere. I should never be admitted!

(*Sitting*)

Duchess of B. Oh, men don't matter. With women it is different. We're good. Some of us are, at least. But we are positively getting elbowed into the corner. Our husbands would really forget our existence if we didn't nag at them from time to time, just to remind them that we have a perfect legal right to do so.

Lord D. It's a curious thing, Duchess, about the game of marriage — a game, by the way, that is going out of fashion — the wives hold all the honors, and invariably lose the odd trick.

Duchess of B. The odd trick? Is that the husband, Lord Darlington?

Lord D. It would be rather a good name for the modern husband.

Duchess of B. Dear Lord Darlington, how thoroughly depraved you are!

Lady W. Lord Darlington's trivial.

Lord D. Ah, don't say that, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. Why do you talk so trivially about life, then?

Lord D. Because I think that life is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it.

(*Moves up c.*)

Duchess of B. What does he mean? Do, as a concession to my poor wits, Lord Darlington, just explain to me what you really mean?

Lord D. (*coming down back of table*). I think I had better not, Duchess. Nowadays to be intelligible is to be found out. Good-bye! (*Shakes hands with DUCHESS.*) And now (*goes up stage*), Lady Windermere, good-bye. I may come to-night, mayn't I? Do let me come.

Lady W. (*standing up stage with LORD D.*). Yes, certainly. But you are not to say foolish, insincere things to people.

Lord D. (*smiling*). Ah, you are beginning to reform me. It is a dangerous thing to reform anyone, Lady Windermere.

(*Bows, and exits*)

Duchess of B. (*who has risen, goes c.*). What a charming, wicked creature! I like him so much. I'm quite delighted he's gone! How sweet you're looking! Where do you get your gowns? And now I must tell you how sorry I am for you, dear Margaret. (*Crosses to sofa and sits with LADY W.*) Agatha, darling!

Lady A. Yes, mamma. (*Rises.*)

Duchess of B. Will you go and look over the photograph album that I see there?

Lady A. Yes, mamma. (*Goes to table L.*)

Duchess of B. Dear girl! She is so fond of photographs of Switzerland. Such a pure taste, I think. But I really am so sorry for you, Margaret.

Lady W. (*smiling*). Why, Duchess?

Duchess of B. Oh, on account of that horrid woman. She dresses so well, too, which makes it much worse, sets such a dreadful example. Augustus — you know my disreputable brother — such a trial to us all — well, Augustus is completely infatuated about her. It is quite scandalous, for she is absolutely inadmissible into society. Many a woman has a past, but I am told that she has at least a dozen, and that they all fit.

Lady W. Whom are you talking about, Duchess?

Duchess of B. About Mrs. Erlynne.

Lady W. Mrs. Erlynne? I never heard of her, Duchess. And what has she to do with me?

Duchess of B. My poor child! Agatha, darling!

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. Will you go out on the terrace and look at the sunset?

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

(*Exit through window L.*)

Duchess of B. Sweet girl! So devoted to sunsets! Shows such refinement of feeling, does it not? After all, there is nothing like nature, is there?

Lady W. But what is it, Duchess? Why do you talk to me about this person?

Duchess of B. Don't you really know? I assure you we're all so distressed about it. Only last night at dear Lady Fansen's everyone was saying how extraordinary it was that, of all men in London, Windermere should behave in such a way.

Lady IV. My husband — what has he to do with any woman of that kind?

Duchess of B. Ah, what indeed, dear? That is the point. He goes to see her continually, and stops for hours at a time, and while he is there she is not at home to anyone. Not that young ladies call on her, dear, but she has a great many disreputable men friends — my own brother in particular, as I told you — and that is what makes it so dreadful about Windermere. We looked upon him as being such a model husband, but I am afraid there is no doubt about it. My dear nieces — you know the Saville girls, don't you? — such nice domestic creatures — plain, dreadfully plain, but so good — well, they're always at the window doing fancy work, and making ugly things for the poor, which I think so useful of them in these dreadful socialistic days, and this terrible woman has taken a house in Curzon Street, right opposite them — such a respectable street, too. I don't know what we're coming to! And they tell me that Windermere goes there four and five times a week — they see him. They can't help it — and although they never talk scandal, they — well, of course — they remark on it to everyone. And the worst of it all is, that I have been told that this woman has got a great deal of money out of somebody, for it seems that she came to London six months ago without anything at all to speak of, and now she has this charming house in Mayfair, drives her pony in the Park every afternoon, and all — well, all — since she has known poor dear Windermere.

Lady W. Oh, I can't believe it!

Duchess of B. But it's quite true, my dear. The whole of London knows it. That is why I felt it was better to come and talk to you, and advise you to take Windermere away at once to Homburg or to Aix where he'll have something to amuse him, and where you can watch him all day long. I

assure you, my dear, that on several occasions after I was first married I had to pretend to be very ill, and was obliged to drink the most unpleasant mineral waters, merely to get Berwick out of town. He was so extremely susceptible. Though I am bound to say he never gave away any large sums of money to anybody. He is far too high-principled for that.

Lady W. {interrupting}. Duchess, Duchess, it's impossible! (*Rising and crossing stage c.*) We are only married two years. Our child is but six months old.

{Sits in chair R. of L. tabled}

Duchess of B. Ah, the dear, pretty baby! How is the little darling? Is it a boy or a girl? I hope a girl! — Ah, no, I remember it's a boy! I'm so sorry. Boys are so wicked. My boy is excessively immoral. You wouldn't believe at what hours he comes home. And he's only left Oxford a few months — I really don't know what they teach them there.

Lady W. Are all men bad?

Duchess of B. Oh, all of them, my dear, all of them, without any exception. And they never grow any better. Men become old, but they never become good.

Lady W. Windermere and I married for love.

Duchess of B. Yes, we begin like that. It was only Berwick's brutal and incessant threats of suicide that made me accept him at all, and before the year was out he was running after all kinds of petticoats, every color, every shape, every material. In fact, before the honeymoon was over, I caught him winking at my maid, a most pretty, respectable girl. I dismissed her at once without a character. — No, I remember I passed her on to my sister, poor dear Sir George is so short-sighted, I thought it wouldn't matter. But it did, though it was most unfortunate. (*Rises.*) And now, my dear child, I must go, as we are dining out. And mind you don't take this little aberration of Windermere's too much to heart. Just take him abroad, and he'll come back to you all right.

Lady W. Come back to me? (*c.*)

Duchess of B. (*L. c.*) Yes, dear, these

wicked women get our husbands away from us, but they always come back, slightly damaged, of course. And don't make scenes, men hate them!

Lady W. It is very kind of you, Duchess, to come and tell me all this. But I can't believe that my husband is untrue to me.

Duchess of B. Pretty child! I was like that once. Now I know that all men are monsters. (*LADY W. rings bell.*) The only thing to do is to feed the wretches well. A good cook does wonders, and that I know you have. My dear Margaret, you are not going to cry?

Lady W. You needn't be afraid, Duchess, I never cry.

Duchess of B. That's quite right, dear. Crying is the refuge of plain women, but the rum of pretty ones. Agatha, darling.

Lady A. (entering L.). Yes, mamma.

{Stands back of table L. c.}

Duchess of B. Come and bid good-bye to Lady Wmdermere, and thank her for your charming visit. (*Coming down again*) And by the way, I must thank you for sending a card to Mr. Hopper — he's that rich young Australian people are taking such notice of just at present. His father made a great fortune by selling some kind of food in circular tins — most palatable, I believe — I fancy it is the thing the servants always refuse to eat. But the son is quite interesting. I think he's attracted by dear Agatha's clever talk. Of course, we should be very sorry to lose her, but I think that a mother who doesn't part with a daughter every season has no real affection. We're coming to-night, dear. (*PARKER opens c. doors*) And remember my advice, take the poor fellow out of town at once, it is the only thing to do. Good-bye, once more; come, Agatha.

(Exeunt DUCHESS and LADY A. c.)

Lady W. How horrible! I understand now what Lord Darlington meant by the imaginary instance of the couple not two years married. Oh! it can't be true — she spoke of enormous sums of money paid to this woman. I know where Arthur keeps his bank book — in one of the drawers of that desk. I might find out by that. I will find out. (*Opens drawer.*) No, it is some

hideous mistake. (*Rises and goes c.*) Some silly scandal! He loves me! He loves me! But why should I not look? I am his wife, I have a right to look! (*Returns to bureau, takes out book and examines it, page by page, smiles and gives a sigh of relief*) I knew it, there is not a word of truth in this stupid story. (*Puts book back in drawer. As she does so, starts and takes out another book.*) A second book — private — locked! (*Tries to open it, but fails. Sees paper knife on bureau, and with it cuts cover from book. Begins to start at the first page.*) Mrs. Erlynne — £600 — Mrs. Erlynne — £700 — Mrs. Erlynne — £400. Oh! it is true! it is true! How horrible! (*Throws book on floor*)

(Enter LORD W. c.)

Lord W. Well, dear, has the fan been sent home yet? (*Going R. c. sees book*) Margaret, you have cut open my bank book. You have no right to do such a thing!

Lady W. You think it wrong that you are found out, don't you?

Lord W. I think it wrong that a wife should spy on her husband.

Lady W. I did not spy on you. I never knew of this woman's existence till half an hour ago. Someone who pitied me was kind enough to tell me what everyone in London knows already — your daily visits to Curzon Street, your mad infatuation, the monstrous sums of money you squander on this infamous woman! (*Crossing L.*)

Lord W. Margaret, don't talk like that of Mrs. Erlynne, you don't know how unjust it is!

Lady W. (turning to him). You are very jealous of Mrs. Erlynne's honor. I wish you had been as jealous of mine.

Lord W. Your honor is untouched, Margaret. You don't think for a moment that

(Puts book back into desk.)

Lady W. I think that you spend your money strangely. That is all. Oh, don't imagine I mind about the money. As far as I am concerned, you may squander everything we have. But what I do mind is that you who have loved me, you who have taught me to love you, should pass from the love that is given to the love that is bought.

Oh, it's horrible! (*Sits on sofa.*) And it is I who feel degraded. You don't feel anything. I feel stained, utterly stained. You can't realize how hideous the last six months seem to me now — every kiss you have given me is tainted in my memory.

Lord W. (*crossing to her*). Don't say that, Margaret, I never loved anyone in the whole world but you.

Lady W. (*rises*). Who is this woman, then? Why do you take a house for her?

Lord W. I did not take a house for her.

Lady W. You gave her the money to do it, which is the same thing.

Lord W. Margaret, as far as I have known Mrs. Erlynne—

Lady W. Is there a Mr. Erlynne — or is he a myth?

Lord W. Her husband died many years ago. She is alone in the world.

Lady W. No relations? (*A-pause.*)

Lord W. None.

Lady W. Rather curious, isn't it? (*L.*)

Lord W. (*L. c.*). Margaret, I was saying to you — and I beg you to listen to me — that as far as I have known Mrs. Erlynne, she has conducted herself well. If years ago—

Lady W. Oh! (*Crossing R. c.*) I don't want details about her life.

Lord W. I am not going to give you any details about her life. I tell you simply this — Mrs. Erlynne was once honored, loved, respected. She was well born, she had a position — she lost everything — threw it away, if you like. That makes it all the more bitter. Misfortunes one can endure — they come from outside, they are accidents. But to suffer for one's own faults — ah! there is the sting of life. It was twenty years ago, too. She was little more than a girl then. She had been a wife for even less time than you have.

Lady W. I am not interested in her — and — you should not mention this woman and me in the same breath. It is an error of taste.

(*Sitting R. at desk.*)

Lord W. Margaret, you could save this woman. She wants to get back into society, and she wants you to help her.

(*Crossing to her.*)

Lady W. Me!

Lord W. Yes, you.

Lady W. How impertinent of her!

(*A pause.*)

Lord W. Margaret, I came to ask you a great favor, and I still ask it of you, though you have discovered what I had intended you should never have known, that I have given Mrs. Erlynne a large sum of money. I want you to send her an invitation for our party to-night.

(*Standing L. of her.*)

Lady W. You are mad.

(*Rises.*)

Lord W. I entreat you. People may chatter about her, do chatter about her, of course, but they don't know anything definite against her. She has been to several houses — not to houses where you would go, I admit, but still to houses where women who are in what is called Society nowadays do go. That does not content her. She wants you to receive her once.

Lady W. As a triumph for her, I suppose.

Lord W. No; but because she knows that you are a good woman — and that if she comes here once she will have a chance of a happier, a surer life, than she has had. She will make no further effort to know you. Won't you help a woman who is trying to get back?

Lady W. No! If a woman really repents, she never wishes to return to the society that has made or seen her ruin.

Lord W. I beg of you.

Lady W. (*crossing to door R.*). I am going to dress for dinner, and don't mention the subject again this evening. Arthur (*going to him c.*), you fancy because I have no father or mother that I am alone in the world and you can treat me as you choose. You are wrong, I have friends, many friends.

Lord W. (*L. c.*). Margaret, you are talking foolishly, recklessly. I won't argue with you, but I insist upon your asking Mrs. Erlynne to-night.

Lady W. (*R. c.*). I shall do nothing of the kind.

(*Crossing L. c.*)

Lord W. (*c.*). You refuse?

Lady W. Absolutely!

Lord W. Ah, Margaret, do this for my sake; it is her last chance.

Lady W. What has that to do with me?

Lord W. How hard good women are!

Lady W. How weak bad men are!

Lord W. Margaret, none of us men may be good enough for the women we marry — that is quite true — but you don't imagine I would ever — oh, the suggestion is monstrous!

Lady W. Why should you be different from other men? I am told that there is hardly a husband in London who does not waste his life over *some* shameful passion.

Lord W. I am not one of them.

Lady W. I am not sure of that.

Lord W. You are sure in your heart. But don't make chasm after chasm between us. God knows the last few minutes have thrust us wide enough apart. Sit down and write the card.

Lady W. Nothing in the whole world would induce me.

Lord W. (*crossing to the bureau*). Then I will.

(*Rings electric bell, sits down and writes card.*)

Lady W. You are going to invite this woman? (*Crossing to him*)

Lord W. Yes. (*Pause.*)

(*Enter PARKER.*)

Lord W. Parker!

Parker. Yes, my lord. (*Comes down L. c.*)

Lord W. Have this note sent to Mrs. Erlynne at No. 84A Curzon Street. (*Crossing to L. c. and giving note to PARKER.*) There is no answer. (*Exit PARKER c.*)

Lady W. Arthur, if that woman comes here I shall insult her.

Lord W. Margaret, don't say that.

Lady W. I mean it.

Lord W. Child, if you did such a thing, there's not a woman in London who wouldn't pity you.

Lady W. There is not a good woman in London who would not applaud me. We have been too lax. We must make an example. I propose to begin to-night. (*Picking up fan.*) Yes, you gave me this fan to-day; it was your birthday present. If that woman crosses my threshold, I shall strike her across the face with it.

Lord W. Margaret, you couldn't do such a thing.

Lady W. You don't know me! (*Moves R.*)

(*Enter PARKER*)

Lady W. Parker!

Parker. Yes, my lady.

Lady W. I shall dine in my own room. I don't want dinner, in fact. See that everything is ready by half-past ten. And, Parker, be sure you pronounce the names of the guests very distinctly to-night. Sometimes you speak so fast that I miss them. I am particularly anxious to hear the names quite clearly, so as to make no mistake. You understand, Parker?

Parker. Yes, my lady.

Lady W. That will do! (*Exit PARKER c.*) (*Speaking to LORD W.*) Arthur, if that woman comes here — I warn you——

Lord W. Margaret, you'll ruin us!

Lady W. Us! From this moment my life is separate from yours. But if you wish to avoid a public scandal, write at once to this woman, and tell her that I forbid her to come here!

Lord W. I will not! — I cannot — she must come!

Lady W. Then I shall do exactly as I have said. (*Goes R.*) You leave me no choice. (*Exit R.*)

Lord W. (*calling after her*). Margaret! Margaret! (*A pause.*) My God! What shall I do! I dare not tell her who this woman really is. The shame would kill her.

(*Sinks down into a chair and buries his face in his hands*)

ACT II

SCENE — *Drawing-room in LORD W.'s house.*

Door R. u. opening into ballroom, where band is playing. Door L. through which guests are entering. Door L. u. opens on an illuminated terrace. Palms, flowers, and brilliant lights. Room crowded with guests.

LADY W. is receiving them.

Duchess of B. (*up c.*). So strange Lord Wmdermere isn't here. Mr. Hopper is very late, too. You have kept those five dances for him, Agatha! (*Comes down.*)

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. (*sitting on sofa*). Just let

me see your card. I'm so glad Lady Windermere has revived cards. — They're a mother's only safeguard. You dear simple little thing! (*Scratches out two names.*) No nice girl should ever waltz with such particularly younger sons! It looks so fast! The last two dances you must pass on the terrace with Mr. Hopper.

(*Enter MR. DUMBY and LADY PLYMDALE from the ballroom.*)

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. (*fanning herself*). The air is so pleasant there.

Parker. Mrs. Cowper-Cowper. Lady Stutfield. Sir James Royston. Mr. Guy Berkeley.

(*These people enter as announced?*)

Dumby. Good evening, Lady Stutfield. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season?

Lady S. I suppose so, Mr. Dumby. It's been a delightful season, hasn't it?

Dumby. Quite delightful! Good evening, Duchess. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season?

Duchess of B. I suppose so, Mr. Dumby. It has been a very dull season, hasn't it?

Dumby. Dreadfully dull! Dreadfully dull!

Mrs. C.-C. Good evening, Mr. Dumby. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season?

Dumby. Oh, I think not. There'll probably be two more. (*Wanders back to LADY P.*)

Parker. Mr. Rufford. Lady Jedburgh and Miss Graham. Mr. Hopper.

(*These people enter as announced.*)

Hopper. How do you do, Lady Windermere? How do you do, Duchess?

(*Bows to LADY A.*)

Duchess of B. Dear Mr. Hopper, how nice of you to come so early. We all know how you are run after in London.

Hopper. Capital place, London! They are not nearly so exclusive in London as they are in Sydney.

Duchess of B. Ah! we know your value, Mr. Hopper. We wish there were more like you. It would make life so much easier. Do you know, Mr. Hopper, dear Agatha and I are so much interested in Australia. It

must be so pretty with all the dear little kangaroos flying about. Agatha has found it on the map. What a curious shape it is! Just like a large packing-case. However, it is a very young country, isn't it?

Hopper. Wasn't it made at the same time as the others, Duchess?

Duchess of B. How clever you are, Mr. Hopper. You have a cleverness quite of your own. Now I mustn't keep you.

Hopper. But I should like to dance with Lady Agatha, Duchess.

Duchess of B. Well, I hope she has a dance left. Have you got a dance left, Agatha?

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. The next one?

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Hopper. May I have the pleasure?

(*LADY AGATHA bows*)

Duchess of B. Mind you take great care of my little chatter-box, Mr. Hopper.

(*LADY A. and MR. H. pass into ball-room*)

(*Enter LORD W. c.*)

Lord W. Margaret, I want to speak to you.

Lady W. In a moment. (*The music stops.*)

Parker. Lord Augustus Lorton.

(*Enter LORD A.*)

Lord A. Good evening, Lady Windermere.

Duchess of B. Sir James, will you take me into the ballroom? Augustus has been dining with us to-night. I really have had quite enough of dear Augustus for the moment.

(*SIR JAMES R. gives the DUCHESS his arm and escorts her into the ballroom!*)

Parker. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bowden. Lord and Lady Paisley. Lord Darlington.

(*These people enter as announced!*)

Lord A. (*coming up to LORD W.*). Want to speak to you particularly, dear boy. I'm worn to a shadow. Know I don't look it. None of us men do look what we really are. Demmed good thing, too. What I want to know is this. Who is she? Where does she come from? Why hasn't she got any demmed relations? Demmed nuisance, relations! But they make one so demmed respectable.

Lord W. You are talking of Mrs. Erlynne,

I suppose? I only met her six months ago. Till then I never knew of her existence.

Lord A. You have seen a good deal of her since then.

Lord W. (coldly). Yes, I have seen a good deal of her since then. I have just seen her.

Lord A. Egad! the women are very down on her. I have been dining with Arabella this evening! By Jove! you should have heard what she said about Mrs. Erlynne. She didn't leave a rag on her.... *(Aside.)* Berwick and I told her that didn't matter much, as the lady in question must have an extremely fine figure. You should have seen Arabella's expression!... But, look here, dear boy. I don't know what to do about Mrs. Erlynne. Egad! I might be married to her; she treats me with such demmed indifference. She's deuced clever, too! She explains everything. Egad! She explains you. She has got any amount of explanations for you — and all of them different.

Lord W. No explanations are necessary about my friendship with Mrs. Erlynne.

Lord A. Hem! Well, look here, dear old fellow. Do you think she will ever get into this demmed thing called Society? Would you introduce her to your wife? No use beating about the confounded bush. Would you do that?

Lord W. Mrs. Erlynne is coming here to-night.

Lord A. Your wife has sent her a card?

Lord W. Mrs. Erlynne has received a card.

Lord A. Then she's all right, dear boy. But why didn't you tell me that before? It would have saved me a heap of worry and demmed misunderstandings!

(LADY A. and MR. H. cross and exit on terrace L. u. E.)

Parker. Mr. Cecil Graham!

(Enter MR. CECIL G.)

Cecil G. (bows to LADY W., passes over and shakes hands with LORD W.). Good evening, Arthur. Why don't you ask me how I am? I like people to ask me how I am. It shows a widespread interest in my health. Now to-night I am not at all well. Been dining with my people. Wonder why it is one's people are always so tedious? My father would

talk morality after dinner. I told him he was old enough to know better. But my experience is that as soon as people are old enough to know better, they don't know anything at all. Hullo, Tuppy! Hear you're going to be married again; thought you were tired of that game.

Lord A. You're excessively trivial, my dear boy, excessively trivial!

Cecil G. By the way, Tuppy, which is it? Have you been twice married and once divorced, or twice divorced and once married? I say, you've been twice divorced and once married. It seems so much more probable.

Lord A. I have a very bad memory. I really don't remember which.

(Moves away R.)

Lady P. Lord Windermere, I've something most particular to ask you.

Lord W. I am afraid — if you will excuse me — I must join my wife.

Lady P. Oh, you mustn't dream of such a thing. It's most dangerous nowadays for a husband to pay any attention to his wife in public. It always makes people think that he beats her when they're alone. The world has grown so suspicious of anything that looks like a happy married life. But I'll tell you what it is at supper.

(Moves towards door of ballroom.)

Lord W. (c.). Margaret, I must speak to you.

Lady W. Will you hold my fan for me, Lord Darlington? Thanks.

(Comes down to him.)

Lord W. (crossing to her). Margaret, what you said before dinner was, of course, impossible?

Lady W. That woman is not coming here to-night!

Lord W. (R. c.). Mrs. Erlynne is coming here, and if you in any way annoy or wound her, you will bring shame and sorrow on us both. Remember that! Ah, Margaret! only trust me! A wife should trust her husband!

Lady W. (c.). London is full of women who trust their husbands. One can always recognize them. They look so thoroughly unhappy. I am not going to be one of them.

(*Moves up.*) Lord Darlington, will you give me back my fan, please? Thanks.... A useful thing, a fan, isn't it?... I want a friend to-night, Lord Darlington. I didn't know I would want one so soon.

Lord D. Lady Windermere? I knew the time would come some day; but why to-night!

Lord W. I will tell her. I must. It would be terrible if there were any scene. Margaret —

Parker. Mrs. Erlynne.

(LORD W. starts. MRS. E. enters, very beautifully dressed and very dignified. LADY W. clutches at her fan, then lets it drop on the floor. She bows coldly to MRS. E., who bows to her sweetly in turn, and sits into the room.)

Lord D. You have dropped your fan, Lady Windermere. (*Picks it up and hands it to her.*) Mrs. E. (c.). How do you do again, Lord Windermere? How charming your sweet wife looks! Quite a picture!

Lord W. (*in a low voice*). It was terribly rash of you to come!

Mrs. E. (*smiling*). The wisest thing I ever did in my life. And, by the way, you must pay me a good deal of attention this evening. I am afraid of the women. You must introduce me to some of them. The men I can always manage. How do you do, Lord Augustus? You have quite neglected me lately. I have not seen you since yesterday. I am afraid you're faithless. Everyone told me so.

Lord A. (R.). Now really, Mrs. Erlynne, allow me to explain.

Mrs. E. (R. c.). No, dear Lord Augustus, you can't explain anything. It is your chief charm.

Lord A. Ah! if you find charms in me, Mrs. Erlynne —

(*They converse together.* LORD W. moves uneasily about the room watching MRS. E.)

Lord D. (*to LADY W.*). How pale you are!

Lady W. Cowards are always pale.

Lord D. You look faint. Come out on the terrace.

Lady W. Yes. (*TO PARKER.*) Parker, send my cloak out.

Mrs. E. (*crossing to her*). Lady Windermere, how beautifully your terrace is illuminated. Reminds me of Prince Doria's at Rome. (LADY W. bows coldly, and goes off with LORD D.) Oh, how do you do, Mr. Graham? Isn't that your aunt, Lady Jedburgh? I should so much like to know her.

CECIL G. (*after a moment's hesitation and embarrassment*). Oh, certainly, if you wish it. Aunt Caroline, allow me to introduce Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. So pleased to meet you, Lady Jedburgh. (*Sits beside her on the sofa.*) Your nephew and I are great friends. I am so much interested in his political career. I think he's sure to be a wonderful success. He thinks like a Tory, and talks like a Radical, and that's so important nowadays. He's such a brilliant talker, too. But we all know from whom he inherits that. Lord Allendale was saying to me only yesterday in the Park, that Mr. Graham talks almost as well as his aunt.

Lady J. (R.). Most kind of you to say these charming things to me!

(MRS. E. smiles and continues conversation.)

Dumby (*to* CECIL G.). Did you introduce Mrs. Erlynne to Lady Jedburgh?

Cecil G. Had to, my dear fellow. Couldn't help it. That woman can make one do anything she wants. How, I don't know.

Dumby. Hope to goodness she won't speak to me! (*Saunters towards LADY P.*)

Mrs. E. (c. to LADY J.). On Thursday? With great pleasure. (*Rises and speaks to LORD W. laughing*) What a bore it is to have to be civil to these old dowagers. But they always insist on it.

Lady P. (*to* MR. D.). Who is that well-dressed woman talking to Windermere?

Dumby. Haven't got the slightest idea. Looks like an *édition de luxe* of a wicked French novel, meant specially for the English market.

Mrs. E. So that is poor Dumby with Lady Plymdale? I hear she is frightfully jealous of him. He doesn't seem anxious to speak to me to-night. I suppose he is afraid of her. Those straw-colored women have dreadful tempers. Do you know, I think I'll dance with you first, Windermere. (LORD W. bites

his lip and frowns.') It will make Lord Augustus so jealous! Lord Augustus! (LORD A. comes down?) Lord Windermere insists on my dancing with him first, and, as it's his own house, I can't well refuse. You know I would much sooner dance with you.

Lord A. (with a low bow). I wish I could think so, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. You know it far too well. I can fancy a person dancing through life with you and finding it charming.

Lord A. {placing his hand on his white waistcoat}. Oh, thank you, thank you. You are the most adorable of all ladies!

Mrs. E. What a nice speech! So simple and so sincere! Just the sort of speech I like. Well, you shall hold my bouquet. (Goes towards ballroom on LORD W.'s arm.) Ah, Mr. Dumby, how are you? I am so sorry I have been out the last three times you have called. Come and lunch on Friday.

Dumby (with perfect nonchalance). Delighted.

(LADY P. glares with indignation at MR. D. LORD A. follows MRS. E. and LORD W. into the ballroom holding bouquet?)

Lady P. (to MR. D.). What an absolute brute you are! I never can believe a word you say! Why did you tell me you didn't know her? What do you mean by calling on her three times running? You are not to go to lunch there; of course you understand that?

Dumby. My dear Laura, I wouldn't dream of going!

Lady P. You haven't told me her name yet. Who is she?

Dumby (coughs slightly and smooths his hair). She's a Mrs. Erlynne.

Lady P. That woman!

Dumby. Yes, that is what everyone calls her.

Lady P. How very interesting! How intensely interesting! I really must have a good stare at her. (Goes to door of ballroom and looks in.) I have heard the most shocking things about her. They say she is ruining poor Windermere. And Lady Windermere, who goes in for being so proper, invites her! How extremely amusing! It takes a thoroughly good woman to do a thoroughly

stupid thing. You are to lunch there on Friday.

Dumby. Why?

Lady P. Because I want you to take my husband with you. He has been so attentive lately, that he has become a perfect nuisance. Now, this woman is just the thing for him. He'll dance attendance upon her as long as she lets him, and won't bother me. I assure you, women of that kind are most useful. They form the basis of other people's marriages.

Dumby. What a mystery you are!

Lady P. (looking at him). I wish you were!

Dumby. I am — to myself. I am the only person in the world I should like to know thoroughly; but I don't see any chance of it just at present.

(They pass into the ballroom, and LADY W. and LORD D. enter from the terraced)

Lady W. Yes. Her coming here is monstrous, unbearable. I know now what you meant to-day at tea-time. Why didn't you tell me right out? You should have!

Lord D. I couldn't! A man can't tell these things about another man! But if I had known he was going to make you ask her here to-night, I think I would have told you. That insult, at any rate, you would have been spared.

Lady W. I did not ask her. He insisted on her coming — against my entreaties — against my commands. Oh! the house is tainted for me! I feel that every woman here sneers at me as she dances by with my husband. What have I done to deserve this? I gave him all my life. He took it — used it — spoiled it! I am degraded in my own eyes, and I lack courage — I am a coward!

{Sits down on sofa.}

Lord D. If I know you at all, I know that you can't live with a man who treats you like this! What sort of life would you have with him? You would feel that he was lying to you every moment of the day. You would feel that the look in his eyes was false, his voice false, his touch false, his passion false. He would come to you when he was weary of others; you would have to comfort him. He would come to you when he was devoted

to others, you would have to charm him. You would have to be to him the mask of his real life, the cloak to hide his secret.

Lady W. You are right — you are terribly right. But where am I to turn? You said you would be my friend, Lord Darlington. — Tell me, what am I to do? Be my friend now.

Lord D. Between men and women there is no friendship possible. There is passion, enmity, worship, love, but no friendship. I love you——

Lady W. No, no! (Rises.)

Lord D. Yes, I love you! You are more to me than anything in the whole world. What does your husband give you? Nothing. Whatever is in him he gives to this wretched woman, whom he has thrust into your society, into your home, to shame you before everyone. I offer you my life——

Lady W. Lord Darlington!

Lord D. My life — my whole life. Take it, and do with it what you will——I love you — love you as I have never loved any living thing. From the moment I met you I loved you, loved you blindly, adoringly, madly! You did not know it then — you know it now! Leave this house to-night. I won't tell you that the world matters nothing, or the world's voice, or the voice of Society. They matter a good deal. They matter far too much. But there are moments when one has to choose between living one's own life, fully, entirely, completely — or dragging out some false, shallow, degrading existence that the world in its hypocrisy demands. You have that moment now. Choose! Oh, my love, choose!

Lady W. (moving slowly away from him, and looking at him with startled eyes). I have not the courage.

Lord D. (following her). Yes; you have the courage. There may be six months of pain, of disgrace even, but when you no longer bear his name, when you bear mine, all will be well. Margaret, my love, my wife that shall be some day — yes, my wife! You know it! What are you now? This woman has the place that belongs by right to you. Oh! go — go out of this house, with head erect, with a smile upon your lips, with courage in your eyes. All London will know

• why you did it; and who will blame you? No one. If they do, what matter. Wrong? What is wrong? It's wrong for a man to abandon his wife for a shameless woman. It is wrong for a wife to remain with a man who so dishonors her. You said once you would make no compromise with things. Make none now. Be brave! Be yourself!

Lady W. I am afraid of being myself. Let me think! Let me wait! My husband may return to me. (Sits down on sofa.)

Lord D. And you would take him back! You are not what I thought you were. You are just the same as every other woman. You would stand anything rather than face the censure of a world whose praise you would despise. In a week you will be driving with this woman in the Park. She will be your constant guest — your dearest friend. You would endure anything rather than break with one blow this monstrous tie. You are right. You have no courage; none.

Lady W. Ah, give me time to think. I cannot answer you now.

(Passes her hand nervously over her brow)

Lord D. It must be now or not at all.

Lady W. (rising from the sofa). Then not at all! (A pause)

Lord D. You break my heart!

Lady W. Mine is already broken.

(A pause)

Lord D. To-morrow I leave England. This is the last time I shall ever look on you. You will never see me again. For one moment our lives met — our souls touched. They must never meet or touch again. Good-bye, Margaret. (Exit.)

Lady W. How alone I am in life! How terribly alone! (The music stops.)

(Enter the DUCHESS OF B. and LORD P. laughing and talking. Other guests come on from ballroom.)

Duchess of B. Dear Margaret, I've just been having such a delightful chat with Mrs. Erlynne. I am so sorry for what I said to you this afternoon about her. Of course, she must be all right if you invite her. A most attractive woman, and has such sensible views on life. Told me she entirely dis-

approved of people marrying more than once, so I feel quite safe about poor Augustus. Can't imagine why people speak against her. It's those horrid nieces of mine — the Saville girls — they're always talking scandal. Still, I should go to Homburg, dear, I really should. She is just a little too attractive. But where is Agatha? Oh, there she is. (LADY A. and MR. H. enter from the terrace L. u. E.) Mr. Hopper, I am very angry with you. You have taken Agatha out on the terrace, and she is so delicate.

Hopper (L. c.). Awfully sorry, Duchess. We went out for a moment and then got chatting together.

Duchess of B. (c.). Ah, about dear Australia, I suppose?

Hopper. Yes.

Duchess of B. Agatha, darling!

(Beckons her over)

Lady A. Yes, mammal

Duchess of B. (aside). Did Mr. Hopper definitely——

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. And what answer did you give him, dear child?

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. (affectionately). My dear one! You always say the right thing. Mr. Hopper! James! Agatha has told me everything. How cleverly you have both kept your secret.

Hopper. You don't mind my taking Agatha off to Australia, then, Duchess?

Duchess of B. (indignantly). To Australia? Oh, don't mention that dreadful vulgar place.

Hopper. But she said she'd like to come with me.

Duchess of B. (severely). Did you say that, Agatha?

Lady A. Yes, mamma.

Duchess of B. Agatha, you say the most silly things possible. I think on the whole that Grosvenor Square would be a more healthy place to reside in. There are lots of vulgar people live in Grosvenor Square, but at any rate there are no horrid kangaroos crawling about. But we'll talk about that to-morrow. James, you can take Agatha down. You'll come to lunch, of course, James. At half-past one instead of two.

The Duke will wish to say a few words to you, I am sure.

Hopper. I should like to have a chat with the Duke, Duchess. He has not said a single word to me yet.

Duchess of B. I think you'll find he will have a great deal to say to you to-morrow. (Exit LADY A. with MR. H.) And now good night, Margaret. I'm afraid it's the old, old story, dear. Love — well, not love at first sight, but love at the end of the season, which is so much more satisfactory.

Lady W. Good night, Duchess.

(Exit the DUCHESS OF B. on LORD P.'s arm)

Lady P. My dear Margaret, what a handsome woman your husband has been dancing with! I should be quite jealous if I were you! Is she a great friend of yours?

Lady W. No!

Lady P. Really? Good night, dear.

(Looks at MR. D. and exit)

Dumby. Awful manners young Hopper has!

Cecil G. Ah! Hopper is one of Nature's gentlemen, the worst type of gentlemen I know.

Dumby. Sensible woman, Lady Windermere. Lots of wives would have objected to Mrs. Erlynne coming. But Lady Windermere has that uncommon thing called common sense.

Cecil G. And Windermere knows that nothing looks so like innocence as an indiscretion.

Dumby. Yes; dear Windermere is becoming almost modern. Never thought he would.

(Bows to LADY W. and exit)

Lady J. Good night, Lady Windermere. What a fascinating woman Mrs. Erlynne is! She is coming to lunch on Thursday, won't you come too? I expect the Bishop and dear Lady Merton.

Lady W. I am afraid I am engaged, Lady Jedburgh.

Lady J. So sorry. Come, dear.

(Exeunt LADY J. and Miss G.)

(Enter MRS. E. and LORD W.)

Mrs. E. Charming ball it has been! Quite reminds me of old days. (Sits on the sofa) And I see that there arc just as many fools in society as there used to be. So pleased to

find that nothing has altered! Except Margaret. She's grown quite pretty. The last time I saw her — twenty years ago — she was a fright in flannel. Positive fright, I assure you. The dear Duchess! and that sweet Lady Agatha! Just the type of girl I like. Well, really, Windermere, if I am to be the Duchess's sister-in-law——

Lord W. {sitting L. of her}. But are you — ?
{Exit MR. CECIL G. with rest of guests.}

LADY W. watches with a look of scorn and pain MRS. E. and her husband. They are unconscious of her presence.}

Mrs. E. Oh, yes! He's to call to-morrow at twelve o'clock. He wanted to propose to-night. In fact he did. He kept on proposing. Poor Augustus, you know how he repeats himself. Such a bad habit! But I told him I wouldn't give him an answer till to-morrow. Of course, I am going to take him. And I dare say I'll make him an admirable wife, as wives go. And there is a great deal of good in Lord Augustus. Fortunately it is all on the surface. Just where good qualities should be. Of course you must help me in this matter.

Lord W. I am not called on to encourage Lord Augustus, I suppose?

Mrs. E. Oh, no! I do the encouraging. But you will make me a handsome settlement, Windermere, won't you?

Lord W. {frowning}. Is that what you want to talk to me about to-night?

Mrs. E. Yes.

Lord W. {with a gesture of impatience}. I will not talk of it here.

Mrs. E. {laughing}. Then we will talk of it on the terrace. Even business should have a picturesque background. Should it not, Windermere? With a proper background women can do anything.

Lord W. Won't to-morrow do as well?

Mrs. E. No; you see, to-morrow I am going to accept him. And I think it would be a good thing if I was able to tell him that — well, what shall I say — £1000 a year left me by a third cousin — or a second husband — or some distant relative of that kind. It would be an additional attraction, wouldn't it? You have a delightful opportunity now of paying me a compliment, Windermere.

But you are not very clever at paying compliments. I am afraid Margaret doesn't encourage you in that excellent habit. It's a great mistake on her part. When men give up saying what is charming, they give up thinking what is charming. But seriously, what do you say to £2,000? £1500, I think. In modern life margin is everything. Windermere, don't you think the world an intensely amusing place? I do!

{Exit on terrace with LORD W. Music strikes up in ballroom.}

Lady W. To stay in this house any longer is impossible. To-night a man who loves me offered me his whole life. I refused it. It was foolish of me. I will offer him mine now. I will give him mine. I will go to him! *{Puts on cloak and goes to door, then turns back. Sits down at table and writes a letter, puts it into an envelope and leaves it on table}.* Arthur has never understood me. When he reads this, he will. He may do as he chooses now with his life. I have done with mine as I think best, as I think right. It is he who has broken the bond of marriage — not I. I only break its bondage. *{Exit.}*

{PARKER enters L. and crosses towards the ballroom R. Enter MRS. E.}

Mrs. E. Is Lady Windermere in the ballroom?

Parker. Her ladyship has just gone out.

Mrs. E. Gone out? She's not on the terrace?

Parker. No, madam. Her ladyship has just gone out of the house.

Mrs. E. {starts and looks at the servant with a pulled expression on her face}. Out of the house?

Parker. Yes, madam — her ladyship told me she had left a letter for his lordship on the table.

Mrs. E. A letter for Lord Windermere?

Parker. Yes, madam.

Mrs. E. Thank you. *{Exit PARKER. The music in the ballroom stops.}* Gone out of her house! A letter addressed to her husband! *{Goes over to table and looks at letter. Takes it up and lays it down again with a shudder of fear.}* No, no! It would be impossible! Life doesn't repeat its tragedies like that! Oh, why does this horrible fancy come across

me? Why do I remember now the one moment of my life I most wish to forget? Does life repeat its tragedies? (*Tears letter open and reads it, then stinks down into a chair with a gesture of anguish.*) Oh, how terrible! the same words that twenty years ago I wrote to her father! and how bitterly I have been punished for it! No; my punishment, my real punishment is to-night, is now!

(*Still seated R.*)

(*Enter LORD W. L. u. E.*)

Lord W. Have you said good night to my wife?

Mrs. E. (*crushing letter in her hand*). Yes.

Lord W. Where is she?

Mrs. E. She is very tired. She has gone to bed. She said she had a headache.

Lord W. I must go to her. You'll excuse me?

Mrs. E. (*rising hurriedly*). Oh, no! It's nothing serious. She's only very tired, that is all. Besides, there are people still in the supper-room. She wants you to make her apologies to them. She said she didn't wish to be disturbed. (*Drops letter.*) She asked me to tell you.

Lord W. (*picks up letter*). You have dropped something.

Mrs. E. Oh, yes, thank you, that is mine. (*Puts out her hand to take it.*)

Lord W. (*still looking at letter*). But it's my wife's handwriting, isn't it?

Mrs. E. (*takes the letter quickly*). Yes, it's — an address. Will you ask them to call my carriage, please?

Lord W. Certainly. (*Goes L. and exit J*)

Mrs. E. Thanks. — What can I do? What can I do? I feel a passion awakening within me that I never felt before. What can it mean? The daughter must not be like the mother — that would be terrible. How can I save her? How can I save my child? A moment may ruin a life. Who knows that better than I? Windermere must be got out of the house; that is absolutely necessary. (*Goes L.*) But how shall I do it? It must be done somehow. Ah!

(*Enter LORD A. R. u. E. carrying bouquet.*)

Lord A. Dear lady, I am in such suspense! May I not have an answer to my request?

Mrs. E. Lord Augustus, listen to me. You are to take Lord Windermere down to your club at once, and keep him there as long as possible. You understand?

Lord A. But you said you wished me to keep early hours!

Mrs. E. (*nervously*). Do what I tell you. Do what I tell you.

Lord A. And my reward?

Mrs. E. Your reward? Your reward? Oh! ask me that to-morrow. But don't let Windermere out of your sight to-night. If you do I will never forgive you. I will never speak to you again. I'll have nothing to do with you. Remember you are to keep Windermere at your club, and don't let him come back to-night. (*Exit.*)

Lord A. Well, really, I might be her husband already. Positively I might.

(*follows her in a bewildered manner?*)

ACT III

SCENE — LORD DARLINGTON'S rooms. A large sofa is in front of fireplace R. At the back of the stage a curtain is drawn across the window. Doors L. and R. Table R. with writing materials. Table c. with syphons, glasses, and Tantalus frame. Table L. with cigars and cigarette box. Lamps lit.

Lady W. (*standing by the fireplace*). Why doesn't he come? This waiting is horrible. He should be here. Why is he not here, to wake by passionate words some fire within me? I am cold — cold as a loveless thing. Arthur must have read my letter by this time. If he cared for me, he would have come after me, would have taken me back by force. But he doesn't care. He's entrained by this woman — fascinated by her — dominated by her. If a woman wants to hold a man, she has merely to appeal to what is worst in him. We make gods of men, and they leave us. Others make brutes of them, and they fawn and are faithful. How hideous life is!... Oh! it was mad of me to come here, horribly mad. And yet which is the worst, I wonder, to be at the mercy of a man who loves one, or the wife of a man who in one's own house dishonors one? What woman knows? What woman

in the whole world? But will he love me always, this man to whom I am giving my life? What do I bring him? Lips that have lost the note of joy, eyes that are blighted by tears, chill hands and icy heart. I bring him nothing. I must go back — no; I can't go back, my letter has put me in their power — Arthur would not take me back! That fatal letter! No! Lord Darlington leaves England to-morrow. I will go with him — I have no choice. (*Sits down for a few moments. Then starts up and puts on her cloak.*) No, no! I will go back, let Arthur do with me what he pleases. I can't wait here. It has been madness my coming. I must go at once. As for Lord Darlington — Oh! here he is! What shall I do? What can I say to him? Will he let me go away at all? I have heard that men are brutal, horrible — Oh!

(*Hides her face in her hands.*)

(*Enter MRS. E. L.*)

Mrs. E. Lady Windermere! (*LADY W. starts and looks up. Then recoils in contempt.*) Thank Heaven I am in time. You must go back to your husband's house immediately.

Lady W. Must?

Mrs. E. (*authoritatively*). Yes, you must! There is not a second to be lost. Lord Darlington may return at any moment.

Lady W. Don't come near me!

Mrs. E. Oh! you are on the brink of ruin; you are on the brink of a hideous precipice. You must leave this place at once, my carriage is waiting at the corner of the street. You must come with me and drive straight home. (*LADY W. throws off her cloak and flings it on the sofa.*) What are you doing?

Lady W. Mrs. Erlynne — if you had not come here, I would have gone back. But now that I see you, I feel that nothing in the whole world would induce me to live under the same roof as Lord Windermere. You fill me with horror. There is something about you that stirs the wildest rage within me. And I know why you are here. My husband sent you to lure me back that I might serve as a blind to whatever relations exist between you and him.

Mrs. E. Oh! You don't think that — you can't.

Lady W. Go back to my husband, Mrs. Erlynne. He belongs to you and not to me. I suppose he is afraid of a scandal. Men are such cowards. They outrage every law of the world, and are afraid of the world's tongue. But he had better prepare himself. He shall have a scandal. He shall have the worst scandal there has been in London for years. He shall see his name in every vile paper, mine on every hideous placard.

Mrs. E. No — no —

Lady W. Yes! he shall. Had he come himself, I admit I would have gone back to the life of degradation you and he had prepared for me — I was going back — but to stay himself at home, and send you as his messenger — oh! it was infamous — infamous.

Mrs. E. (*c.*) Lady Windermere, you wrong me horribly — you wrong your husband horribly. He doesn't know you are here — he thinks you are safe in your own house. He thinks you are asleep in your own room. He never read the mad letter you wrote to him!

Lady W. (*R.*). Never read it!

Mrs. E. No — he knows nothing about it.

Lady W. How simple you think me! (*Going to her.*) You are lying to me!

Mrs. E. (*restraining herself*). I am not. I am telling you the truth.

Lady W. If my husband didn't read my letter, how is it that you are here? Who told you I had left the house you were shameless enough to enter? Who told you where I had gone to? My husband told you, and sent you to decoy me back. (*Crosses L.*)

Mrs. E. (*R. c.*). Your husband has never seen the letter. I — saw it, I opened it. I — read it.

Lady W. (*fuming to her*). You opened a letter of mine to my husband? You wouldn't dare!

Mrs. E. Dare! Oh! to save you from the abyss into which you are falling, there is nothing in the world I would not dare, nothing in the whole world. Here is the letter. Your husband has never read it. He never shall read it. (*Going to fireplace.*) It should never have been written.

(*ICtars it and throws it into the fire.*)

Lady W. (*with infinite contempt in her voice and look*). How do I know that was my letter after all? You seem to think the commonest device can take me in!

Mrs. E. Oh! Why do you disbelieve everything I tell you! What object do you think I have in coming here, except to save you from utter ruin, to save you from the consequence of a hideous mistake? That letter that is burning now was your letter. I swear it to you!

Lady W. (*slowly*). You took good care to burn it before I had examined it. I cannot trust you. You, whose whole life is a lie, how could you speak the truth about anything? (*Sits down?*)

Mrs. E. (*hurriedly*). Think as you like about me — say what you choose against me, but go back, go back to the husband you love.

Lady W. (*sullenly*). I do *not* love him!

Mrs. E. You do, and you know that he loves you.

Lady W. He does not understand what love is. He understands it as little as you do — but I see what you want. It would be a great advantage for you to get me back. Dear Heaven! what a life I would have then! Living at the mercy of a woman who has neither mercy nor pity in her, a woman whom it is an infamy to meet, a degradation to know, a vile woman, a woman who comes between husband and wife!

Mrs. E. (*with a gesture of despair*). Lady Windermere, Lady Windermere, don't say such terrible things. You don't know how terrible they are, how terrible and how unjust. Listen, you must listen! Only go back to your husband, and I promise you never to communicate with him again on any pretext — never to see him — never to have anything to do with his life or yours. The money that he gave me, he gave me not through love, but through hatred, not in worship, but in contempt. The hold I have over him——

Lady W. (*rising*). Ah! you admit you have ahold!

Mrs. E. Yes, and I will tell you what it is. It is his love for you, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. You expect me to believe that?

Mrs. E. You must believe it! It is true. It is his love for you that has made him submit to — oh! call it what you like, tyranny, threats, anything you choose. But it is his love for you. His desire to spare you — shame, yes, shame and disgrace.

Lady W. What do you mean? You are insolent! What have I to do with you?

Mrs. E. (*humbly*). Nothing. I know it — but I tell you that your husband loves you — that you may never meet with such love again in your whole life — that such love you will never meet — and that if you throw it away, the day may come when you will starve for love and it will not be given to you, beg for love and it will be denied you—— Oh! Arthur loves you!

Lady W. Arthur? And you tell me there is nothing between you?

Mrs. E. Lady Windermere, before Heaven your husband is guiltless of all offense towards you! And I — I tell you that had it ever occurred to me that such a monstrous suspicion would have entered your mind, I would have died rather than have crossed your life or his — oh! died, gladly died!

(*Moves away to sofa R.*)

Lady W. You talk as if you had a heart. Women like you have no hearts. Heart is not in you. You are bought and sold.

(*Sits L. c.*)

Mrs. E. (*starts, with a gesture of faint. Then restrains herself, and comes over to where LADY W. is sitting. As she speaks, she stretches out her hands towards her, but does not dare to touch her*). Believe what you choose about me, I am not worth a moment's sorrow. But don't spoil your beautiful young life on my account! You don't know what may be in store for you, unless you leave this house at once. You don't know what it is to fall into the pit, to be despised, mocked, abandoned, sneered at — to be an outcast! to find the door shut against one, to have to creep in by hideous byways, afraid every moment lest the mask should be stripped from one's face, and all the while to hear the laughter, the horrible laughter of the world, a thing more tragic than all the tears the world has ever shed. You don't know what it is. One pays for one's sin, and then one pays again, and all

one's life one pays. You must never know that. — As for me, if suffering be an expiation, then at this moment I have expiated all my faults, whatever they have been; for to-night you have made a heart in one who had it not, made it and broken it. — But let that pass. I may have wrecked my own life, but I will not let you wreck yours. You — why, you are a mere girl, you would be lost. You haven't got the kind of brains that enables a woman to get back. You have neither the wit nor the courage. You couldn't stand dishonor. No! Go back, Lady Windermere, to the husband who loves you, whom you love. You have a child, Lady Windermere. Go back to that child who even now, in pain or in joy, may be calling to you. (LADY W. rises.) God gave you that child. He will require from you that you make his life fine, that you watch over him. What answer will you make to God if his life is ruined through you? Back to your house, Lady Windermere — your husband loves you. He has never swerved for a moment from the love he bears you. But even if he had a thousand loves, you must stay with your child. If he was harsh to you, you must stay with your child. If he ill-treated you, you must stay with your child. If he abandoned you, your place is with your child.

(LADY W. bursts into tears and buries her face in her hands.)

(Rushing to her.) Lady Windermere!

Lady W. (holding out her hands to her, helplessly, as a child might do). Take me home. Take me home.

Mrs. E. (is about to embrace her. Then restrains herself. There is a look of wonderful joy in her face). Come! Where is your cloak? (Getting it from sofa.) Here. Put it on. Come at once! (They go to the door.)

Lady W. Stop! Don't you hear voices?

Mrs. E. No, no! There is no one!

Lady W. Yes, there is! Listen! Oh! that is my husband's voice! He is coming in! Save me! Oh, it's some plot! You have sent for him! (Voices outside.)

Mrs. E. Silence! I am here to save you if I can. But I fear it is too late! There! (Points to the curtain across the window.) The

first chance you have, slip out, if you ever get a chance!

Lady W. But you!

Mrs. E. Oh! never mind me. I'll face them. (LADY W. hides herself behind the curtain.)

Lord A. (outside). Nonsense, dear Windermere, you must not leave me!

Mrs. E. Lord Augustus! Then it is I who am lost!

(Hesitates for a moment, then looks round and sees door R., and exit through it.)

(Enter LORD D., MR. A., LORD W., LORD A. L., and CECIL G.)

Dumby. What a nuisance their turning us out of the club at this hour! It's only two o'clock. {Sinks into a chair.} The lively part of the evening is only just beginning. (Yawns and closes his eyes.)

Lord W. It is very good of you, Lord Darlington, allowing Augustus to force our company on you, but I'm afraid I can't stay long.

Lord D. Really! I am so sorry! You'll take a cigar, won't you?

Lord W. Thanks! {Sits down.}

Lord A. (to LORD W.). My dear boy, you must not dream of going. I have a great deal to talk to you about, of demmed importance, too. {Sits down with him at L. table.}

Cecil G. Oh! we all know what that is! Tuppy can't talk about anything but Mrs Erlynne!

Lord W. Well, that is no business of yours, is it, Cecil?

Cecil G. None! That is why it interests me. My own business always bores me to death. I prefer other people's.

Lord D. Have something to drink, you fellows. Cecil, you'll have a whiskey and soda?

Cecil G. Thanks. (Goes to the table with LORD D.) Mrs. Erlynne looked very handsome to-night, didn't she?

Lord D. I am not one of her admirers.

Cecil G. I usen't to be, but I am now. Why! she actually made me introduce her to poor dear Aunt Caroline. I believe she is going to lunch there.

Lord D. (*in surprise*). No?

Cecil G. She is, really.

Lord D. Excuse me, you fellows. I'm going away to-morrow. And I have to write a few letters.

(*Goes to writing-table and sits down?*)

Dumby. Clever woman, Mrs. Erlynne.

Cecil G. Hallo, Dumby! I thought you were asleep.

Dumby. I am, I usually am!

Lord A. A very clever woman. Knows perfectly well what a demmed fool I am — knows it as well as I do myself. (CECIL G. comes towards him laughing.?) Ah! you may laugh, my boy, but it is a great thing to come across a woman who thoroughly understands one.

Dumby. It is an awfully dangerous thing. They always end by marrying one.

Cecil G. But I thought, Tuppy, you were never going to see her again. Yes! you told me so yesterday evening at the club. You said you'd heard——(*Whispering to him?*)

Lord A. Oh, she's explained that.

Cecil G. And the Wiesbaden affair?

Lord A. She's explained that, too.

Dumby. And her income, Tuppy? Has she explained that?

Lord A. (*in a very serious voice?*). She's going to explain that to-morrow.

(CECIL G. goes back to c. table?)

Dumby. Awfully commercial, women nowadays. Our grandmothers threw their caps over the mills, of course, but by Jove, their granddaughters only throw their caps over mills that can raise the wind for them.

Lord A. You want to make her out a wicked woman. She is not!

Cecil G. Oh! Wicked women bother one. Good women bore one. That is the only difference between them.

Lord D. (*puffing a cigar*). Mrs. Erlynne has a future before her.

Dumby. Mrs. Erlynne has a past before her.

Lord A. I prefer women with a past. They're always so demmed amusing to talk to.

Cecil G. Well, you'll have lots of topics of conversation with her, Tuppy.

(*Rising and going to him?*)

Lord A. You're getting annoying, dear boy; you're getting demmed annoying.

Cecil G. (*puts his hands on his shoulders*). Now, Tuppy, you've lost your figure and you've lost your character. Don't lose your temper; you have only got one.

Lord A. My dear boy, if I wasn't the most good-natured man in London——

Cecil G. We'd treat you with more respect, wouldn't we, Tuppy? (*Strolls away?*)

Dumby. The youth of the present day are quite monstrous. They have absolutely no respect for dyed hair.

(LORD A. looks round angrily?)

Cecil G. Mrs. Erlynne has a very great respect for dear Tuppy.

Dumby. Then Mrs. Erlynne sets an admirable example to the rest of her sex. It is perfectly brutal the way most women nowadays behave to men who are not their husbands.

Lord W. Dumby, you are ridiculous, and Cecil, you let your tongue run away with you. You must leave Mrs. Erlynne alone. You don't really know anything about her, and you're always talking scandal against her.

Cecil G. (*coming towards him L. c.*). My dear Arthur, I never talk scandal. only talk gossip.

Lord W. What is the difference between scandal and gossip?

Cecil G. Oh! gossip is charming! History is merely gossip. But scandal is gossip made tedious by morality. Now I never moralize. A man who moralizes is usually a hypocrite, and a woman who moralizes is invariably plain. There is nothing in the whole world so unbecoming to a woman as a Nonconformist conscience. And most women know it, I'm glad to say.

Lord A. Just my sentiments, dear boy, just my sentiments.

Cecil G. Sorry to hear it, Tuppy, whenever people agree with me, I always feel I must be wrong.

Lord A. My dear boy, when I was your age —

Cecil G. But you never were, Tuppy, and you never will be. (*Goes up c.*) I say, Darlington, let us have some cards. You'll play, Arthur, won't you?

Lord W. No, thanks, Cecil.

Dumby (*with a sigh*). Good Heavens! how

marriage ruins a man! It's as demoralizing as cigarettes, and far more expensive.

Cecil G. You'll play, of course, Tuppy?

Lord A. (*pouring himself out a brandy and soda at table*). Can't, dear boy. Promised Mrs. Erlynne never to play or drink again.

Cecil G. Now, my dear Tuppy, don't be led astray into the paths of virtue. Reformed, you would be perfectly tedious. That is the worst of women. They always want one to be good. And if we are good, when they meet us, they don't love us at all. They like to find us quite irretrievably bad, and to leave us quite unattractively good.

Lord D. (*rising from R. table, where he has been writing letters*). They always do find us bad!

Dumby. I don't think we are bad. I think we are all good except Tuppy.

Lord D. No, we are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.

(*Sits down at c. table?*)

Dumby. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars? Upon my word, you are very romantic, to-night, Darlington.

Cecil G. Too romantic! You must be in love. Who is the girl?

Lord D. The woman I love is not free, or thinks she isn't.

(*Glances instinctively at LORD W. while he speaks.*)

Cecil G. A married woman, then! Well, there's nothing in the world like the devotion of a married woman. It's a thing no married man knows anything about.

Lord D. Oh! she doesn't love me. She is a good woman. She is the only good woman I have ever met in my life.

Cecil G. The only good woman you have ever met in your life?

Lord D. Yes!

Cecil G. (*lighting a cigarette*). Well, you are a lucky fellow! Why, I have met hundreds of good women. I never seem to meet any but good women. The world is perfectly packed with good women. To know them is a middle-class education.

Lord D. This woman has purity and innocence. She has everything we men have lost.

Cecil G. My dear fellow, what on earth

should we men do going about with purity and innocence? A carefully thought-out buttonhole is much more effective.

Dumby. She doesn't really love you then?

Lord D. No, she does not!

Dumby. I congratulate you, my dear fellow. In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. The last is much the worst, the last is a real tragedy! But I am interested to hear she does not love you. How long could you love a woman who didn't love you, Cecil?

Cecil G. A woman who didn't love me? Oh, all my life!

Dumby. So could I. But it's so difficult to meet one.

Lord D. How can you be so conceited, Dumby?

Dumby. I didn't say it as a matter of conceit. I said it as a matter of regret. I have been wildly, madly adored. I am sorry I have. It has been an immense nuisance. I should like to be allowed a little time to myself, now and then.

Lord A. (*looking round*). Time to educate yourself, I suppose.

Dumby. No, time to forget all I have learned. That is much more important, dear Tuppy. (*LORD A. moves uneasily in his chair.*)

Lord D. What cynics you fellows are!

Cecil G. What is a cynic?

(*Sitting on the back of the sofa.*)

Lord D. A man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.

Cecil G. And a sentimentalist, my dear Darlington, is a man who sees an absurd value in everything, and doesn't know the market price of any single thing.

Lord D. You always amuse me, Cecil. You talk as if you were a man of experience.

Cecil G. I am. (*Moves up to front of fireplace.*)

Lord D. You are far too young!

Cecil G. That is a great error. Experience is a question of instinct about life. I have got it. Tuppy hasn't. Experience is the name Tuppy gives to his mistakes. That is all. (*LORD A. looks round indignantly.*)

Dumby. Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.

Cecil G. (standing with his back to fireplace).
One shouldn't commit any.

(Sees LADY W.'s fan on sofa.)

Dumby. Life would be very dull without them.

Cecil G. Of course you are quite faithful to this woman you are in love with, Darlington, to this good woman?

Lord D. Cecil, if one really loves a woman, all other women in the world become absolutely meaningless to one. Love changes one — I am changed.

Cecil G. Dear me! How very interesting. Tuppy, I want to talk to you.

(LORD A. takes no notice.)

Dumby. It's no use talking to Tuppy. You might as well talk to a brick wall.

Cecil G. But I like talking to a brick wall — it's the only thing in the world that never contradicts me! Tuppy!

Lord A. Well, what is it? What is it?

(Rising and going over to CECIL G.)

Cecil G. Come over here. I want you particularly. *(Aside?)* Darlington has been moralizing and talking about the purity of love, and that sort of thing, and he has got some woman in his rooms all the time.

Lord A. No, really! really!

Cecil G. (in a low voice). Yes, here is her fan.

(Points to the fan.)

Lord A. (chuckling). By Jove! By Jove!

Lord W. (up by door). I am really off now, Lord Darlington. I am sorry you are leaving England so soon. Pray call on us when you come back! My wife and I will be charmed to see you!

Lord D. (up stage with LORD W.). I am afraid I shall be away for many years. Good night!

Cecil G. Arthur!

Lord W. What?

Cecil G. I want to speak to you for a moment. No, do come!

Lord W. (putting on his coat). I can't — I'm off!

Cecil G. It is something very particular. It will interest you enormously.

Lord W. (smiling). It is some of your nonsense, Cecil.

Cecil G. It isn't. It isn't really!

Lord A. (going to him). My dear fellow,

you mustn't go yet. I have a lot to talk to you about. And Cecil has something to show you.

Lord W. (walking over)' Well, what is it?

Cecil G. Darlington has got a woman here in his rooms. Here is her fan. Amusing, isn't it? *(A pause.)*

Lord W. Good God!

(Seizes the fan — DUMBY rises.)

Cecil G. What is the matter?

Lord W. Lord Darlington!

Lord D. (turning round). Yes!

Lord W. What is my wife's fan doing here in your rooms? Hands off, Cecil. Don't touch me.

Lord D. Your wife's fan?

Lord W. Yes, here it is!

Lord D. (walking towards him). I don't know!

Lord W. You must know. I demand an explanation. *(To CECIL G.)* Don't hold me, you fool.

Lord D. (aside). She is here after all!

Lord W. Speak, sir! Why is my wife's fan here? Answer me, by God! I'll search your rooms, and if my wife's here, I'll——*(Moves.)*

Lord D. You shall not search my rooms. You have no right to do so. I forbid you.

Lord W. You scoundrel! I'll not leave your room till I have searched every corner of it! What moves behind that curtain?

(Rushes towards the curtain c.)

Mrs. E. (enters behind R.). Lord Windermere!

Lord W. Mrs. Erlynne!

(Everyone starts and turns round.)

LADY W. slips out from behind the curtain and glides from the room L.)

Mrs. E. I am afraid I took your wife's fan in mistake for my own, when I was leaving your house to-night. I am so sorry.

(Takes fan from him. LORD W. looks at her in contempt. LORD D. in mingled astonishment and anger.)

LORD A. turns away. The other men smile at each other.)

ACT IV

(SCENE — Same as in Act .)

Lady W. (lying on sofa). How can I tell him? I can't tell him. It would kill me.

I wonder what happened after I escaped from that horrible room. Perhaps she told them the true reason of her being there, and the real meaning of that — fatal fan of mine. Oh, if he knows — how can I look him in the face again? He would never forgive me. (*Touches bell.*) How securely one thinks one lives — out of reach of temptation, sin, folly. And then suddenly——Oh! Life is terrible. It rules us, we do not rule it.

(*Enter ROSALIE R.*)

Rosalie. Did your ladyship ring for me?

Lady W. Yes. Have you found out at what time Lord Windermere came in last night?

Rosalie. His lordship did not come in till five o'clock.

Lady W. Five o'clock! He knocked at my door this morning, didn't he?

Rosalie. Yes, my lady — at half-past nine. I told him your ladyship was not awake yet.

Lady W. Did he say anything?

Rosalie. Something about your ladyship's fan. I didn't quite catch what his lordship said. Has the fan been lost, my lady? I can't find it, and Parker says it was not left in any of the rooms. He has looked in all of them and on the terrace as well.

Lady W. It doesn't matter. Tell Parker not to trouble. That will do. (*Exit ROSALIE.*) (*Rising.*) She is sure to tell him. I can fancy a person doing a wonderful act of self-sacrifice, doing it spontaneously, recklessly, nobly — and afterwards finding out that it costs too much. Why should she hesitate between her ruin and mine?... How strange! I would have publicly disgraced her in my own house. She accepts public disgrace in the house of another to save me.... There is a bitter irony in things, a bitter irony in the way we talk of good and bad women.... Oh, what a lesson! and what a pity that in life we only get our lessons when they are of no use to us! For even if she doesn't tell, I must. Oh! the shame of it, the shame of it! To tell it is to live through it all again. Actions are the first tragedy in life, words are the second. Words are perhaps the worst. Words are merciless——Oh!

(*Starts as LORD W. enters.*)

Lord W. (*kisses her*). Margaret — how pale you look!

Lady W. I slept very badly.

Lord W. (*sitting on sofa with her*). I am so sorry. I came in dreadfully late, and I didn't like to wake you. You are crying, dear.

Lady W. Yes, I am crying, for I have something to tell you, Arthur.

Lord W. My dear child, you are not well. You've been doing too much. Let us go away to the country. You'll be all right at Scoby. The season is almost over. There is no use staying on. Poor darling! We'll go away to-day, if you like. (*Rises.*) We can easily catch the 4.30. I'll send a wire to Fannen.

(*Crosses and sits down at table to write a telegram.*)

Lady W. Yes; let us go away to-day. No; I can't go away to-day, Arthur. There is someone I must see before I leave town — someone who has been kind to me.

Lord W. (*rising and leaning over sofa*). Kind to you?

Lady W. Far more than that. (*Rises and goes to him.*) I will tell you, Arthur, but only love me, love me as you used to love me.

Lord W. Used to? You are not thinking of that wretched woman who came here last night? (*Coming round and sitting R. of her.*) You don't still imagine — no, you couldn't.

Lady W. I don't. I know now I was wrong and foolish.

Lord W. It was very good of you to receive her last night — but you are never to see her again.

Lady W. Why do you say that? (*A pause.*)

Lord W. (*holding her hand*). Margaret, I thought Mrs. Erlynne was a woman more sinned against than sinning, as the phrase goes. I thought she wanted to be good, to get back into a place that she had lost by a moment's folly, to lead again a decent life. I believed what she told me — I was mistaken in her. She is bad — as bad as a woman can be.

Lady W. Arthur, Arthur, don't talk so bitterly about any woman. I don't think now that people can be divided into the good and the bad, as though they were two

separate races or creations. What are called good women may have terrible things in them, mad moods of recklessness, assertion, jealousy, sin. Bad women, as they are termed, may have in them sorrow, repentance, pity, sacrifice. And I don't think Mrs. Erlynne a bad woman — I know she's not.

Lord W. My dear child, the woman's impossible. No matter what harm she tries to do us, you must never see her again. She is inadmissible anywhere.

Lady W. But I want to see her. I want her to come here.

Lord W. Never!

Lady W. She came here once as *your* guest. She must come now as *mine*. That is but fair.

Lord W. She should never have come here.

Lady W. (*rtsm£*). It is too late, Arthur, to say that now. (*Moves aivay!*)

Lord W. (*rtsing*). Margaret, if you knew where Mrs. Erlynne went last night, after she left this house, you would not sit in the same room with her. It was absolutely shameless, the whole thing.

Lady W. Arthur, I can't bear it any longer. I must tell you. Last night——

(*Enter PARKER with a tray on which lie*

LADY W.'s *fan and a card*)

Parker. Mrs. Erlynne has called to return your ladyship's fan which she took away by mistake last night. Mrs. Erlynne has written a message on the card.

Lady W. Oh, ask Mrs. Erlynne to be kind enough to come up. (*Reads card.*) Say I shall be very glad to see her. (*Exit PARKER.*) She wants to see me, Arthur.

Lord W. (*takes card and looks at it*). Margaret, I beg you not to. Let me see her first, at any rate. She's a very dangerous woman. She is the most dangerous woman I know. You don't realize what you're doing.

Lady W. It is right that I should see her.

Lord W. My child, you may be on the brink of a great sorrow. Don't go to meet it. It is absolutely necessary that I should see her before you do.

Lady W. Why should it be necessary?

(*Enter PARKER.*)

Parker. Mrs. Erlynne.

(*Enter MRS. E. Exit PARKER.*)

Mrs. E. How do you do, Lady Windermere? (*To LORD W.*) How do you do? Do you know, Lady Windermere, I am so sorry about your fan. I can't imagine how I made such a silly mistake. Most stupid of me. And as I was driving in your direction, I thought I would take the opportunity of returning your property in person, with many apologies for my carelessness, and of bidding you good-bye.

Lady W. Good-bye? (*Moves towards sofa with MRS. E. and sits down beside her?*) Arc you going away, then, Mrs. Erlynne?

Mrs. E. Yes; I am going to live abroad again. The English climate doesn't suit me. My — heart is affected here, and that I don't like. I prefer living in the south. London is too full of fogs and — and serious people, Lord Windermere. Whether the fogs produce the serious people or whether the serious people produce the fogs, I don't know, but the whole thing rather gets on my nerves, and so I'm leaving this afternoon by the Club Train.

Lady W. This afternoon? But I wanted so much to come and see you.

Mrs. E. How kind of you! But I am afraid I have to go.

Lady W. Shall I never see you again, Mrs. Erlynne?

Mrs. E. I am afraid not. Our lives lie too far apart. But there is a little thing I would like you to do for me. I want a photograph of you, Lady Windermere — would you give me one? You don't know how gratified I should be.

Lady W. Oh, with pleasure. There is one on that table. I'll show it to you.

(*Goes across to the table*)

Lord W. (*coming up to MRS. E. and speaking in a low voice*). It is monstrous your intruding yourself here after your conduct last night.

Mrs. E. (*with an amused smile*). My dear Windermere, manners before morals!

Lady W. (*returning*). I'm afraid it is very flattering — I am not so pretty as that.

(*Showing photograph.*)

Mrs. E. You are much prettier. But haven't you got one of yourself with your little boy?

Lady W. *I have.* Would you prefer one of those?

Mrs. E. Yes.

Lady W. I'll go and get it for you, if you'll excuse me for a moment. I have one upstairs.

Mrs. E. So sorry, Lady Windermere, to give you so much trouble.

Lady W. *(moves to door R.)*. No trouble at all, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. Thanks so much. *(Exit LADY W. R.)*. You seem rather out of temper this morning, Windermere. Why should you be? Margaret and I get on charmingly together.

Lord W. I can't bear to see you with her. Besides, you have not told me the truth, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. I have not told *her* the truth, you mean.

Lord W. *(standing c.)*. I sometimes wish you had. I should have been spared then the misery, the anxiety, the annoyance of the last six months. But rather than my wife should know — that the mother whom she was taught to consider as dead, the mother whom she has mourned as dead, is living — a divorced woman going about under an assumed name, a bad woman preying upon life, as I know you now to be — rather than that, I was ready to supply you with money to pay bill after bill, extravagance after extravagance, to risk what occurred yesterday, the first quarrel I have ever had with my wife. You don't understand what that means to me. How could you? But I tell you that the only bitter words that ever came from those sweet lips of hers were on your account, and I hate to see you next her. You sully the innocence that is in her. *(Moves L. c.)* And then I used to think that with all your faults you were frank and honest. You are not.

Mrs. E. Why do you say that?

Lord W. You made me get you an invitation to my wife's ball.

Mrs. E. For my daughter's ball — yes.

Lord W. You came, and within an hour

of your leaving the house, you are found in a man's rooms — you are disgraced before everyone. *(Goes up stage c.)*

Mrs. E. Yes.

Lord W. *(turning round on her)*. Therefore I have a right to look upon you as what you are — a worthless, vicious woman. I have the right to tell you never to enter this house, never to attempt to come near my wife —

Mrs. E. *(coldly)*. My daughter, you mean.

Lord W. You have no right to claim her as your daughter. You left her, abandoned her, when she was but a child in the cradle, abandoned her for your lover, who abandoned you in turn.

Mrs. E. *(rising)*. Do you count that to his credit, Lord Windermere — or to mine?

Lord W. To his, now that I know you.

Mrs. E. Take care — you had better be careful.

Lord W. Oh, I am not going to mince words for you. I know you thoroughly.

Mrs. E. *(looking steadily at him)*. I question that.

Lord W. I do know you. For twenty years of your life you lived without your child, without a thought of your child. One day you read in the papers that she had married a rich man. You saw your hideous chance. You knew that to spare her the ignominy of learning that a woman like you was her mother, I would endure anything. You began your blackmailing.

Mrs. E. *(shrugging her shoulders)*. Don't use ugly words, Windermere. They are vulgar. I saw my chance, it is true, and took it.

Lord W. Yes, you took it — and spoiled it all last night by being found out.

Mrs. E. *(with a strange smile)*. You are quite right, I spoiled it all last night.

Lord W. And as for your blunder in taking my wife's fan from here, and then leaving it about in Darlington's rooms, it is unpardonable. I can't bear the sight of it now. I shall never let my wife use it again. The thing is soiled for me. You should have kept it, and not brought it back.

Mrs. E. I think I *shall* keep it. *(Goes up.)* It's extremely pretty. *(Takes up fan.)* I shall ask Margaret to give it to me.

Lord W. I hope my wife will give it you.

Mrs. E. Oh, I'm sure she will have no objection.

Lord W. I wish that at the same time she would give you a miniature she kisses every night before she prays——It's the miniature of a young, innocent-looking girl with beautiful dark hair.

Mrs. E. Ah, yes, I remember. How long ago that seems! *(Goes to sofa and sits down.)* It was done before I was married. Dark hair and an innocent expression were the fashion then, Windermere! *(A pause.)*

Lord W. What do you mean by coming here this morning? What is your object?

(Crossing L. c. and sitting?)

Mrs. E. *(with a note of irony in her voice).* To bid good-bye to my dear daughter, of course. *(LORD W. bites his underlip in anger. MRS. E. looks at him, and her voice and manner become serious. In her accents as she talks there is a note of deep tragedy. For a moment she reveals herself.)* Oh, don't imagine I am going to have a pathetic scene with her, weep on her neck and tell her who I am, and all that kind of thing. I have no ambition to play the part of a mother. Only once in my life have I known a mother's feelings. That was last night. They were terrible — they made me suffer — they made me suffer too much. For twenty years, as you say, I have lived childless — I want to live childless still. *(Hiding her feelings with a trivial laugh.)* Besides, my dear Windermere, how on earth could I pose as a mother with a grown-up daughter? Margaret is twenty-one, and I have never admitted that I am more than twenty-nine, or thirty at the most. Twenty-nine when there are pink shades, thirty when there are not. So you see what difficulties it would involve. No, as far as I am concerned, let your wife cherish the memory of this dead, stainless mother. Why should I interfere with her illusions? I find it hard enough to keep my own. I lost one illusion last night. I thought I had no heart. I find I have, and a heart doesn't suit me, Windermere. Somehow it doesn't go with modern dress. It makes one look old. *(Takes up hand-mirror from table and looks into it.)* And it spoils one's career at critical moments.

Lord W. You fill me with horror — with absolute horror.

Mrs. E. *(rising).* I suppose, Windermere, you would like me to retire into a convent or become a hospital nurse or something of that kind, as people do in silly modern novels. That is stupid of you, Arthur; in real life we don't do such things — not as long as we have any good looks left, at any rate. No — what consoles one nowadays is not repentance, but pleasure. Repentance is quite out of date. And, besides, if a woman really repents, she has to go to a bad dressmaker, otherwise no one believes in her. And nothing in the world would induce me to do that. No; I am going to pass entirely out of your two lives. My coming into them has been a mistake — I discovered that last night.

Lord W. A fatal mistake.

Mrs. E. *(smiling).* Almost fatal.

Lord W. I am sorry now I did not tell my wife the whole thing at once.

Mrs. E. I regret my bad actions. You regret your good ones — that is the difference between us.

Lord W. I don't trust you. I will tell my wife. It's better for her to know, and from me. It will cause her infinite pain — it will humiliate her terribly, but it's right that she should know.

Mrs. E. You propose to tell her?

Lord W. I am going to tell her.

Mrs. E. *(going up to him).* If you do, I will make my name so infamous that it will mar every moment of her life. It will ruin her and make her wretched. If you dare to tell her, there is no depth of degradation I will not sink to, no pit of shame I will not enter. You shall not tell her — I forbid you.

Lord W. Why?

Mrs. E. *(after a pause).* If I said to you that I cared for her, perhaps loved her even — you would sneer at me, wouldn't you?

Lord W. I should feel it was not true. A mother's love means devotion, unselfishness, sacrifice. What could you know of such things?

Mrs. E. You are right. What could I know of such things? Don't let us talk any more about ' , as for telling my daughter

who I am, that I do not allow. It is my secret, it is not yours. If I make up my mind to tell her, and I think I will, I shall tell her before I leave this house — if not, I shall never tell her.

Lord W. (*angrily*). Then let me beg of you to leave our house at once. I will make your excuses to Margaret.

(*Enter LADY W. R. She goes over to MRS. E. with the photograph in her hand. LORD W. moves to back of sofa, and anxiously watches MRS. E. as the scene progresses.*)

Lady W. I am so sorry, Mrs. Erlynne, to have kept you waiting. I couldn't find the photograph anywhere. At last I discovered it in my husband's dressing-room — he had stolen it.

Mrs. E. (*takes the photograph from her and looks at it*). I am not surprised — it is charming. (*Goes over to sofa with LADY W. and sits down beside her. Looks again at the photograph.*) And so that is your little boy! What is he called?

Lady W. Gerard, after my dear father.

Mrs. E. (*laying the photograph down*). Really?

Lady W. Yes. If it had been a girl, I would have called it after my mother. My mother had the same name as myself, Margaret.

Mrs. E. My name is Margaret, too.

Lady W. Indeed!

Mrs. E. Yes. (*Pause?*) You are devoted to your mother's memory, Lady Windermere, your husband tells me.

Lady W. We all have ideals in life. At least we all should have. Mine is my mother.

Mrs. E. Ideals are dangerous things. Realities are better. They wound, but they are better.

Lady W. (*shaking her head*). If I lost my ideals, I should lose everything.

Mrs. E. Everything?

Lady W. Yes. (*Pause*)

Mrs. E. Did your father often speak to you of your mother?

Lady W. No, it gave him too much pain. He told me how my mother had died a few months after I was born. His eyes filled with tears as he spoke. Then he begged me never to mention her name to him again. It made

him suffer even to hear it. My father — my father really died of a broken heart. His was the most ruined life I know.

?Mrs. E. (*rising*). I am afraid I must go now, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. (*rising*). Oh, no, don't.

Mrs. E. I think I had better. My carriage must have come back by this time. I sent it to Lady Jedburgh's with a note.

Lady W. Arthur, would you mind seeing if Mrs. Erlynne's carriage has come back?

Mrs. E. Pray don't trouble Lord Windermere, Lady Windermere.

Lady W. Yes, Arthur, do go, please.

(*LORD W. hesitates for a moment, and looks at MRS. E. She remains quite impassive. He leaves the room.*)

(*To MRS. E.*) Oh, what am I to say to you? You saved me last night! (*Goes toward her*)

Mrs. E. Hush — don't speak of it.

Lady W. I must speak of it. I can't let you think that I am going to accept this sacrifice. I am not. It is too great. I am going to tell my husband everything. It is my duty.

Mrs. E. It is not your duty — at least you have duties to others besides him. You say you owe me something?

Lady W. I owe you everything.

Mrs. E. Then pay your debt by silence. That is the only way in which it can be paid. Don't spoil the one good thing I have done in my life by telling it to anyone. Promise me that what passed last night will remain a secret between us. You must not bring misery into your husband's life. Why spoil his love? You must not spoil it. Love is easily killed. Oh, how easily love is killed! Pledge me your word, Lady Windermere, that you will never tell him. I insist upon it.

Lady W. (*with bowed head*). It is your will, not mine.

Mrs. E. Yes, it is my will. And never forget your child — I like to think of you as a mother. I like you to think of yourself as one.

Lady W. (*looking up*). I always will now. Only once in my life I have forgotten my own mother — that was last night. Oh, if I had remembered her, I should not have been so foolish, so wicked.

Mrs. E. (with a slight shudder). Hush, last night is quite over.

(Enter LORD W.)

Lord W. Your carriage has not come back yet, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. It makes no matter. I'll take a hansom. There is nothing in the world so respectable as a good Shrewsbury and Talbot. And now, dear Lady Windermere, I am afraid it is really good-bye. {Moves up c.} Oh, I remember. You'll think me absurd, but do you know, I've taken a great fancy to this fan that I was silly enough to run away with last night from your ball. Now, I wonder would you give it to me? Lord Windermere says you may. I know it is his present.

Lady W. Oh, certainly, if it will give you any pleasure. But it has my name on it. It has "Margaret" on it.

Mrs. E. But we have the same Christian name.

Lady W. Oh, I forgot. Of course, do have it. What a wonderful chance our names being the same!

Mrs. E. Quite wonderful. Thanks — it will always remind me of you.

(Shakes hands with her.)

• (Enter PARKER.)

Parker. Lord Augustus Lorton. Mrs. Erlynne's carriage has come.

(Enter LORD A.)

Lord A. Good morning, dear boy. Good morning, Lady Windermere. (Sees MRS. E.) Mrs. Erlynne!

Mrs. E. How do you do, Lord Augustus? Are you quite well this morning?

Lord A. (coldly). Quite well, thank you, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. You don't look at all well, Lord Augustus. You stop up too late — it is so bad for you. You really should take more care of yourself. Good-bye, Lord Windermere. (Goes towards door with a bow to LORD A. Suddenly smiles' and looks back at him.) Lord Augustus! Won't you see me to my carriage? You might carry the fan.

Lord W. Allow me!

Mrs. E. No, I want Lord Augustus. I have a special message for the dear Duchess. Won't you carry the fan, Lord Augustus?

Lord A. If you really desire it, Mrs. Erlynne.

Mrs. E. (laughing). Of course I do. You'll carry it so gracefully. You would carry off anything gracefully, dear Lord Augustus.

(When she reaches the door she looks back for a moment at LADY W. Their eyes meet. Then she turns, and exits c., followed by LORD A.)

Lady W. You will never speak against Mrs. Erlynne again, Arthur, will you?

Lord W. (gravely). She is better than one thought her.

Lady W. She is better than I am.

Lord W. (smiling as he strokes her hair). Child, you and she belong to different worlds. Into your world evil has never entered.

Lady W. Don't say that, Arthur. There is the same world for all of us, and good and evil, sin and innocence, go through it hand in hand. To shut one's eyes to half of life that one may live securely is as though one blinded oneself that one might walk with more safety in a land of pit and precipice.

Lord W. (moves down with her). Darling, why do you say that?

Lady W. (sits on sofa). Because I, who had shut my eyes to life, came to the brink. And one who had separated us——

Lord W. We were never parted.

Lady W. We never must be again. Oh, Arthur, don't love me less, and I will trust you more. I will trust you absolutely. Let us go to Selby. In the Rose Garden at Selby, the roses are white and red.

(Enter LORD A.)

Lord A. Arthur, she has explained everything! (LADY W. looks horribly frightened. LORD W. jarts. LORD A. takes LORD W. by the arm, and brings him to front of stage.) My dear fellow, she has explained every demmed thing. We all wronged her immensely. It was entirely for my sake she went to Darlington's rooms — called first at the club. Fact is, wanted to put me out of suspense, and being told I had gone on, followed — naturally — frightened when she heard a lot of

men coming in — retired to another room — I assure you, most gratifying to me, the whole thing. We all behaved brutally to her. She is just the woman for me. Suits me down to the ground. All the condition she makes is that we live out of England — a very good thing, too! — Demmed clubs, demmed climate, demmed cooks, demmed everything! Sick of it all.

Lady W. (*frightened*). Has Mrs. Erlynne —?

Lord A. (*advancing towards her with a bow*). Yes, Lady Windermere, Mrs. Erlynne has done me the honor of accepting my hand.

Lord W. Well, you are certainly marrying a very clever woman.

Lady W. (*taking her husband's hand*). Ah! you're marrying a very good woman.

Francis Thompson • 1860-1907

Francis Thompson is the pre-eminent Roman Catholic poet of the nineteenth century. He was educated at Ushaw College, a Catholic college near Durham, and later studied medicine at Owens College, Manchester; but he never practiced in his profession. During a life made painful by disease and personal sorrows, he was befriended and encouraged by Wilfred and Alice Meynell, who, after his death, edited his poems.

Thompson is a genuine poet. He is often regarded as a literary descendant of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, especially Crashaw. This is only partly true. In his religious mysticism, his delight in conceits and in strange words, many of which he coined himself, he does resemble them; but he has an originality all his own. His literary idol was Shelley, about whom he wrote a now-famous essay. Besides his poems, he wrote critical and familiar essays, which for freshness and charm rank among the best of the century.

The standard biography is A. Meynell's *The Life of Francis Thompson* (1926). Thompson's complete works have been edited by W. Meynell (3 vols., 1913), who has also edited, with a biographical note, *Selected Poems* (1930).

The Poppy

To Monica¹

Summer set lip to earth's bosom bare,
And left the flushed print in a poppy there;
Like a yawn of fire from the grass it came,
And the fanning wind puffed it to flapping
flame. 4

With burnt mouth, red like a lion's, it drank
The blood of the sun as he slaughtered sank,
And dipped its cup in the purpate shine
When the eastern conduits ran with wine;

Till it grew lethargied with fierce bliss,
And hot as a swinked² gypsy is, 10

¹ The Meynells' daughter. ² tired.

And drowsed in sleepy savageries,
With mouth wide a-pout for a sultry kiss.

A child and man paced side by side,
Treading the skirts of eventide;
But between the clasp of his hand and hers 15
Lay, felt not, twenty withered years.

She turned, with the rout of her dusk South
hair,
And saw the sleeping gypsy there;
And snatched and snapped it in swift child's
whim, 19
With—"Keepit, long as you live!"—to him.

And his smile, as nymphs from their laving
meres,
Trembled up from a bath of tears;

And joy, like a mew sea-rocked apart,
Tossed on the wave of his troubled heart.

For *he* saw what she did not see, 25
That — as kindled by its own fervency —
The verge shriveled inward smolderingly;

And suddenly 'twixt his hand and hers
He knew the twenty withered years —
No flower, but twenty shriveled years. 30

"Was never such thing until this hour,"
Low to his heart he said; "the flower
Of sleep brings waking to me,
And of oblivion, memory.

"Was never this thing to me," he said, 35
"Though with bruised poppies my feet are
red!"

And again to his own heart very low:
"O child! I love, for I love and know;

"But you, who love nor know at all
The diverse chambers in Love's guest-hall, 40
Where some rise early, few sit long:
In how differing accents hear the throng
His great Pentecostal tongue;

"Who know not love from amity,
Nor my reported self from me; 45
A fair fit gift is this, meseems,
You give — this withering flower of dreams.

¹ O frankly fickle, and fickle true,
Do you know what the days will do to you?
To your Love and you what the days will do,
O frankly fickle, and fickle true? 51

"You have loved me, Fair, three lives — or
days;

"Twill pass with the passing of my face.
But where go, your face goes too,
To watch lest I play false to you. 55

"I am but, my sweet, your foster-lover,
Knowing well when certain years are over
You vanish from me to another;
Yet I know, and love, like the foster-mother.

"So, frankly fickle, and fickle true! 60
For my brief life-while I take from you

This token, fair and fit, meseems,
For me — this withering flower of dreams."

The sleep-flower sways in the wheat its head,
Heavy with dreams, as that with bread; 65
The goodly grain and the sun-flushed sleeper
The reaper reaps, and Time the reaper.

I hang 'mid men my needless head,
And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is bread.
The goodly men and the sun-hazed sleeper
Time shall reap; but after the reaper 71
The world shall glean of me, me the sleeper I

Love, love! your flower of withered dream
In leaved rime lies safe, I deem,
Sheltered and shut in a nook of rime, 75
From the reaper man, and his reaper Time.

Love! I fall into the claws of Time;
But lasts within a leaved rime
All that the world of me esteems —
My withered dreams, my withered dreams. 80
Pub. 1893.

The Hound of Heaven

Ifled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.

Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasm'd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed,
followed after.

But with unhurrying chase, 10
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat — and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet —
"All things betray thee, who betrayest
Me."

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love Who followed,
Yet was I sore adread 20

- Lest, having Him, I must have naught be-
side);
- But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled, 25
And troubled the gold gateways of the
stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clanged bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the
moon.
- I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon; 30
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me
over
From this tremendous Lover!
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy, 35
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal
deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly
fleet, 40
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clanged his chariot 'thwart a
heaven
Flashy with flying lightnings round the
spurn o' their feet: —
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pur-
sue. 45
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat — 50
"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not
shelter Me."
- I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face of man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that re-
plies; ss
They at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But, just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,
- Their angel plucked them from me by the
hair. 60
"Come then, ye other children, Nature's —
share
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellow-
ship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,
Let me twine with you caresses,
Wantoning 65
With our Lady-Mother's vagrant
tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azured dais,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is, 70
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
So it was done:
in their delicate fellowship was one —
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies. 75
knew all the swift importings
On the wilful face of skies;
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumed of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies so
Rose and drooped with — made them
shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine —
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers 85
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal
mine; oo
Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my
human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's grey
cheek. 95
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound speak —
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by
silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my
drouth;
Let her, if she would owe me, 100

Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
 The breasts o' her tenderness:
 Never did any milk of hers once bless
 My thirsting mouth.
 Nigh and nigh draws the chase, 105
 With unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
 And past those noised Feet
 A voice comes yet more fleet —
⁴⁴Lo! naught contents thee, who content's!
 not Me." 110

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
 My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn
 from me,
 And smitten me to my knee;
 I am defenceless utterly.
 I slept, methinks, and woke, 115
 And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
 In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
 I shook the pillaring hours
 And pulled my life upon me; grimed with
 smears,
 I stand amid the dust o' the mounded
 years — 120
 My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
 My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,
 Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a
 stream.
 Yea, faileth now even dream
 The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist; 125
 Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy
 twist
 I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
 Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
 For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
 Ah! is Thy love indeed 130
 A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
 Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?
 Ah! must —
 Designer infinite! —
 Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou
 canst limn with it? 135
 My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the
 dust;
 And now my heart is as a broken fount,
 Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down
 ever
 From the dank thoughts that shiver
 Upon the sighful branches of my mind. 140
 Such is; what is to be?

The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
 I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;
 Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
 From the hid battlements of Eternity; 145
 Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
 Round the half-glimpsed turrets slowly wash
 again.
 But not ere him who summoneth
 I first have seen, enwound
 With glooming robes purpureal, cypress
 crowned; 150
 His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.
 Whether man's heart or life it be which yields
 Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields
 Be dunged with rotten death?
 Now of that long pursuit 155
 Comes on at hand the bruit;
 That Voice is round me like a bursting
 sea:
 "And is thy earth so marred,
 Shattered in shard on shard?
 Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest
 Me! 160
 Strange, piteous, futile thing,
 Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
 Seeing none but I makes much of naught"
 (He said),
 "And human love needs human meriting:
 How hast thou merited — 165
 Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
 Alack, thou knowest not
 How little worthy of any love thou art!
 Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
 Save Me, save only Me? 170
 All which I took from thee I did but take,
 Not for thy harms,
 But just that thou might'st seek it in My
 arms.
 All which thy child's mistake 174
 Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
 Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

Halts by me that footfall:
 Is my gloom, after all,
 Shade of His hand, outstretched ca-
 ressingly?
 "Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, 180
 I am He Whom thou seekest!
 Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest
 Me."
 Pub. 1893.

Little Jesus

*Ex ore infantium Deus et lactentium
perfecti laudem.*¹

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy
Once, and just so small as I?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of heaven, and just like me?
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*, 5
And ask where all the angels were?

I should think that I would cry
For my house all made of sky;
I would look about the air,
And wonder where my angels were; 10
And at waking 'twould distress me —
Not an angel there to dress me!

Hadst Thou ever any toys,
Like us little girls and boys?
And didst Thou play in heaven with all 15
The angels, that were not too tall,
With stars for marbles? Did the things
Play *Can you see me?* through their wings?

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way? 20
And did they tire sometimes, being young,
And make the prayer seem very long?
And dost Thou like it best, that we
Should join our hands to pray to Thee?

I used to think, before I knew, 25
The prayer not said unless we do.
And did Thy Mother at the night
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,
Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said? 30

Thou canst not have forgotten all
That it feels like to be small;
And Thou know'st I cannot pray
To thee in my father's way —
When Thou wast so little, say, 35
Couldst Thou talk Thy Father's way?

So, a little Child, come down
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;

¹ "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou
hast perfected praise." St. Matthew xxi, 16.

Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk. 40
To Thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, Thou art so fair),
And say: "O Father, I, Thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one." 44

And He will smile, that children's tongue
Has not changed since Thou wast young!
Pub. 1893.

The Kingdom of God

*"In no Strange Land"*¹

O world invisible, we view thee;
O world intangible, we touch thee;
O world unknowable, we know thee;
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean, 5
The eagle plunge to find the air —
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumor of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars! — 10
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places —
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces 15
That miss the many-splendored thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry — and upon thy sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing 20
Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry, — clinging heaven by the hems:
And lo, Christ walking on the water,
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!
Pub. 1908.

Envoy

Go, songs, for ended is our brief, sweet play;
Go, children of swift joy and tardy sorrow:

¹ See Exodus ii, aa.

And some arc sung, and that was yesterday,
And some unsung, and that may be to-
morrow.

Go forth; and if it be o'er stony way, 5
Old joy can lend what newer grief must
borrow:

And it was sweet, and that was yesterday,
And sweet is sweet, though purchased with
sorrow.

Go, songs, and come not back from your far
way;

And if men ask you why ye smile and
sorrow, 10

Tell them ye grieve, for your hearts know
To-day,

Tell them ye smile, for your eyes know
To-morrow.

Publ¹⁸97-

George Meredith • 1818-1909

George Meredith is best known as a novelist, but he began his career with a volume of verse in 1851, and continued to write poetry throughout his long life. As poet and novelist Meredith belongs to the generation which succeeded the great Victorians — Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, and Browning. He grew up in the period of scientific thought, and is therefore more mature intellectually than his predecessors. As prose writer he contributed to "the novel of ideas"; as poet he dealt with themes of great import to man's career and destiny, considered in the light of his origin and biological history. Both his novels and his poetry require a mental effort that comparatively few readers are willing to give. Moreover, both his prose and his poetry are marked by certain eccentricities of style — concentration, sudden transitions, unusual words and constructions. In his poetry he resembles Donne and Browning, but he has never had the devoted followers who have met the challenge of their master's obscurities and difficulties. Like Browning, Meredith has included in his poetry much that might better have been called prose; but on the other hand he has left many lines of such rich beauty and superb skill that his title is clear to a place among the English poets.

Meredith was born in Portsmouth, February 12, 1818. He was the grandson of a tailor of that city, famous as an outfitter of naval officers, and enjoying a privileged position among the county gentry. About the social position of the family there was a certain ambiguity, which Meredith makes the theme of his autobiographical novel, *Evan Harrington* (1861). He was not averse to the appearance of some mystery in regard to his birth, which one legend attributed to the amours of George IV. He was educated at a famous Moravian school at Neuwied, on the Rhine. On his return to England, he was articled as clerk to a solicitor; but his passion for literature led him to journalism, poetry, and fiction. He married the daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, a writer of eccentric and satiric novels whose style had some influence on his son-in-law. The marriage of these two highly gifted people proved unhappy, and ended in separation and the suicide of Mrs. Meredith — a tragedy which forms the basis of Meredith's *Modern Love*, a sequence of fifty "sonnets" of sixteen lines each, published in 1861.

Meanwhile Meredith had begun with *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), his great series of novels dealing with themes and typical situations in modern life. There followed *Beauchamfs' Career* (1875), *The Egoist* (1879), *Diana of the Crossways* (1885), and *One of Our Conquerors* (1891). He married Marie Vulliamy in 1863, paying her the tribute of the mag-

nificnt prothalamium, *Love in the Valley*. At her death, in 1885, he wrote the most nobly serious of his poems, *A Faith oa Trial*. For many years he acted as manuscript-reader for the publishers, Chapman and Hall; and in this capacity it fell to him to reject Thomas Hardy's first offering and advise his younger competitor to join the sensational school of Wilkie Collins. Meredith had deep admiration for Carlyle, but he sympathized with the younger followers of John Stuart Mill — John Morley and Leslie Stephen — in their belief in the application of ideas to the conduct of human affairs. His cottage at Box Hill, Surrey, was a resort for these friends, who formed a sort of peripatetic school of philosophy in their weekly tramps over the hills. Meredith had the misfortune to break a leg in 1905; but he continued from his chair to watch the changing world, lending his support to such radical causes as equal suffrage and trial marriage. He died in 1909.

Meredith was an inheritor of the great tradition of English poetry in the nineteenth century — the feeling for nature. The minuteness and precision of his perception of colors and sounds mark a distinct growth in the appreciation of nature since Wordsworth. No finer instance of the blending of the two great themes of love and nature is to be found in literature than his poem, *Love in the Valley*, in which landscape, under the changing colors of dawn, noon, twilight, night, and the succession of seasons, not only becomes the background, but also partakes of the drama, of human character. Nature was also the basis of Meredith's philosophy.

With the new concept of the relation of man to the natural world, he could not share Wordsworth's faith in nature as an emanation of a divine being. Rather he thought of her as a rough kindly mother, the source of life, who by a process which he indicates as conscious, has brought forth her favorite offspring in man. It is to be noted that Meredith uses the term Earth, more often than earlier poets — "Earth, young mother of her brood." He accepted the theory of evolution, with an optimistic interpretation. Evolution was progress. He saw humanity as the flowering of nature, and the mind of man as the flowering of humanity. He believed that evolution was still at work in human intelligence, and that its future was beyond our dreams. In this evolution, contention, the struggle for existence, was the vital force, resulting in the survival of the fittest. Thus no less than Browning does he value courage, strenuous activity, faith in life.

The complete works of George Meredith are published by Charles Scribner's Sons, through whose kind permission the following poems are reprinted. For his life see either J. B. Priestley (1916) in the English Men of Letters series, or R. E. Sencourt (1919).

FROM Modern Love

The fifty poems that make up *Modern Love* are regarded by some critics as a sonnet-sequence. Note, however, that the poems have sixteen lines (a length not unusual in the early history of the sonnet), and that, unlike most sonnet-sequences, they tell a connected, complex story.

i

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
The strange low sobs that shook their common bed,

Were called into her with a sharp surprise,
And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay 6
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed
away

With muffled pulses. Then, as midnight makes
Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet
Were moveless, looking through their dead
black years, 12

By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen

Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword be-
tween; 15
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

2

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had! 5
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:
A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was
brown

Before his vision, and the world forgot, 10
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengeance, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of Jove, 15
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

48

Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,
Destroyed by subtleties these women are!
More brain, O Lord, more brain! or we shall
mar

Utterly this fair garden we might win.
Behold! I looked for peace, and thought it
near. 5

Our inmost hearts had opened, each to each.
We drank the pure daylight of honest speech.
Alas! that was the fatal draught, I fear.

For when of my lost Lady¹ came the word,
This woman, O this agony of flesh! 10
Jealous devotion bade her break the mesh,
That I might seek that other like a bird.
I do adore the nobleness! despise
The act! She has gone forth, I know not
where.

Will the hard world my sentience of her
share? 15

I feel the truth; so let the world surmise.

49

He² found her³ by the ocean's moaning verge,
Nor any wicked change in her discerned;

¹ The woman with whom the husband has been
carrying on a flirtation.
² The husband. ³ The wife.

And she believed his old love had returned,
Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
She took his hand, and walked with him, and
seemed 5

The wife he sought, though shadow-like and
dry.

She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,
And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
She dared not say, "This is my breast: look
in."

But there's a strength to help the desperate
weak. 10

That night he learned how silence best can
speak

The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
About the middle of the night her call
Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.
"Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she
said. 15

Lethe had passed those lips,¹ and he knew all.

50

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!

These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
Lovers beneath the singing sky of May, 5
They wandered once; clear as the dew on
flowers:

But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless
dole. 10

Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life! —
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's
force,

Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior
horse, 15

To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!
Pub. 1862.

Love in the Valley

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-
sward,

Couched with her arms behind her golden
head,

¹ i.e., she had killed herself.

- Knees and tresses folded ro slip and ripple
idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her, 5
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather
slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but em-
brace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me
go?
- Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the
swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's
light 10
Circling the surface to meet his mirrored
winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her
flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-
tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set
of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and con-
quer, 15
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were
she won!
- When her mother tends her before the laugh-
ing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing
wedded,
More love should I have, and much less
care. 20
When her mother tends her before the lighted
mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her
curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing
wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and
girls.
- Heartless she is as the shadow in the mead-
ows 25
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy
noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new
moon.
- Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid
measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal
no less: 30
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the
flowers with hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise
and bless.
- Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweep-
ing
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note un-
varied, 35
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown
eve-jar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more for-
getting:
So were it with me if forgetting could be
willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bub-
bling well-spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it
filled. 40
.
- Stepping down the hill with her fair com-
panions,
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she
marches,
Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpos-
sessed.
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awak-
ing 45
Whispered the world was; morning light
is she.
Love that so desires would fain keep her
changeless;
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her
free.
- Happy happy time, when the white star
hovers
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy
dew, 50
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart
the darkness,
Threading it with color, like yewberries
the yew.
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East
deepens

Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud
swells.
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is,
and secret; 55
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as
cold sea-shells.
Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and
lighting
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills
along,
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant
laughter
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song. 60
Ay, but shows the South-West a ripple-
feathered bosom
Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken
and ascend
Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream, there
comes a sunset
Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.
When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant
to the window 65
Turns grave eyes craving light, released
from dreams,
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily
Bursting out of bud in havens of the
streams.
When from bed she rises clothed from neck to
ankle
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of
May, 70
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden lily
Pure from the night, and splendid for the
day.
Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twi-
light,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-
delighted skylark, 75
Clear as though the dewdrops had their
voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the ray-
less planet,
Fountain-full he pours the spraying foun-
tain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the
flowers. 80

All the girls are out with their baskets for
the primrose;
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in
joyful bands.
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now
she loiters,
Hyes the bent anemones, and hangs her
hands.
Such a look will tell that the violets are
peeping, 85
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odors and for color,
Covert and the nightingale; she knows nor
why.
Kerchiefed head and chin she darts between
her tulips, 89
Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy rain:
Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their
angel
She will be; she lifts them, and on she
speeds again.
Black the driving ramcloud breasts the iron
gateway:
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking
mirth.
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for
thunder 95
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.
Prim little scholars are the flowers of her
garden,
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if
they please.
I might love them well but for loving more
the wild ones.
O my wild ones! they tell me more than
these. 100
You, my wild one, you tell of honeyed field-
rose,
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even
as they,
They by the wayside are earnest of your good-
ness,
You are of life's, on the banks that line the
way.
Peering at her chamber the white crowns the
red rose, 105
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two
and three.

- Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry
jasmine
Breathes a falling breath that carries
thoughts of me.
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my
sweetest?
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the
jasmine breathes, no
Luring her to love; she sleeps; the starry jas-
mine
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-
wreaths.
- Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-
glades;
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray
leaf;
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are
yellow; 115
Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing to
the sheaf.
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the laugh-
ing yaffle;
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and
shine:
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the
heavens,
Thinking of the harvest: I look and think
of mine. 120
- This I may know: her dressing and un-
dressing
Such a change of light shows as when the
skies in sport
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over
thunder
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port
White sails furl, or on the ocean borders 125
White sails lean along the waves leaping
green.
Visions of her shower before me, but from
eyesight
Guarded she would be like the sun were she
seen.
- Front door and back of the mossed old farm-
house
Open with the morn, and in a breezy
link 130
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed
orchard,
- Green across a rill where on sand the min-
nows wink.
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting
notes
Call my darling up with round and roguish
challenge: 135
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing
throats!
- Cool was the woodside, cool as her white
dairy
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the
boys from school,
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with
sunshine;
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed
cool! 140
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a
pitcher
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the
beak.
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tip-
toe,
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and
leaned her cheek.
- Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red
roof 145
Through the long noon coo, crooning
through the coo.
Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy
roadway
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch, loose droops
the blue.
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and
fly. 150
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her no-
where,
Lightning may come, straight rains and
tiger sky. . . .
- O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-
armful!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!
O the treasure-tresses one another over 155
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the
waist!
Slain are the poppies that shot their random
scarlet

Quick the whcatcars: wound about
the waist,
Gathered, see these brides of Earth one blush
of ripeness! 159
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded
snow:
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of
moonrise,
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-
tree 165
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.
Here may life on death or death on life be
painted.
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow
chamber
Where there is no window, read not heaven
or her. 170
"When she was tiny," one aged woman
quavers,
Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.
Faults she had once as she learned to run and
tumbled:
Faults of feature some see, beauty not
complete.
Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy 175
Earth and air, may have faults from head
to feet.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she
lingers,
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new
surprise
High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.
Something friends have told her fills her
heart to brimming, 181
Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her,
and tames. —
Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in
our names.
• • • • •
Soon will she lie like a white-frost sunrise. 185
Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale
as rye,

Long since your sheaves have yielded to the
thresher,
Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses fly.
Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.
Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged
Spring! 190
Sing from the South-West, bring her back the
truants,
Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping
wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April
Spreading bough on bough a primrose
mountain, you,
Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the sky-
fields, 195
Youngest green transfused in silver shining
through:
Fairer than the lily, than the wild white
cherry:
Fair as in image my seraph love appears
Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my
eyelids:
Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on
tears. 200
• • • • •
Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my
need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dog-
wood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like
the reed.
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in
October; 205
Streaming like the flag-reed South-West
blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted
whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.
Pub. 1878.

The Spirit of Shakespeare

Thy greatest knew thee, Mother Earth; un-
soured
He knew thy sons. He probed from hell to
hell
Of human passions, but of love deflowered
His wisdom was not, for he knew thee well.

Thence came the honeyed corner at his lips, 5
 The conquering smile wherein his spirit sails
 Calm as the God who the white sea-wave
 whips,

Yet full of speech and intershifting talcs,
 Close mirrors of us: thence had he the laugh
 We feel is thine: broad as ten thousand
 beeves 10

At pasture! thence thy songs, that winnow
 chaff

From grain, bid sick Philosophy's last leaves
 Whirl, if they have no response — they en-
 forced

To fatten Earth when from her soul divorced.

How smiles he at a generation ranked 15
 In gloomy noddings over life! They pass.
 Not he to feed upon a breast unthanked,
 Or eye a beauteous face in a cracked glass.
 But he can spy that little twist of brain
 Which moved some weighty leader of the
 blind, 20

Unwitting 'twas the goad of personal pain,
 To view in cursed eclipse our Mother's mind,
 And show us of some rigid harridan
 The wretched bondmen till the end of time.
 O lived the Master now to paint us Man, 25
 That little twist of brain would ring a chime
 Of whence it came and what it caused, to
 start

Thunders of laughter, clearing air and heart.
 Pub. 1883.

Lucifer in Starlight

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
 Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
 Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
 Where sinners hugged their specter of repose.
 Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those. 5
 And now upon his western wing he leaned,
 Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands ca-
 reened,
 Now the black planet shadowed Arctic
 snows.
 Soaring through wider zones that pricked
 his scars

With memory of the old revolt from Awe,¹ 10
 He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
¹ In his contest with God.

Which arc the brain of heaven, he looked, and
 sank.

Around the ancient track marched, rank on
 rank,

The army of unalterable law.
 Pub. 1883.

A Certain People

As Puritans they prominently wax.
 And none more kindly gives and takes hard
 knocks.

Strong psalmic chanting, like to nasal cocks,
 They join to thunderings of their hearty
 thwacks.

But naughtiness, with hoggerly, not lacks 5
 When Peace another door in them unlocks,
 Where conscience shows the eyeing of an ox
 Grown dully apprehensive of an Axe.
 Graceless they are when gone to frivolous-
 ness,

Fearing the God they flout, the God they
 glut. 10

They need their pious exercises less
 Than schooling in the Pleasures: fair belief
 That these are devilish only to their thief,
 Charged with an Axe nigh on the occiput.
 Pub. 1883.

The Woods of Westermain

The woods of Westermain symbolize Nature,
 whose meaning can be understood only by those
 who, in going through the woods, exhibit both
 love and courage.

1

Enter these enchanted woods,
 You who dare.

Nothing harms beneath the leaves
 More than waves a swimmer cleaves.
 Toss your heart up with the lark, 5
 Foot at peace with mouse and worm,
 Fair you fare.

Only at a dread of dark
 Quaver, and they quit their form:
 Thousand eyeballs under hoods 10
 Have you by the hair.

Enter these enchanted woods,
 You who dare.

2

Here the snake across your path
Stretches in his golden bath: 15
Mossy-footed squirrels leap
Soft as winnowing plumes of Sleep:
Yaffles on a chuckle skim
Low to laugh from branches dim:
Up the pine, where sits the star, 20
Rattles deep the moth-winged jar.
Each has business of his own;
But should you distrust a tone,
Then beware.
Shudder all the haunted roods, 25
All the eyeballs under hoods
Shroud you in their glare.
Enter these enchanted woods,
You who dare.

3

Open hither, open hence, 30
Scarce a bramble weaves a fence,
Where the strawberry runs red,
With white star-flower overhead;
Cumbered by dry twig and cone,
Shredded husks of seedlings flown, 35
Mine of mole and spotted flint:
Of dire wizardry no hint,
Save mayhap the print that shows
Hasty outward-tripping toes,
Heels to terror, on the mold. 40
These, the woods of Westermain,
Are as others to behold,
Rich of wreathing sun and rain;
Foliage lusterful around
Shadowed leagues of slumbering sound. 45
Wavy tree-tops, yellow whins,
Shelter eager minikins,
Myriads, free to peck and pipe:
Would you better? would you worse?
You with them may gather ripe 50
Pleasures flowing not from purse,
Quick and far as Color flies
Taking the delighted eyes,
You of any well that springs
May unfold the heaven of things; 55
Have it homely and within,
And thereof its likeness win,
Will you so in soul's desire:
This do sages grant t' the lyre.
This is being bird and more, 60
More than glad musician this;

Granaries you will have a store
Past the world of woe and bliss;
Sharing still its bliss and woe;
Harnessed to its hungers, no. 65
On the throne Success usurps,
You shall seat the joy you feel
Where a race of water chirps,
Twisting hues of flourished steel:
Or where light is caught in hoop 70
Up a clearing's leafy rise,
Where the crossing deerherds troop
Classic splendors, knightly dyes.
Or, where old-eyed oxen chew
Speculation with the cud, 75
Read their pool of vision through,
Back to hours when mind was mud;
Nigh the knot, which did untwine
Timelessly to drowsy suns;
Seeing Earth a slimy spine, 80
Heaven a space for winging tons.
Farther, deeper, may you read,
Have you sight for things afield,
Where peeps she,¹ the Nurse of seed,
Cloaked, but in the peep revealed; 85
Showing a kind face and sweet:
Look you with the soul you see it.
Glory narrowing to grace,
Grace to glory magnified,
Following that will you embrace 90
Close in arms or aery wide.
Banished is the white Foam-born³
Not from here, nor under ban
Phoebus lyst, Phoebe's horn,
Pipings of the reedy Pan. 95
Loved of Earth of old they were,
Loving did interpret her;
And the sterner worship bars
None whom Song has made her stars.
You have seen the huntress moon 100
Radiantly facing dawn,
Dusky meads between them strewn
Glimmering like downy awn:
Argent Westward glows the hunt,
East the blush about to climb; 105
One another fair they front,
Transient, yet outshine the time;
Even as dewlight off the rose
In the mind a jewel sows.
Thus opposing grandeurs live 110

¹ Nature, or Mother Earth.
³ Aphrodite, or Venus.

- Here if Beauty be their dower:
 Doth she of her spirit give,
 Fleetingness will spare her flower.
 This is in the tune we play,
 Which no spring of strength would quell;
 In subduing does not slay; 116
 Guides the channel, guards the well:
 Tempered holds the young blood-heat,
 Yet through measured grave accord,
 Hears the heart of wildness beat 120
 Like a centaur's hoof on sward.
 Drink the sense the notes infuse,
 You a larger self will find:
 Sweetest fellowship ensues
 With the creatures of your kind. 125
 Ay, and Love, if Love it be
 Flaming over and ME,
 Love meet they who do not shove
 Cravings in the van of Love.
 Courtly dames are here to woo, 130
 Knowing love if it be true.
 Reverence the blossom-shoot
 Fervently, they are the fruit.
 Mark them stepping, hear them talk,
 Goddess, is no myth inane, 135
 You will say of those who walk
 In the woods of Westermaiu.
 Waters that from throat arid thigh
 Dart the sun his arrows back;
 Leaves that on a woodland sigh 140
 Chat of secret things no Jack;
 Shadowy branch-leaves, waters clear.
 Bare or veiled they move sincere;
 Not by slavish terrors tripped;
 Being anew in nature dipped, 145
 Growths of what they step on, these;
 With the roots the grace of trees.
 Casket-breasts they give, nor hide,
 For a tyrant's flattered pride,
 Mind, which nourished not by light, 150
 Lurks the shuffling trickster sprite:
 Whereof arc strange tales to tell;
 Some in blood writ, tombed in bell.
 Here the ancient battle ends,
 Joining two astonished friends, 155
 Who the kiss can give and take
 With more warmth than in that world
 Where the tiger claws the snake,
 Snake her tiger clasps infurled,
 And the issue of their fight 160
 Peoples lands in snarling plight.
- Here her splendid beast she leads
 Silken-leashed and decked with weeds
 Wild as he, but breathing faint
 Sweetness of unfelt constraint. 165
 Love, the great volcano, flings
 Fires of lower Earth to sky;
 Love, the sole permitted, sings
 Sovereignly of ME and .
 Bowers he has of sacred shade, 170
 Spaces of superb parade,
 Voiceful... But bring you a note
 Wrangling, howsoe'er remote,
 Discords out of discord spin
 Round and round derisive din: 175
 Sudden will a pallor pant
 Chill at screeches miscreant;
 Owls or specters, thick they flee;
 Nightmare upon horror broods;
 Hooded laughter, monkish glee, 180
 Gaps the vital air.
 Enter these enchanted woods
 You who dare.
- 4
- You must love the light so well
 That no darkness will seem fell. 185
 Love it so you could accost
 Fellowly a livid ghost.
 Whish! the phantom wisps away,
 Owns him smoke to cocks of day.
 In your breast the light must burn 190
 Fed of you, like corn in quern
 Ever plumping while the wheel
 Speeds the mill and drams the meal.
 Light to light sees little strange,
 Only features heavenly new; 195
 Then you touch the nerve of Change,
 Then of Earth you have the clew;
 Then her two-sexed meanings melt
 Through you, wed the thought-and felt.
 Sameness locks no scurfy pond 200
 Here for Custom, crazy-fond:
 Change is on the wing to bud
 Rose in brain from rose in blood.
 Wisdom throbbing shall you see
 Central in complexity; 205
 From her pasture 'mid the beasts
 Rise to her ethereal feasts,
 Not, though lightnings track your wit
 Starward, scorning them you quit:
 For be sure the bravest wing 210

Preens it in our common spring,
Thence along the vault to soar,
You with others, gathering more,
Glad of more, till you reject
Your proud title of elect, 215
Perilous even here while few
Roam the arched greenwood with you.

Heed that snare.

Muffled by his cavern-cowl
Squats the scaly Dragon-fowl,¹ 220
Who was lord ere light you drank,
And lest blood of knightly rank
Stream, let not your fair princess
Stray: he holds the leagues in stress,
Watches keenly there. 225

Oft has he been riven, slain
Is no force in Wcstcrmain.
Wait, and we shall forge him curbs,
Put his fangs to uses, tame,
Teach him, quick as cunning herbs, 230
How to cure him sick and lame.
Much restricted, much enringed,
Much he frets, the hooked and winged,
Never known to spare.

Tis enough: the name of Sage 235
Hits no thing in nature, nought;
Man the least, save when grave Age
From yon Dragon guards his thought
Eye him when you hearken dumb
To what words from Wisdom come. 240
When she says how few are by
Listening to her, eye his eye.

Self, his name declare.

Him shall Change, transforming late,
Wondcrouslly renovate. 245
Hug himself the creature may:
What he hugs is loathed decay.
Crying, slip thy scales, and slough!
Change will strip his armor off;
Make of him who was all maw, 250
Inly only thrilling-shrewd,
Such a servant as none saw
Through his days of dragonhood.
Days when growling o'er his bone,
Sharpened he for mine and thine; 255
Sensitive within alone;
Scaly as in clefts of pine.
Change, the strongest son of Life,
Has the Spirit here to wife.
Lo, their young of vivid breed, 260

¹ self, egoism.

Bear the lights that onward speed,
Threading thickets, mounting glades,
Up the verdurous colonnades,
Round the fluttered curves, and down,
Out of sight of Earth's blue crown, 265
Whither, in her central space,
Spouts the Fount and Lure o' the chase.¹

Fount unresting, Lure divine!
There meet all: too late look most.
Fire in water hued as wine, 270
Springs amid a shadowy host;
Circled: one close-headed mob,
Breathless, scanning divers heaps
Where a Heart begins to throb,
Where it ceases, slow, with leaps. 275
And 'tis very strange, 'tis said,
How you spy in each of them
Semblance of that Dragon red,
As the oak in bracken-stem.²

And, 'tis said, how each and each: 280
Which commences, which subsides:
First my Dragon! doth beseech
Her who food for all provides.³
And she answers with no sign;
Utters neither yea nor nay; 285
Fires the water hued as wine;
Kneads another spark in clay.
Terror is about her hid;
Silence of the thunders locked;
Lightnings lining the shut lid; 290
Fixity on quaking rocked.

Lo, you look at Flow and Drought
Interflashed and interwrought:
Ended is begun, begun
Ended, quick as torrents run. 295
Young Impulsion spouts to sink;
Luridness and luster link;
'Tis your come and go of breath;
Mirrored pants the Life, the Death;
Each of either reaped and sown: 300
Rosiest rosy wanes to crone.
See you so? your senses drift;
'Tis a shuttle weaving swift.
Look with spirit past the sense,
Spirit shines in permanence. 305
That is She,⁴ the view of whom
Is the dust within the tomb,

¹ Love.

² A cross-section of a bracken-stem, it is said, shows an oak tree in miniature.⁴

³ Mother Nature. Nature.

- Is the inner blush above,
 Look to loathe, or look to love;
 Think her Lump, or know her Flame; 310
 Dread her scourge, or read her aim;
 Shoot your hungers from their nerve;
 Or, in her example, serve.
 Some have found her sitting grave;
 Laughing, some; or, browed with sweat,
 Hurling dust of fool and knave 316
 In a hissing smithy's jet.
 More it were not well to speak;
 Burn to see, you need but seek.
 Once beheld she gives the key 320
 Airing every doorway, she.
 Little can you stop or steer
 Ere of her you are the seer.
 On the surface she will witch,
 Rendering Beauty yours, but gaze 325
 Under, and the soul is rich
 Past computing, past amaze.
 Then is courage that endures
 Even her awful tremble yours.
 Then, the reflex of that Fount 330
 Spied below, will Reason mount
 Lordly and a quenchless force,
 Lighting Pain to its mad source,
 Scaring Fear till Fear escapes,
 Shot through all its phantom shapes.
 Then your spirit will perceive 336
 Fleshly seed of fleshly sins;
 Where the passions interweave,
 How the serpent tangle spins
 Of the sense of Earth misprised, 340
 Brainlessly unrecognized;
 She being Spirit in her clods,
 Footway to the God of Gods.
 Then for you arc pleasures pure,
 Sureties as the stars are sure: 345
 Not the wanton beckoning flags
 Which, of flattery and delight,
 Wax to the grim Habit-Hags
 Riding souls of men to night:
 Pleasures that through blood run sane,
 Quickening spirit from the brain. 351
 Each of each in sequent birth,
 Blood and brain and spirit, three
 (Say the deepest gnomes of Earth),
 Join for true felicity. 355
 Are they parted, then expect
 Someone sailing will be wrecked:
 Separate hunting are they sped,
- Scan the morsel coveted.
 Earth that Triad¹ is: she hides 360
 Joy from him who that divides;
 Showers it when the three are one
 Glassing² her in union.
 Earth your haven, Earth your helm,
 You command a double realm: 365
 Laboring here to pay your debt,
 Till your little sun shall set;
 Leaving her the future task:
 Loving her too well to ask.
 Eglantine that climbs the yew, 370
 She her darkest wreathes for those
 Knowing her the Ever-new,
 And themselves the kin o' the rose.
 Life, the chisel, axe and sword,
 Wield who have her depths explored: 375
 Life, the dream, shall be their robe,
 Large as air about the globe;
 Life, the question, hear its cry
 Echoed with concordant Why;
 Life, the small self-dragon ramped, 380
 Thrill for service to be stamped.
 Ay, and over every height
 Life for them shall wave a wand:
 That, the last, where sits affright,
 Homely shows the stream beyond. 385
 Love the light and be its lynx,
 You will track her and attain;
 Read her as no cruel Sphinx
 In the woods of Westermairn.
 Daily fresh the woods are ranged; 390
 Glooms which elsewhere appal,
 Sounded: here, their worths exchanged,
 Urban joins with pastoral:
 Little lost, save what may drop
 Husk-like, and the mind preserves. 395
 Natural overgrowths they lop,
 Yet from nature neither swerves,
 Trained or savage: for this cause:
 Of our Earth they ply the laws,
 Have in Earth their feeding root, 400
 Mind of man and bent of brute.
 Hear that song; both wild and ruled.
 Hear it: is it wail or mirth?
 Ordered, bubbled, quite unschooled?
 None, and all: it springs of Earth. 405
 O but hear it! 'tis the mind;
 Mind that with deep Earth unites,
 Round the solid trunk to wind

¹ The body, the mind, the soul. ³ mirroring.

Rings of clasping parasites.

Music have you there to feed 410
 Simplest and most soaring need.
 Free to wind, and in desire
 Winding, they to her attached
 Feel the trunk a spring of fire,
 And ascend to heights unmatched, 415
 Whence the tidal world is viewed
 As a sea of windy wheat,
 Momently black, barren, rude;
 Golden brown, for harvest meet;
 Dragon-reaped from folly-sown; 420
 Bride-like to the sickle-blade:
 Quick it varies, while the moan,
 Moan of a sad creature strayed,
 Chiefly is its voice. So flesh 425
 Conjures tempest-flails to thresh
 Good from worthless. Some clear lamps
 Light it; more of dead marsh-damps.
 Monster is it still, and blind,
 Fit but to be led by Pain.
 Glance we at the paths behind, 430
 Fruitful sight has Westernmain.
 There we labored, and in turn
 Forward our blown lamps discern,
 As you see on the dark deep
 Far the loftier billows leap, 435
 Foam for beacon bear.
 Hither, hither, if you will,
 Drink instruction, or instill,
 Run the woods like vernal sap,
 Crying, hail to luminousness! 440
 But have care.
 In yourself may lurk the trap:
 On conditions they caress.
 Here you meet the light invoked:
 Here is never secret cloaked. 445
 Doubt you with the monster's fry
 All his orbit may exclude;
 Are you of the stiff, the dry,
 Cursing the not understood;
 Grasp you with the monster's claws; 450
 Govern with his truncheon-saws;
 Hate, the shadow of a grain;
 You are lost in Westernmain:
 Earthward swoops a vulture sun,
 Nighted upon carrion: 455
 Straightway venom winecups shout
 Toasts to One whose eyes are out:¹

Flowers along the reeling floor
 Drip henbane and hellebore:
 Beauty, of her tresses shorn, 460
 Shrieks as nature's maniac:
 Hideousness on hoof and horn
 Tumbles, yapping in her track:
 Haggard Wisdom, stately once,
 Leers fantastical and trips: 465
 Allegory drums the sconce,
 Impiousness nibblenips.
 Imp that dances, imp that flits,
 Imp o' the demon-growing girl,
 Maddest! whirl with imp o' the pits 470
 Round you, and with them you whirl
 Fast where pours the fountain-rout
 Out of Him whose eyes are out:
 Multitudes on multitudes,
 Drenched in wallowing deviltry: 475
 And you ask where you may be,
 In what reck of a lair
 Given to bones and ogre-broods:
 And they yell you Where.
 Enter these enchanted woods, 480
 You who dare.
 Pub. 1883.

The Thrush in February

I know him, February's thrush,
 And loud at eve he valentines
 On sprays that paw the naked bush
 Where soon will sprout the thorns and bines.¹

Now ere the foreign singer thrills 5
 Our vale his plain-song pipe he pours,
 A herald of the million bills;
 And heed him not, the loss is yours.

My study, flanked with ivied fir
 And budded beech with dry leaves curled, 10
 Perched over yew and juniper,
 He neighbors, piping to his world: —

The wooded pathways dank on brown,
 The branches on gray cloud a web,
 The long green roller of the down, 15
 An image of the deluge-ebb: —

And farther, they may hear along
 The stream beneath the poplar row,
¹ woodbines.

¹ Meredith told G. M. Trevelyan that this was
 Death — the skeleton.

- By fits, like welling rocks, the song
Spouts of blushful Spring in flow. 20
- But most he loves to front the vale
When waves of warm Southwestern rains
Have left our heavens clear in pale,
With faintest beck of moist red veins:¹
- Vermilion wings, by distance held 25
To pause aflight while fleeting swift:
And high aloft the pearl inshelled'
' Her lucid glow in glow will lift;
- A little south of colored sky;
Directing, gravely amorous, 30
The human of a tender eye
Through pure celestial on us:
- Remote, not alien; still, not cold;
Unraying yet, more pearl than star;
She seems a while the vale to hold 35
In trance, and homelier makes the far.
- Then Earth her sweet unscented breathes;
An orb of luster quits the height;
And like broad iris-flags, in wreaths
The sky takes darkness, long ere quite. 40
- His Island voice³ then shall you hear,
Not ever after separate
From such a twilight of the year
Advancing to the vernal gate.
- He sings me, out of Winter's throat, 45
The young time with the life ahead;
And my young time his leaping note
Recalls to spirit-mirth from dead.
- Imbedded in a land of greed,
Of mammon-quakings dire as Earth's, 50
My care was but to soothe my need:
At peace among the little worths.
- To light and song my yearning aimed;
To that deep breast of songs and light⁴
Which men have barrenest proclaimed; 55
As 'tis to senses pricked with fright.
- So mine are these new fruitings rich
The simple to the common brings;
I keep the youth of souls who pitch
Their joy in this old heart of things: 60
- Who feel the Coming young as aye,
Thrice hopeful on the ground we plow;
Alive for life, awake to die;
One voice to cheer the seedling Now.
- Full lasting is the song, though he, 65
The singer, passes: lasting too,
For souls not lent in usury,
The rapture of the forward view.
- With that I bear my senses fraught
Till what I am fast shoreward drives. 70
They are the vessel of the Thought.
The vessel splits, the Thought survives.
- Nought else are we when sailing brave,
Save husks to raise and bid it burn.
Glimpse of its livingness will wave 75
A light the senses can discern
- Across the river of the death,
Their close. Meanwhile, O twilight bird
Of promise! bird of happy breath!
I hear, I would the City heard. 80
- The City of the smoky fray;
A prodded ox, it drags and moans:
Its Morrow no man's child; its Day
A vulture's morsel beaked to bones.
- It strives without a mark for strife; 85
It feasts beside a famished host:
The loose restraint of wanton life,
That threatened penance in the ghost!
- Yet there our battle urges; there
Spring heroes many: issuing thence. 90
Names that should leave no vacant air
For fresh delight in confidence.
- Life was to them the bag of grain,
And Death the weedy harrow's tooth.
Those warriors of the sighting brain 95
Give worn Humanity new youth.

¹ cirrus clouds.³ the evening star.³ the English thrush.⁴ the earth's.

Our song and star are they to lead
The tidal multitude and blind

From bestial to the higher breed
By fighting souls of love divined. 100

They scorned the ventral dream of peace,
Unknown in nature. This they knew:
That life begets with fair increase
Beyond the flesh, if life be true.

Just reason based on valiant blood, 105
The instinct bred afield would match
To pipe thereof a swelling flood,
Were men of Earth made wise in watch.¹

Though now the numbers count as drops
An urn might bear, they father Time.² 110
She shapes anew her dusty crops;
Her quick in their own likeness climb.

Of their own force do they create,
They climb to light, in her their root.
Your brutish cry at muffled fate 115
She smites with pangs of worse than brute.

She, judged of shrinking nerves, appears
A Mother whom no cry can melt,
But read her past desires and fears,
The letters on her breast are spelt. 120

A slayer, yea, as when she pressed
Her savage to the slaughter-heaps,
To sacrifice she prompts her best:
She reaps them as the sower reaps.

But read her thought to speed the race, 125
And stars rush forth of blackest night:
You chill not at a cold embrace
To come, nor dread a dubious might.

Her double visage, double voice,
In oneness rise to quench the doubt. 130
This breath, her gift, has only choice
Of service, breathe we in or out.

Since Pain and Pleasure on each hand
Led our wild steps from slimy rock
To yonder sweeps of gardenland, 135
We breathe but to be sword or block.

The sighting brain her good decree
Accepts; obeys those guides,¹ in faith,
By reason hourly fed, that she,
To some the clod, to some the wraith, 140

Is more, no mask; a flame, a stream.
Flame, stream, are we, in mid career
From torrent source, delirious dream,
To heaven-reflecting currents clear.

And why the sons of Strength have been 145
Her cherished offspring ever; how
The Spirit served by her is seen
Through Law; perusing love will show.

Love born of knowledge, love that gains
Vitality as Earth it mates, 150
The meaning of the Pleasures, Pains,
The Life, the Death, illuminates.

For love we Earth, then serve we all;
Her mystic secret then is ours:
We fall, or view our treasures fall, 155
Unclouded, as beholds her flowers

Earth, from a night of frosty wreck,
Enrobed in morning's mounted fire,
When lowly, with a broken neck,
The crocus lays her cheek to mire. 160
Pub. 1885.

Hard Weather

Bursts from a rending East in flaws
The young green leaflet's harrier, sworn
To strew the garden, strip the shaws,²
And show our Spring with banner torn.
Was ever such virago morn? 5
The wind has teeth, the wind has claws.
All the wind's wolves through woods are
loose,
The wild wind's falconry aloft.
Shrill underfoot the grassblade shrews,
At gallop, clumped, and down the croft 10
Bestrid by shadows, beaten, tossed;
It seems a scythe, it seems a rod.
The howl is up at the howl's accost,
The shivers greet and the shivers nod.
Is the land ship? we are rolled, we drive 15

¹ If men studied carefully the lessons of Nature.

² Few in numbers now, they are the fathers of the future.

¹ Pain and pleasure.

³ The tops of potatoes and similar tubers or roots.

- Tritonly, cleaving hiss and hum;
Whirl with the dead, or mount or dive,
Or down in dregs, or on in scum.
And drums the distant, pipes the near,
And vale and hill are gray in gray, 20
As when the surge is crumbling sheer,
And sea-mews wing the haze of spray.
Clouds — are they bony witches? — swarms
Darting swift on the robber's flight,
Hurry an infant sky in arms: 25
It peeps, it beck; 'tis day, 'tis night.
Black while over the loop of blue
The swathe is closed, like shroud on corse.
Lo, as if swift the Furies flew,
The Fates at heel at a cry to horse! 30
- Interpret me the savage whirr:
And is it Nature scourged, or she,
Her offspring's executioner,
Reducing land to barren sea?
But is there meaning in a day 35
When this fierce angel of the air,
Intent to throw, and haply slay,
Can, for what breath of life we bear,
Exact the wrestle? Call to mind
The many meanings glistening up 40
When Nature to her nurslings kind,
Hands them the fruitage and the cup!
And seek we rich significance
Not otherwhere than with those tides
Of pleasure on the sunned expanse, 45
Whose flow deludes, whose ebb derides?
- Look in the face of men who fare
Lock-mouthed, a match in lungs and thews
For this fierce angel of the air,
To twist with him and take his bruise. 50
That is the face beloved of old
Of Earth, young mother of her brood:
Nor broken for us shows the mold
When muscle is in mind renewed:
Though farther from her nature rude, 55
Yet nearer to her spirit's hold.
And though of gentler mood serene,
Still forceful of her fountain-jet.
So shall her blows be shrewdly met,
Be luminously read the scene 60
Where Life is at her grindstone set,
That she may give us edging keen,
String us for battle, till as play
The common strokes of fortune shower.
- Such meaning in a dagger-day 65.
Our wits may clasp to wax in power.
Yea, feel us warmer at her breast,
By spin of blood in lusty drill,
Than when her honeyed hands caressed,
And Pleasure, sapping, seemed to fill. 70
- Behold the life at ease; it drifts.
The sharpened life commands its course.
She winnows, winnows roughly; sifts,
To dip her chosen in her source:
Contention is the vital force, 75
Whence pluck thy brain, her prize of gifts,
Sky of the senses! on which height,
Not disconnected, yet released,
They see how spirit comes to light,
Through conquest of the inner beast, 80
Which Measure tames to movement sane,
In harmony with what is fair.
Never is Earth misread by brain:
That is the welling of her, there
The mirror: with one step beyond, 85
For likewise is it voice; and more,
Benignest kinship bids respond,
When wait the weak, and then restore
Whom days as fell as this may rive.
While Earth sits ebon in her gloom, 90
Us atomies of life alive
Unheeding, bent on life to come.
Her children of the laboring brain,
These are the champions of the race,
True parents, and the sole humane, 95
With understanding for their base.
Earth yields the milk, but all her mind
Is vowed to thresh for stouter stock.
Her passion for old giantkind,
That scaled the mount, uphurled the rock,
Delves on them who read aright 101
Her meaning and devoutly serve,
Nor in her starlessness of night
Peruse her with the craven nerve:
But even as she from grass to corn, 105
To eagle high from grubbing mole,
Prove in strong brain her noblest born,
The station for the flight of soul.
Pub. 1888.
- ### A Stave of Roving Tim
- The wind is East, the wind is West,
Blows in and out of haven;

- The wind that blows is the wind that's best,
And croak, my jolly raven!
If here awhile we jiggled and laughed, 5
The like we will do yonder;
For he's the man who masters a craft,
And light as a lord can wander.
So, foot the measure, Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven! 10
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven. 60
- You live in rows of snug abodes,
With gold, maybe, for counting;
And mine's the beck of the rainy roads 15
Against the sun a-mounting.
I take the day as it behaves,
Nor shiver when 'tis airy;
But comes a breeze, all you are on waves,
Sick chickens o' Mother Carey! 20
So, now for next, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.
- * Sweet lass, you screw a lovely leer, 25
To make a man consider.
If you were up with the auctioneer,
I'd be a handsome bidder.
But wedlock clips the rover's wing;
She tricks him fly to spider; 30
And when we get to fights in the Ring,
It's trumps when you play outsider.
So, wrench and split, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim 35
Is in and out of haven.
- Along my winding way I know
A shady dell that's winking;
The very corner for Self and Co.
To do a world of thinking. 40
And shall I this? and shall I that?
Till Nature answers, n'ether!
Strike match and light your pipe in your hat,
Rejoicing in sound shoe-leather!
So, lead along, cries Roving Tim, 45
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.
- A cunning hand'll hand you bread,
With freedom for your capers. 50
- I'm not so sure of a cunning head;
It steers to pits or vapors.
But as for Life, we'll hear in sight
The lesson Nature teaches;
Regard it in a sailing light, 55
And treat it like thirsty leeches.
So fly your jib, cries Roving Tim,
And top your boom, old raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven. 60
- She'll take, to please her dame and dad,
The shopman nicely shaven.
She'll learn to think o' the marching lad
When perchers show they're craven.
You say the shopman piles a heap, 65
While I perhaps am fasting;
And bless your wits, it haunts him in sleep,
His tin-kettle chance of lasting!
So hail the road, cries Roving Tim,
And hail the rain, old raven! 70
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.
- He's half a wife, yon pecker bill;
A book and likewise preacher.
With any soul, in a game of skill, 75
He'll prove your over-reacher.
The reason is, his brains are bent
On doing things right single.
You'd wish for them when pitching your
tent
At night in a whirly dingle! 80
So, off we go, cries Roving Tim,
And on we go, old raven f
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.
- Lord, no, man's lot is not for bliss; 85
To call it woe is blindness:
It's here a kick, and it's there a kiss,
And here and there a kindness.
He starts a hare and calls her joy;
He runs her down to sorrow: 90
The dogs within him bother the boy,
But 'tis a new day to-morrow.
So, I at helm, cries Roving Tim,
And you at bow, old raven!
The wind according to its whim 95
Is in and out of haven.
- Pub. 1888.

Thomas Hardy - 1840-1918

Thomas Hardy is linked with George Meredith as one of the writers of fiction who responded to the intellectual movement of the close of the nineteenth century by making the novel represent ideas as well as manners. Like Meredith, he was distinguished in poetry as well as in prose, and he made each the vehicle of his philosophy. A more usual reason for coupling their names is the profound opposition in their interpretation of man's relation to the universe as revealed by science. Both grew up under the spell of the theory of evolution, but while Meredith saw Nature as a stern but kindly mother to her human brood, with progress implicit in her processes, Hardy saw the cosmos, with its blind urge toward life, as completely indifferent to the values which consciousness recognizes as making life worth living. He once wrote in his diary: "We have reached a degree of intelligence which Nature never contemplated in framing her laws, and for which she consequently has provided no satisfactions." In this pessimism he resembles the philosopher Schopenhauer, although he seems to have reached his conclusions quite independently and while a young man.

Hardy was born at the village of Higher Bockhampton, near Dorchester, June 1, 1840. While Meredith lived from youth in a highly intellectual society, Hardy grew up in the countryside, familiar from boyhood with its people and their customs, stories, and songs. At the age of sixteen he was articled to a local architect in Dorchester, and was engaged in making drawings for the restoration of churches and houses in the neighborhood. Through this employment he became acquainted with family histories and domestic tragedies — the melodrama of country life. Later he worked in the office of a London architect. His desire to escape from this service led him to try to write fiction, and for many years he turned out serials for the magazines — *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), with many less important novels. Perhaps it was owing to the uneven and frequently sensational character of his work that he was scarcely distinguished from the generality of purveyors of novels, until his two powerful novels, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Judith the Obscure* (1895) gave him standing at the head of English fiction. Hardy wrote verse before he wrote novels, though his career as a poet began only when he retired from novel writing; but during the last thirty years several volumes appeared containing upwards of 800 short poems. He also wrote a vast epic drama, *The Dynasts*, based on the Napoleonic wars, which was completed in 1908. Thenceforth until his death in 1918 he held a unique position as the sole survivor of a great age, the last of the Victorians.

Hardy's poems, like his novels, deal with matters of the countryside. While Meredith is concerned with the walks of life where men and women are most consciously active, in invigorating conflict with nature and with one another, Hardy's characters are simple, even primitive human beings, held down and thwarted by the irony of circumstances. His perception of natural phenomena is as keen as Meredith's, and sometimes affords relief from the disappointments and sufferings of life; but his philosophy, drawn from Darwin, emphasizes the tragedy and waste of the struggle for existence, not its justification in the survival of fitter forms. In one of his early poems he records an observation which he later used as a scene in *The Woodlanders*: "Here, as everywhere, the Unfulfilled Intention,

which makes Life what it is, was as obvious as it could be among the depraved crowds of a city slum. The leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was interrupted; the lichen eat the vigor of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling." For Hardy, nature typifies the enduring power, indifferent to man, against which he pits his puny strength.

Hardy's poems offer few of the difficulties of Meredith's more sophisticated workmanship. They are plain and unadorned, in accord with the simple, instinctive quality of the life which they present. Their deep implication is, however, evident. The mischances which so often mar human endeavors are frequent subjects in Hardy's poetry as in his novels; and the irony with which a sinister power seems to direct man's fate is evident in the titles of his volumes — *Human Shows*, *Satires of Circumstance*, *Time's Laughingstock*'

Hardy's works are published by The Macmillan Company, through whose kindness the following poems are reprinted. The standard biography is that by Mrs. Florence Emily Hardy (*The Early Life*, 1928, *The Later Years*, 1930). There are numerous studies of Hardy's art and philosophy, among which may be mentioned those by Lascelles Abercrombie, Joseph Warren Beach, Lionel Johnson, S. C. Chew, J. H. Fowler, and Mary Ellen Chase.

Her Dilemma

In——Church

The two were silent in a sunless church,
Whose mildewed walls, uneven paving-
stones,
And wasted carvings passed antique research;
And nothing broke the clock's dull mono-
tones.

Leaning against a wormy poppy-head, 5
So wan and worn that he could scarcely
stand,
— For he was soon to die, — he softly said,
"Tell me you love me!" — holding long her
hand.

She would have given a world to breathe
"yes" truly,
So much his life seemed hanging on her
mind, 10
And hence she lied, her heart persuaded
thoroughly
'Twas worth her soul to be a moment kind.

But the sad need thereof, his nearing death,
So mocked humanity that she shamed to
prize
A world conditioned thus, or care for breath
Where Nature such dilemmas could devise. 16
1866.

Revulsion

Though I waste watches framing words to
fetter
Some unknown spirit to mine in clasp and kiss,
Out of the night there looms a sense 'twere
better
To fail obtaining whom one fails to miss.

For winning love we win the risk of losing, 5
And losing love is as one's life were riven;
It cuts like contumely and keen ill-using
To cede what was superfluously given.

Let me then never feel the fateful thrilling
That devastates the love-worn wooer's frame,
The hot ado of fevered hopes, the chilling 11
That agonizes disappointed aim!
So may I live no junctive law fulfilling,
And my heart's table bear no woman's name.
1866.

Her Initials

Upon a poet's page I wrote
Of old two letters of her name;
Part seemed she of the effulgent thought
Whence that high singer's rapture came.
— When now I turn the leaf the same 5
Immortal light illumines the lay,
But from the letters of her name
The radiance has waned away!
1869.

Rome

*At the Pyramid of Cestius Near
the Graves of Shelley and Keats*

1887

Who, then, was Cestius,
And what is he to me? —
Amid thick thoughts and memories multitudinous
One thought alone brings he.

I can recall no word 5
Of anything he did;
For me he is a man who died and was interred
To leave a pyramid

Whose purpose was expressed
Not with its first design, 10
Nor till, far down in Time, beside it found
their rest
Two countrymen of mine.

Cestius in life, maybe,
Slew, breathed out threatening;
I know not. This I know: in death all silently
He does a finer thing, 16

In beckoning pilgrim feet
With marble finger high
To where, by shadowy wall and history-
haunted street,
Those matchless singers lie.... 20

— Say, then, he lived and died
That stones which bear his name
Should mark, through Time, where two im-
mortal Shades abide;
It is an ample fame.

Lausanne

In Gibbon's Old Garden: 11-11 p.m.

June 27, 1897

The uth anniversary of the completion of the
Decline and Fall at the same hour and place.

A spirit seems to pass,
Formal in pose, but grave withal and
grand:

He contemplates a volume in his hand,
And far lamps fleck him through the thin
acacias.

Anon the book is closed, 5
With "It is finished!" And at the alley's
end
He turns, and when on me his glances bend
As from the Past comes speech — small,
muted, yet composed.

"How fares the Truth now? — 11?
— Do pens but sily further her advance?
May one not speed her but in phrase
askance? II
Do scribes aver the Comic to be Reverend still?

"Still rule those minds on earth
At whom sage Milton's wormwood
words were hurled:
'Truth like a bastard comes mto the world 15
Never without ill-fame to him who gives her
birth'?"

An August Midnight

A shaded lamp and a waving blind,
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:
On this scene enter — winged, horned, and
spined —
A longlegs, a moth, and a dumbledore; 5
While 'mid my page there idly stands
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands...

2

Thus meet we five, in this still place,
At this point of time, at this point in space.
— My guests besmear my new-penned line,
Or bang at the lamp and fall supine. 10
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?
They know Earth-secrets that know not I.
MAX GATE, 1899.

Embarcation

Southampton Docks: October', 1899

Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the
sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,

And Henry's army leaped afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbor lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands, 5
To argue in the selfsame bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and
code,

Still fails to mend. — Now deckward tramp
the bands,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
And as each host draws out upon the sea 10
Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
None dubious of the cause, none murmuring,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands and
smile,
As if they knew not that they weep the while.

A Christmas Ghost-Story

South of the Line, inland from far Durban,
A moldering soldier lies — your countryman.
Awry and doubled up are his gray bones,
And on the breeze his puzzled phantom moans
Nightly to clear Canopus: "I would know s
By whom and when the All-Earth-gladdening
Law

Of Peace, brought in by that Man Crucified,
Was ruled to be inept, and set aside?
And what of logic or of truth appears
In tacking 'Anno Domini' to the years? 10
Near twenty-hundred liveried thus have hied,
But tarries yet the Cause for which He died."
Christmas Eve, 1899.

The Darkling Thrush

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was specter-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky 5
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant, 10

His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth 15
Seemed fervorless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited; 20
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings 35
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afair or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air 30
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.
December, 1900.

"I Said to Love"

I said to Love,
"It is not now as in old days
When men adored thee and thy ways
All else above;
Named thee the Boy, the Bright, the One 5
Who spread a heaven beneath the sun,"
I said to Love.

I said to him,
"We now know more of thee than then;
We were but weak in judgment when, 10
With hearts abrim,
We clamored thee that thou would'st please
Inflict on us thine agonies,"
I said to him.

I said to Love, 15
"Thou art not young, thou art not fair,
No elfin darts, no cherub air,
Nor swan, nor dove
Are thine; but features pitiless,
And iron daggers of distress," 20
I said to Love.

"Depart then, Love!...
 — Man's race shall perish, threatenest thou,
 Without thy kindling coupling-vow?
 The age to come the man of now 25
 Know nothing of? —
 We fear not such a threat from thee;
 We are too old in apathy!
Mankind shall cease. — So let it be,"
 I said to Love. 30
 Pub. 1901.

To Life

0 Life with the sad seared face,
 I weary of seeing thee,
 And thy draggled cloak, and thy hobbling
 pace,
 And thy too-forced pleasantry!

 1 know what thou would'st tell 5
 Of Death, Time, Destiny —
 I have known it long, and know, too, well
 What it all means for me.

 But canst thou not array
 Thyself in rare disguise, 10
 And feign like truth, for one mad day,
 That Earth is Paradise?

 I'll tune me to the mood,
 And mumm with thee till eve;
 And maybe what as interlude 15
 I feign, I shall believe!
 Pub. 1901.

At Casterbridge Fair

I

The Ballad-Singer

Sing, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune;
 Make me forget that there was ever a one
 I walked with in the meek light of the moon
 When the day's work was done. 4

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country song;
 Make me forget that she whom I loved well
 Swore she would love me dearly, love me long,
 Then — what I cannot tell!

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book;
 Make me forget those heart-breaks, aching,
 fears; 10
 Make me forget her name, her sweet sweet
 look —
 Make me forget her tears.

II

Former Beauties

These market-dames, mid-aged, with lips
 thin-drawn,
 And tissues sere,
 Are they the ones we loved in years ago,
 And courted here?

Are these the muslined pink young things to
 whom 5
 We vowed and swore
 In nooks on summer Sundays by the Froom,
 Or Budmouth shore?

Do they remember those gay tunes we trod
 Clasped on the green; 10
 Aye; trod till moonlight set on the beaten
 sod
 A satin sheen?

They must forget, forget! They cannot know
 What once they were,
 Or memory would transfigure them, and
 show 15
 Them always fair.

III

After the Club-Dance

Black'on frowns east on Maidon,
 And westward to the sea,
 But on neither is his frown laden
 With scorn, as his frown on me!

At dawn my heart grew heavy, 5
 I could not sip the wine,
 I left the jocund bevy
 And that young man o' mine.

The roadside elms pass by me, —
 Why do I sink with shame 20
 When the birds a-perch there eye me?
 They, too, have done the same!

IV

The Market-Girl

Nobody took any notice of her as she stood
 on the causey kerb,
 All eager to sell her honey and apples and
 bunches of garden herb;
 And if she had offered to give her wares and
 herself with them too that day,
 I doubt if a soul would have cared to take a
 bargain so choice away.

But chancing to trace her sunburnt grace that
 morning as I passed nigh, 5
 I went and I said "Poor maiddy dear! — and
 will none of the people buy?"
 And so it began; and soon we knew what the
 end of it all must be,
 And I found that though no others had bid,
 a prize had been won by me.

V

The Inquiry

And are ye one of Hermitage —
 Of Hermitage, by Ivel Road,
 And do ye know, in Hermitage
 A thatch-roofed house where sengreens grow?
 And does John Waywood live there still —
 He of the name that there abode 6
 When father hurdled on the hill
 Some fifteen years ago?

Does he now speak o' Patty Beech,
 The Patty Beech he used to — see, 10
 Or ask at all if Patty Beech
 Is known or heard of out this way?
 — Ask if ever she's living yet,
 And where her present home may be,
 And how she bears life's fag and fret 15
 After so long a day?

In years agone at Hermitage
 This faded face was counted fair,
 None fairer; and at Hermitage
 We swore to wed when he should thrive. 20
 But never a chance had he or I,
 And waiting made his wish outwear,
 And Time, that dooms man's love to die,
 Preserves a maid's alive.

VI

A Wife Waits

Will's at the dance in the Club-room below,
 Where the tall liquor-cups foam;
 I on the pavement up here by the Bow,¹
 Wait, wait, to steady him home.

Will and his partner are treading a tune, 5
 Loving companions they be;
 Willy, before we were married in June,
 Said he loved no one but me;

Said he would let his old pleasures all go
 Ever to live with his Dear. 10
 Will's at the dance in the Club-room below,
 Shivering I wait for him here.

VII

After the Fair

The singers are gone from the Cornmarket-
 place
 With their broadsheets of rhymes,
 The street rings no longer in treble and bass
 With their skits on the times,
 And the Cross, lately thronged, is a dim naked
 space 5
 That but echoes the stammering chimes.⁸

From Clock-corner steps, as each quarter ding-
 dongs,
 Away the folk roam
 By the "Hart" and Grey's Bridge into by-
 ways and "dongs,"
 Or across the ridged loam; 10
 The younger ones shrilling the lately heard
 songs,
 The old saying, "Would we were home."

The shy-seeming maiden so mute in the fair
 Now rattles and talks,
 And that one who looked the most swagger-
 ing there 15
 Grows sad as she walks,
 And she who seemed eaten by cankering care
 In statuesque sturdiness stalks.

¹ The old name for the curved corner by the cross-
 streets in the middle of Casterbridge. (Hardy.)
⁸ "The Chimes" will be listened for in vain here at
 midnight now, having been abolished some years ago.
 (Hardy.)

And midnight clears High Street of all but
 the ghosts
 Of its buried burghees, 20
 From the latest far back to those old Roman
 hosts

Whose remains one yet sees,
 Who loved, laughed, and fought, hailed their
 friends, drank their toasts
 At their meeting-times here, just as these!
 1902.

Itydyard Kipling • 1865-1937

At twenty-one Rudyard Kipling, a young newspaperman in India, won world-wide fame with his short stories about Indian life and his songs and tales of the British army. Twenty years later, with the publication of *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), his literary career virtually closed. After he was forty-one, he continued to write, but not with the extraordinary speed and assurance and compelling imagination of the twoscore years during which he held all England spellbound.

Kipling was born in Bombay, India, in 1865. After a preparatory school education at Westward Ho! — the scene of the adventures in *Stalky & Co.* (1899) — he returned to India to become a journalist. Here, with *Departmental Ditties* (1886) and, two years later, his short stories of Indian and army life, *Platn Tales from the Hills* and *Soldiers Three*, he laid the foundation of his great reputation.

Kipling, pre-eminently, is the singer of the widespread British Empire and of "Tommy Atkins." Yet he did not hesitate to have a good-natured fling at the Crown; nor did he refrain, during the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, from sounding a warning, in his *Recessional* against an unsound imperialism.

Kipling ranks among the able British writers as a poet, as a novelist, and as a master of the short story. Everything that he wrote is good reading. No student should miss the poems in *Barrack Room Ballads* (1891) and in *The Seven Seas* (1896), his novel *Kim* (1901), the beast tales in the *Jungle Books* (1894-95) and the masterful short stories in *The Day's Work* (1898). In them he will see Kipling's originality and extraordinary skill, both in technique and in insight into the souls of men — and of animals.

Kipling's autobiography, revealing many of his personal biases, was given to the public in 1937 — after his death.

A Ballad of East and West

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
 never the twain shall meet,
 Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
 God's great Judgment Seat;
 But there is neither East nor West,
 Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
 When two strong men stand face to
 face, tho they come from the ends of
 the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the
 Border side, 5
 And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is
 the Colonel's pride:
 He has lifted her out of the stable-door be-
 tween the dawn and the day,
 And turned the calkins upon her feet, and
 ridden her far away.
 Then up spoke the Colonel's son that led a
 troop of the Guides:
 "Is there never a man of all my men can say
 where Kamal hides?" 10

Then up and spoke Mohammed Khan, the
 son of the Ressaldar,
 "If ye know the track of the morning-mist,
 ye know where his pickets are.
 At dusk he harries the Abazai — at dawn he
 is into Bonair,
 But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own
 place to fare,
 So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird
 can fly, 15
 By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere
 he win to the Tongue of Jagai.
 But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right
 swiftly turn ye then,
 For the length and the breadth of that grisly
 plain is sown with Kamal men.
 There is rock to the left, and rock to the right,
 and low lean thorn between,
 And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where
 never a man is seen." 20
 The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a
 raw rough dun was he,
 With a mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell,
 and the head of the gallows-tree.
 The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they
 bid him stay to eat —
 Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he
 sits not long at his meat.
 He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast
 as he can fly, 25
 Till he was aware of his father's mare in the
 gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
 Till he was aware of his father's mare with
 Kamal upon her back.
 And when he could spy the white of her eye,
 he made the pistol crack.
 He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the
 whistling ball went wide.
 "Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said, "show
 now if ye can ride." 30
 It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as
 blown dust-devils go,
 The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
 mare like a barren doe.
 The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged
 his head above,
 But the red mare played with snaffle-bars, as
 a maiden plays with a glove.
 There was rock to the left and rock to the
 right, and low lean thorn between, 35

And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
 never a man was seen.
 They had ridden the low moon out of the sky,
 their hoofs drum up the dawn;
 The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
 mare like a new-roused fawn.
 The dun he fell at a water-course — in a woe-
 ful heap fell he,
 And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and
 pulled the rider free. 40
 He has knocked the pistol out of his hand —
 small room was there to strive,
 "Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he,
 "ye rode so long alive:
 There was not a rock for twenty mile, there
 was not a clump of tree,
 But covered a man of my own men with his
 rifle cocked on his knee.
 If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held
 it low, 45
 The little jackals that flee so fast, were feast-
 ing all m a row:
 If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I
 have held it high,
 The kite that whistles above us now were
 gorged till she could not fly."
 Lightly answered the Colonel's son: — ⁴ "Do
 good to bird and beast,
 But count who come from the broken meats
 before thou makest a feast. 50
 If there should follow a thousand swords to
 carry my bones away,
 Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more
 than a thief could pay.
 They will feed their horse on the standing
 crop, their men on the garnered grain,
 The thatch of the byres will serve their fires
 when all the cattle arc slain.
 But if thou thinkest the price be fair, — thy
 brethren wait to sup, 55
 The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, —
 howl, dog, and call them up!
 And if thou thinkest the price be high, in
 steer and gear and stack,
 Give me my father's mare again, and I'll
 fight my own way back!"
 Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
 him upon his feet.
 "No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when
 wolf and gray wolf meet. 60

May I eat dirt if them hast hurt of me in deed
or breath;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to
jest at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son, "I hold
by the blood of my clan:
Take up the mare for my father's gift — by
God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and
nuzzled against his breast, 65
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then,
"but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my
turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and
silver stirrups twain."
The Colonel's son a pistol drew, and held it
muzzle-end;
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he;
"will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a
limb for the risk of a limb. 71
Thy father has sent his son to me; I'll send
my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that
dropped from a mountain-crest —
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he
looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said,
"who leads a troop of the Guides, 75
And thou must ride at his left side as shield
on shoulder rides,
Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and
board and bed
Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard him
with thy head.
So thou must eat the White Queen's meat,
and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry any father's hold for
the peace of the Border-line, 80
And thou must make a trooper tough and
hack thy way to power —
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when
I am hanged in Peshawur."
They have looked each other between the
eyes, and there they have found no
fault;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt:
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod, 85

On the hilt and haft of the Khyber knife, and
the wondrous names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and
Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come to Fort Bukloh where
there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-guard,
full twenty swords flew clear —
There was not a man but carried his feud
with the blood of the mountaineer. 90
"Ha' done, Ha' done!" said the Colonel's
son. "Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief —
tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
never the two shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West,
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth, 95
When two strong men stand face to face,
tho' they come from the ends of the
earth.

1889.

Fuzzy-Wuzzy

Soudan Expeditionary Force

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was
not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's changé of 'im: 5
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our
'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua'w,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our
forces.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a poor benighted 'eathen, but a
first-class fightin' man; 10
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you
want it signed,
We'll come an' 'avc a romp with you
whenever you're inclined,

We took our chanst among the Khyber
hills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills, 15
An' a Zulu impi dished us up in style;
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us
swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us
'oiler. 20

Then 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the
missis an' the kid,
Our orders was to break you, an' of
course we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it
wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy-
Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own, 25
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill Vs shown
In usm' of 'is long two-'anded swords;
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the
bush
With 'is coffin-headed shield an' shovel-
spear, 30
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your
friends which is no more,
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we
would 'elp you to deplore;
But give an' take 's the gospel, an' we'll
call the bargain fair, 35
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you
crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke, when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackm' at our
'cad;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's
dead. 40
'E's a daisy, 'e's a duck, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a Injun-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a clam
For the Regiment o' British Infantrec.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
'ome in the Sowdan; 45
You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a
first-classfightin' man;
An' 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with
your 'ayrick 'cad of 'air —
You big black boundin' beggar — for
you bruk a British square.
1890.

Gunga Din

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot
it:
But if it comes to slaughter,
You will do your work on water, 5
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im
that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servm' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew 10
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental Bhisti, Gunga Din,
He was "Dm! Din! Din!
You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! slippy hitheraof 15
Water! Get it! Panee lao!
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind; 20
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day, 25
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin'
eyebrows crawl,
We shouted "Harry By!"
Till our throats were brickv-dry,
Then we wopped 'im cause 'e couldn't serve
us all.
It was "Din! Din! Din! 30
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you
been?
You put some juldce in it,

Or I'll marrow you this minute
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one 35
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear. 40
With 'is mussick on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Petire,"
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside, 45
When 'e went to tend the wounded under
fire!

It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the
green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout: 50
"Hi! ammunition mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should a'
been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst, 55
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnm', gruntin' Gunga
Din.

'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e guv me 'arf a pint o' water — green:
It was crawlin' and it stunk, 60
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefulest to one from Gunga Dm.
It was "Din! Din! Din!"
'Erc's a beggar with a bullet through 'is
spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin'
all around: 65
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a dooli lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside, 70
An' just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone —

Where it's always double drill and no can-
teen; 75

'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din.
Dm! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din! 80
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' God that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.
1890.

L'Envoi

When Earth's last picture is painted, and the
tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the
youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it —
lie down for an a'on or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall
set us to work anew!

And those who were good shall be happy;
they shall sit in a golden chair; 5
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with
brushes of comet's hair;
They shall find real saints to draw from —
Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and
never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only
the Master shall blame,
And no one shall work for money, and no one
shall work for fame; 10
But each for the joy of the working, and each,
in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God
of Things as They Are!
1892.

Recessional

"Reverence is the master-key of knowledge."

God of our fathers, known of old —
Lord of our far-flung battle-line —
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet Lest we forget — lest we forget!	5	If, drunk with sight of power, we loose Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe —	20
The tumult and the shouting dies — The captains and the kings depart — Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice, An humble and a contrite heart.	10	Such boasting as the Gentiles use Or lesser breeds without the Law — Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget — lest we forget!	
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget — lest we forget!		For heathen heart that puts her trust In reeking tube and iron shard — All valiant dust that builds on dust, And guarding calls not Thee to guard — For frantic boast and foolish word, Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord! Amen.	25 30
Far-called our navies melt away — On dune and headland sinks the fire — Lo, all our pomp of yesterday Is one with Nineveh and Tyre! Judge of the Nations, spare us yet, Lest we forget — lest we forget!	15	1897.	

Alfred Edward Housman • 1859-1936

Housman was by profession a scholar, who won recognition as a poet with a small volume of poems, *A Shropshire Lad*. He was born in 1859 in Shropshire, a county with which his name is always linked. After taking his B.A. at Oxford in 1881, he became a clerk in the Patent Office in London, resigning to become, in 1891, Professor of Latin in University College, London. In 1896 he published *A Shropshire Lad*, which ever since has been accepted as a little classic. In 1911 he was appointed Professor of Latin in the University of Cambridge. Here he led an extremely retired life, finding delight in writing terse and minutely accurate notes for the Latin texts that he edited. In 1911 he published another thin volume, *Last Poems*. After his death in 1936, his brother Laurence Housman (the playwright who wrote *Prunella* and *Victoria Regina*) selected, from the papers left to him by his brother, a small group of poems, which he published under the title *More Poems*.

Because of his limited output, Housman must remain a minor poet. His best poems, however, rank very high. They have a simplicity that defies analysis, a simplicity that we find in the best of Wordsworth and of Heine. They deal mainly with the life of Ludlow, in Shropshire. They are at times pessimistic or fatalistic, but genial, always lyrical, with an evasive quality that is Housman's alone.

FROM *A Shropshire Lad*

i. 1887

From Clce to heaven the beacon burns,
The shires have seen it plain;
From north and south the sign returns,
And beacons burn again.

Look left, look right, the hills are bright, 5
The dales are light between,

Because 'tis fifty years to-night
That God has saved the Queen.

Now, when the flame they watch not towers
About the soil they trod, ro
Lads, we'll remember friends of ours
Who shared the work with God.

To skies that knit their heartstrings right,
To fields that bred them brave,

The saviors come not home to-night;
 Themselves they could not save.

It dawns in Asia, tombstones show
 And Shropshire names are read;
 And the Nile spills his overflow
 Beside the Severn's dead.

We pledge in peace by farm and town
 The Queen they served in war,
 And fire the beacons up and down
 The land they perished for.

"God save the Queen," we living sing,
 From height to height 'tis heard,
 And with the rest your voices ring,
 Lads of the Fifty-third.

Oh, God will save her, fear you not!
 Be you the men you've been,
 Get you the sons your fathers got,
 And God will save the Queen.
 1896.

2

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
 Is hung with bloom along the bough,
 And stands about the woodland ride
 Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
 Twenty will not come again,
 And take from seventy springs a score,
 It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
 Fifty springs are little room,
 About the woodlands I will go
 To see the cherry hung with snow.
 1896.

18

Oh, when I was in love with you,
 Then I was clean and brave,
 And miles around the wonder grew
 How well did I behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
 And nothing will remain,
 And miles around they'll say that I
 Am quite myself again.
 1896.

, 15

19. TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
 We chaired you through the market-place;
 Man and boy stood cheering by,
 And home we brought you shoulder-high.

20

To-day, the road all runners come,
 Shoulder-high we bring you home,
 And set you at your threshold down,
 Townsman of a stiller town.

5

25

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
 From fields where glory does not stay,
 And early though the laurel grows
 It withers quicker than the rose.

10

30

Eyes the shady night has shut
 Cannot see the record cut,
 And silence sounds no worse than cheers
 After earth has stopped the ears:

15

Now you will not swell the rout
 Of lads that wore their honors out,
 Runners whom renown outran
 And the name died before the man.

20

5

So set, before its echoes fade,
 The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
 And hold to the low lintel up
 The still-defended challenge-cup.

10

And round that early-laureled head
 Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
 And find unwithered on its curls
 The garland briefer than a girl's.
 1896.

25

36

White in the moon the long road lies,
 The moon stands blank above;
 White in the moon the long road lies
 That leads me from my love.

5

Still hangs the hedge without a gust,
 Still, still the shadows stay;
 My feet upon the moonlit dust
 Pursue the ceaseless way.

5

The world is round, so travelers tell,
 And straight though reach the track,

10

Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well,
The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies
Far, far must it remove;
White in the moon the long road lies 15
That leads me from my love.
1896.

40

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows;
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content, 5
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.
1896.

47. THE CARPENTER'S SON

"Here the hangman stops his cart:
Now the best of friends must part.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die.

"Oh, at home had I but stayed 5
'Prenticed to my father's trade,
Ha4 I stuck to plane and adze,
I had not been lost, my lads.

"Then I might have built perhaps 10
Gallows-trees for other chaps,
Never dangled on my own,
Had I but left ill alone.

"Now, you see, they hang me high,
And the people passing by
Stop to shake their fists and curse; 15
So 'tis come from ill to worse.

"Here hang I, and right and left
Two poor fellows hang for theft:
All the same's the luck we prove,
Though the midmost hangs for love. 20

"Comrades all, that stand and gaze,
Walk henceforth in other ways,
See my neck and save your own:
Comrades all' leave ill alone.

"Make some day a decent end, »s
Shrewder fellows than your friend.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die."
1896.

49

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly.
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a-talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly 5
Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
Spins the heavy world around.
If young hearts were not so clever,
Oh, they would be young forever. 10
Think no more; 'tis only thinking
Lays lads underground.
1896.

54

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipped maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping 5
The lightfoot boys are laid;
The rose-lipped girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

1896.

58

When I came last to Ludlow
Amid the moonlight pale,
Two friends kept step beside me,
Two honest lads and hale.

Now Dick lies long in the churchyard, 5
And Ned lies long in jail,
And I come home to Ludlow
Amid the moonlight pale.
1896.

6'

"Terence,¹ this is stupid stuff:
You cat your victuals fast enough;

¹ The well-known Roman writer of comedy of the second century, B.C. Here, addressed to Housman.

There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,
 To see the rate you drink your beer.
 But, oh, good Lord, the verse you make, 5
 It gives a chap the bellyache.
 The cow, the old cow, she is dead;
 It sleeps well, the horned head.
 We poor lads, 'tis our turn now
 To hear such tunes as killed the cow. 10
 Pretty friendship 'tis to rime
 Your friends to death before their time
 Moping melancholy mad.
 Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad."

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be, 15
 There's brisker pipes than poetry.
 Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
 Or why was Burton¹ built on Trent?
 Oh, many a peer of England brews
 Livelier liquor than the Muse, 20
 And malt does more than Milton can
 To justify God's ways to man.²
 Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
 For fellows whom it hurts to think;
 Look into the pewter pot 25
 To see the world as the world's not.
 And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis passed,
 The mischief is that 'twill not last.
 Oh, I have been to Ludlow fair
 And left my necktie God knows where, 30
 And carried halfway home, or near,
 Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer.
 Then the world seemed none so bad,
 And I myself a sterling lad;
 And down in lovely muck I've lain, 35
 Happy till I woke again.
 Then I saw the morning sky —
 Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
 The world, it was the old world yet,
 I was I, my things were wet, 40
 And nothing now remained to do
 But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still
 Much good, but much less good than ill,
 And while the sun and moon endure 45
 Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
 I'd face it as a wise man would,
 And train for ill and not for good.

¹ Burton on the River Trent, because of the quality of its water, is the site of most of England's great breweries. Many of the owners have been raised to the peerage.

² See *Paradise Lost*, I, 26.

'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
 Is not so brisk a brew as ale, 50
 Out of a stem that scored the hand
 I wrung it in a weary land.
 But take it — if the smack is sour,
 The better for the embittered hour;
 It should do good to heart and head 55
 When your soul is in my soul's stead;
 And I will friend you, if I may,
 In the dark and cloudy day.

There was a king¹ reigned in the East;
 There, when kings will sit to feast, 60
 They get their fill before they think
 With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
 He gathered all that springs to birth
 From the many-venomed earth;
 First a little, thence to more, 65
 He sampled ail her killing store;
 And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,
 Sate the king when healths went round.
 They put arsenic in his meat
 And stared aghast to watch him eat; 70
 They poured strychnine in his cup
 And shook to see him drink it up.
 They shook, they stared as white's their shirt;
 Them it was their poison hurt.
 — I tell the tale that I heard told. 75
 Mithridates, he died old.
 1896.

FROM Last Poems

10

Could man be drunk forever
 With liquor, love, or fights,
 Lief should I rouse at morning
 And lief lie down of nights.

But men at whiles are sober 5
 And think by fits and starts,
 And if they think, they fasten
 Their hands upon their hearts.

12

The laws of God, the laws of man,
 He may keep that will and can;
 Not I; let God and man decree
 Laws for themselves and not for me;
¹ Mithridates VI (the Great), of Pontus, 13-63 B.C.

And if my ways are not as theirs
 Let them mind their own affairs.
 Their deeds I judge and much condemn,
 Yet when did I make laws for them?
 Please yourselves, say I, and they
 Need only look the other way.
 But no, they will not; they must still
 Wrest their neighbor to their will,
 And make me dance as they desire
 With jail and gallows and hell-fire,
 And how am I to face the odds
 Of man's bedevilment and God's?
 I, a stranger and afraid
 In a world I never made.
 They will be master, right or wrong;
 Though both are foolish, both are strong.
 And since, my soul, we cannot fly
 To Saturn nor to Mercury,
 Keep we must, if keep we can,
 These foreign laws of God and man.
 Pub. 1922.

FROM More Poems

They say my verse is sad: no wonder;
 Its narrow measure spans
 Tears of eternity, and sorrow,
 Not mine, but man's.

This is for all ill-treated fellows
 Unborn and unbegot,
 For them to read when they're in trouble
 And I am not.

17

To stand up straight and tread the turning
 mill,
 To lie flat and know nothing and be still,
 Are the two trades of man; and which is
 worse
 I know not, but I know that both are ill.
 Pub. 1936.

John Mase'field - 1874-

The present poet laureate of England, John Masefield, was born in 1874. "e went to sea at fourteen, and later was a worker in a factory and a general assistant in a New York City barroom. These facts are not so important as the statement ascribed to him that on a Sunday afternoon, during his factory period, he read Chaucer and was inflamed with the desire to be a poet. Whether or not this statement is literally true, it is obvious that Masefield has been greatly influenced by Chaucer.

Masefield is a true poet, writing from inner compulsion. He writes in the old tradition, but achieves remarkable freshness and life within accepted forms like the sonnet and rime royal. Many of his lyrics, particularly those in *Salt Water Ballads*, have almost become classic. As a storyteller in verse he has few equals. Especially vivid and at the same time poetic are *The Widow in Bye Street*, *The Everlasting Mercy*, *Dauber*, *Daffodil Fields*, and *Reynard the Fox*. Masefield is also a playwright. His *Tragedy of Nan*, modern in setting and severely realistic, has the intensity and restraint of a Greek play. Among his prose works may be mentioned *A Mainsail Haul* and *Gallipoli*. The latter, an account of the disastrous Dardanelles campaign during the Great War, in which Masefield describes how the British almost accomplished the impossible, rises to the heights of the medieval *Song of Roland* — with a quotation from which Masefield prefaces his book.

Masefield is the poet of the sea, of the rolling country of the Malvern Hills — where the nameless author of *Piers Plowman* once wandered — and of "the man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load."

A Consecration¹

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers

Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years, —

Rather the scorned — the rejected — the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,

Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries, 5

The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,

Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,

But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road, 10

The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,

The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with a clout,

The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,

The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired lookout. 15

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,

The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth; —

Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold;

Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mold. 20

Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold —

Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

Amen.

Cargoes¹

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,

Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,

With a cargo of ivory,

And apes and peacocks,

Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine. 5

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,

Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,

With a cargo of diamonds,

Emeralds, amethysts,

Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores. 10

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,

Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,

With a cargo of Tyne coal,

Road-rails, pig-lead,

Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

Roadways¹

One road leads to London,

One road runs to Wales,

My road leads me seawards

To the white dipping sails.

One road leads to the river, 5

As it goes singing slow;

My road leads to shipping,

Where the bronzed sailors go.

Leads me, lures me, calls me

To salt green tossing sea; 10

A road without earth's road-dust

Is the right road for me.

¹ From *Salt Water Ballads*. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

¹ From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

A wet road heaving, shining,
And wild with seagulls' cries,
A mad salt sea-wind blowing 15
The salt spray in my eyes.

My road calls me, lures me
West, east, south, and north;
Most roads lead men homewards,
My road leads me forth 20

To add more miles to the tally
Of gray miles left behind,
In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

The West Wind'

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in
my eyes.
For it comes from the west lands, the old
brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as
tired as mine; 5
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's
like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men
may be at rest;
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting
from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You
have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the
spray; 10
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is
the rain;
Will you not come home, brother, home to us
again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the
rabbits run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm
rain and sun.

It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a
man's brain, JS
To hear the wild bees and see the merry
spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother,
above the green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest
your tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep
for aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of
birds' cries. 20

It's the white road westwards is the road that
I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for
heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the
thrushes' song
In the fine land, the west land, the land where
I belong.

Sea-Fever¹

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer
her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and
the white sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray
dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of
the running tide 5
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be
denied,
And all I ask is a windy day with the white
clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the brown spume,
and the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant
gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where
the wind's like a whetted knife; 10

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And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the
long trick's over.

On Malvern Hill¹

A wind is brushing down the clover,
It sweeps the tossing branches bare,
Blowing the poisoning kestrel over
The crumbling ramparts of the Caer.

It whirls the scattered leaves before us 5
Along the dusty road to home,
Once it awakened into chorus
The heart-strings in the ranks of Rome.

There by the gusty coppice border
The shrilling trumpets broke the halt, 10
The Roman line, the Roman order,
Swayed forwards to the blind assault.

Spearman and charioteer and bowman
Charged and were scattered into spray,
Savage and taciturn the Roman 15
Hewed upwards in the Roman way.

There — in the twilight — where the cattle
Are lowing home across the fields,
The beaten warriors left the battle
Dead on the clansmen's wicker shields. 20

The leaves whirl in the wind's riot
Beneath the Beacon's jutting spur,
Quiet are clan and chief, and quiet
Centurion and signifer.

London Town¹

Oh London Town's a fine town, and London
sights are rare,
And London ale is right ale, and brisk's the
London air,
And busily goes the world there, but crafty
grows the mind,
And London Town of all towns I'm glad to
leave behind.

Then hey for croft and hop-yard, and hill,
and field, and pond, 5

With Bredon Hill before me and Malvern
Hill beyond.
The hawthorn white i' the hedgerow, and
all the spring's attire
In the comely land of Teme and Lugg, and
Clent, and Clee, and Wyre.

Oh London girls are brave girls, in silk and
cloth o' gold,
And London shops are rare shops where gal-
lant things are sold, 10
And bonnily clinks the gold there, but
drowsily blinks the eye,
And London Town of all towns I'm glad to
hurry by.

Then, hey for covert and woodland, and ash
and elm and oak,
Tewkesbury inns, and Malvern roofs, and
Worcester chimney smoke.
The apple trees in the orchard, the cattle in
the byre, 15
And all the land from Ludlow town to
Bredon church's spire.

Oh London tunes are new tunes, and London
books are wise,
And London plays are rare plays, and fine to
country eyes,
But wretchedly fare the most there and mer-
rily fare the few,
And London Town of all towns I'm glad to
hurry through. 20

So hey for the road, the west road, by mill
and forge and fold,
Scent of the fern and song of the lark by
brook, and field, and wold,
To the comely folk at the hearth-stone and
the talk beside the fire,
In the hearty land, where I was bred, my
land of heart's desire.

Laugh and Be Merry¹

Laugh and be merry, remember, better the
world with a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of
a wrong.

¹ From *Poems*. Copyright, 1935. Reprinted by per-
mission.

¹ From *Poems*. Copyright, 1935. Reprinted by per-
mission.

Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the
length of a span.

Laugh and be proud to belong to the old
proud pageant of man. 4

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time
God made Heaven and Earth for joy He took
in a rhyme,

Made them, and filled them full with the
strong red wind of His mirth,

The splendid joy of the stars: the joy of the
earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep
blue cup of the sky,

Join the jubilant song of the great stars
sweeping by, 10

Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of
the wine outpoured

In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy
of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers
akin,

Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful
inn,

Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of
the music ends. 15

Laugh till the game is played; and be you
merry, my friends.

On Growing Old¹

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying;
My dog and I are old, too old for roving,
Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift
flying,

Is soon too lame to march, too cold for
loving.

I take the book and gather to the fire, 5
Turning old yellow leaves; minute by minute

The clock ticks to my heart; a withered
wire

Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
Your cornland nor your hill-land nor your
valleys 10

Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
Where the young knight the broken squadron
rallies;

Only stay quiet, while my mind remembers
The beauty of fire from the beauty of em-
bers.

Beauty, have pity, for the strong have
power, 15

The rich their wealth, the beautiful their
grace,

Summer of man its sunlight and its flower,
Springtime of man all April in a face.

Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,
Where the mob thrusts or loiters or is loud, 20
The beggar with the saucer in his hand
Asks only a penny from the passing crowd,

So, from this glittering world with all its
fashion,

Its fire and play of men, its stir, its march,
Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and
passion, 25

Bread to the soul, rain where the summers
parch.

Give me but these, and though the darkness
close

Even the night will blossom as the rose.

¹ From *Enslaved*. Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

William Butler Yeats - 1865-

Yeats, a born lyric poet, has been during the last generation the foremost figure in the remarkable literary renaissance that has accompanied the national aspirations of Ireland. Like his compatriot, Goldsmith, he has touched nothing that he did not adorn; but he is essentially the poet, a mystic who firmly believes that truth may be reached through beauty, that imagination and faith are more powerful than reason.

In 1899 he began, with the help of Lady Gregory, to organize an Irish national theater movement. Three years later, at the Abbey Theater in Dublin, the Irish Literary Theater was instituted; and in 1904, with the financial help of Miss Horniman, the theater building was purchased, and The Irish National Theater founded. This institution gave impulse and direction to many Irish dramatists, notably to Synge and to Sean O'Casey.

The works of Yeats are published by Macmillan. For a compact survey of Irish literature see L. Morris, *The Celtic Dawn* (1917). Yeats has written an autobiography, *Reveries over Childhood* (1916).

When You Are Old-

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows
deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or
true; 6
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled 10
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

The Voice'

This lyric is from his play, *The Land of Hearts Desire* (1894).

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away.
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring, 5
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1906, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

For they hear the wind laugh and murmur
and sing

Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say, 10
"When the wind has laughed and murmured
and sung

The lonely of heart is withered away!"

The Song of the Happy Shepherd¹

The woods of Arcady are dead,
And over is their antique joy;
Of old the world on dreaming fed,
Gray Truth is now her painted toy;
Yet still she turns her restless head: 5
But O, sick children of the world,
Of all the many changing things
In dreary dancing past us whirled,
To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,
Words alone are certain good. 10
Where are now the warring kings,
Word be-mockers? — By the Rood
Where are now the warring kings?
An idle word is now their glory,
By the stammering schoolboy said, 15
Reading some entangled story:
The kings of the old time are fled.

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1906, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

The wandering earth herself may be
 Only a sudden flaming word
 In clanging space a moment heard, 20
 Troubling the endless reverie.

Then nowise worship dusty deeds,
 Nor seek; for this is also sooth;
 To hunger fiercely after truth,
 Lest all thy toiling only breeds 25
 New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth
 Saving in thine own heart. Seek, then,
 No learning from the starry men,
 Who follow with the optic glass
 The whirling ways of stars that pass — 30
 Seek, then, for this is also sooth,
 No word of theirs — the cold star-bane
 Has cloven and rent their hearts in twain,
 And dead is all their human truth.
 Go gather by the humming-sea 35
 Some twisted, echo-harboring shell,
 And to its lips thy story tell,
 And they thy comforters will be,
 Rewarding in melodious guile,
 Thy fretful words a little while, 40
 Till they shall singing fade in rith,
 And die a pearly brotherhood;
 For words alone are certain good:
 Sing, then, for this is also sooth.
 I must be gone: there is no grave 45
 Where daffodil and lily wave,
 And I would please the hapless faun,
 Buried under the sleepy ground,
 With mirthful songs before the dawn.
 His shouting days with mirth were crowned;
 And still I dream he treads the lawn, 51
 Walking ghostly in the dew,
 Pierced by my glad singing through,
 My songs of old earth's dreamy ybuth:
 But ah! she dreams not now; dream thou! 55
 For fair are poppies on the brow:
 Dream, dream, for this is also sooth.

The Falling of the Leaves¹

Autumn is over the long leaves that love
 us,
 And over the mice in the barley sheaves;
 Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,

And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves.
 The hour of the waning of love has beset us, 5
 And weary and worn are our sad souls now;
 Let us part, ere the season of passion forget
 us,
 With a kiss and a tear on thy drooping
 brow.

The Fisherman

Although I can see him still,
 The freckled man who goes
 To a gray place on a hill
 In gray Connemara clothes
 At dawn to cast his flies, 5
 It's long since I began
 To call up to the eyes
 This wise and simple man.
 All day I'd looked in the face
 What I had hoped 'twould be 10
 To write for my own race
 And the reality;
 The living men that I hate,
 The dead man that I loved,
 The craven man in his seat, 15
 The insolent unproved,
 And no knave brought to book
 Who has won a drunken cheer,
 The witty man and his joke
 Aimed at the commonest ear, 20
 The clever man who cries
 The catch-cries of the clown,
 The beating down of the wise
 And great Art beaten down.

Maybe a twelvemonth since 25
 Suddenly I began,
 In scorn of this audience,
 Imagining a man,
 And his sun-freckled face,
 And gray Connemara cloth, 30
 Climbing up to a place
 Where stone is dark under froth,
 And the down-turn of his wrist
 When the flies drop in the stream;
 A man who does not exist, 35
 A man who is but a dream;
 And cried, "Before I am old
 I shall have written him one
 Poem maybe as cold
 And passionate as the dawn." 40

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1906, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

FROM Meditations in Time of Civil War

ii

My House

An ancient bridge, and a more ancient tower,
A farmhouse that is sheltered by its wall,
An acre of stony ground,
Where the symbolic rose can break in flower,
Old ragged elms, old thorns innumerable, 5
The sound of the rain or sound
Of every wind that blows;
The stilted water-hen
Crossing stream again
Scared by the splashing of a dozen cows, 10
A winding stair, a chamber arched with stone,
A gray stone fireplace with an open hearth,
A candle and written page.

Il Penseroso's Platonist toiled on
In some like chamber, shadowing forth 15
How the daemonic rage
Imagined everything.
Benighted travelers
From markets and from fairs
Have seen his midnight candle glimmering. 20

Two men have founded here. A man-at-arms
Gathered a score of horse and spent his days
In this tumultuous spot,
Where through long wars and sudden night
alarms
His dwindling score and he seemed casta-
ways 25
Forgetting and forgot;
And I, that after me
My bodily heirs may find,
To exalt a lonely mind,
Befitting emblems of adversity. 30
Pub. 1906.

John M.illmington Synge • 1871-1909

Synge, a sensitive genius, owes much to William Butler Yeats and through him to the famous Abbey Theater. After taking his degree in 1891 at Trinity College, Dublin — the college which has fostered so many dramatists — the young Irishman traveled in France, Germany, and Italy, finally making his residence in Paris. Here, in 1899, he met Yeats, who, learning that Synge had visited the Aran Isles during the previous year, urged him to write about the people there and about the simple-hearted Irishmen that Synge knew in the countryside near Dublin where he was born.

During the next three years Synge made regular trips to the Aran Isles. From the islanders' speech he made, in Wordsworth's phrase, "a selection of the language really used by men" from which he fashioned a prose so skillful that it produced the effect of poetry.

In 1903 he returned to Ireland, and in 1904 became literary adviser to the Abbey Theater. This organization, financed by Miss A. E. Horniman, was the outgrowth of the movement for an Irish national theater, started in 1899 by Yeats and Lady Gregory. Synge quickly developed a remarkable and individual dramatic technique. His first play, a comedy, *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903), was followed by the poignant *Aiders to the Sea* (1904), and by three more comedies — *The Well of the Saints* (1905), *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), and *The Tinker's Wedding* (1907). In 1907 also he published his book on the Aran Isles. His unfinished poetic play, *Detrdre of the Sorrows*, appeared in 1910, the year after his death.

Synge was by far the ablest and most original in the early group of Irish playwrights, approached, among the later Irish dramatists, only by Sean O'Casey in his *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars*. *Riders to the Sea* is Synge's great tragedy, a "static" play as

Granville Barker would call it, in which we see the *effect* of action, rather than action itself, as the old mother Maurya, seated, hears the calamity that met her last son, who had gone down to the sea. *The Playboy of the Western World*, however, is generally considered Synge's best. At its first performance it caused a riot, because Irishmen thought that it was a villainous picture of Irishmen hero-worshipping a boy who had killed his father — a riot suppressed single-handedly by Yeats, who years later was to do the same for Sean O'Casey. On the latter occasion he is reported to have cried out before the footlights: "Once before you produced a genius, Synge, and you stoned him; once again you have a genius, and you do the same."

Christy, in Synge's play, is the type of imaginative hero that we find in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, or, in our own country, in O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*. In reading the play, the student should try, not only to visualize the scenes, but also to feel the cadences of the prose that Synge has so artfully wrought.

*The Playboy of the Western World*¹

Preface

In writing *The Playboy of the Western World*, as in my other plays, I have used one or two words only that I have not heard among the country people of Ireland, or spoken in my own nursery before I could read the newspapers. A certain number of the phrases I employ I have heard also from herds and fishermen along the coast from Kerry to Mayo, or from beggar-women and ballad-singers nearer Dublin; and I am glad to acknowledge how much I owe to the folk-imagination of these fine people. Anyone who has lived in real intimacy with the Irish peasantry will know that the wildest sayings and ideas in this play are tame indeed, compared with the fancies one may hear in any little hillside cabin in Geesala, or Carraroe, or Dingle Bay. All art is a collaboration; and there is little doubt that, in the happy ages of literature, striking and beautiful phrases were as ready to the story-teller's or the playwright's hand as the rich cloaks and dresses of his time. It is probable that when the Elizabethan dramatist took his ink-horn and sat down to his work he used many phrases that he had just heard, as he sat at dinner, from his mother or his children. In Ireland, those of us who

know the people have the same privilege. When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen*, some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen. This matter, I think, is of importance, for in countries where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality, which is the root of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form. In the modern literature of towns, however, richness is found only in sonnets, or prose poems, or in one or two elaborate books that are far away from the profound and common interests of life. One has, on one side, Mallarmé and Huysmans producing this literature; and on the other, Ibsen and Zola dealing with the reality of life in joyless and pallid words. On the stage one must have reality, and one must have joy; and that is why the intellectual modern drama has failed, and people have grown sick of the false joy of the musical comedy, that has been given them in place of the rich joy found only in what is superb and wild in reality. In a good play every

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speech should be as fully flavored as a nut or apple, and such speeches cannot be written by anyone who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry. In Ireland, for a few years more, we have a popular imagination that is fiery and magnificent, and tender; so that those of us who wish to write

start with a chance that is not given to writers in places where the springtime of the local life has been forgotten, and the harvest is a memory only, and the straw has been turned into bricks.

J. M. S.

January 21, 1907

Persons in the Play

CHRISTOPHER MAHON

OLD MAHON, *his father, a squatter*

MICHAEL JAMES FLAHERTY, called MICHAEL

JAMES, *a publican*

MARGARET FLAHERTY, called PEGEEN MIKE,
his daughter

WIDOW QUIN, *a woman of about thirty*

SHAWN KEOGH, *her cousin, a young farmer*

PHILLY CULLEN and JIMMY FARRELL, *small farmers*

SARA TANSEY, SUSAN BRADY, and HONOR
BLAKE, *village girls*

A BELLMAN

SOME PEASANTS

The action takes place near a village, on a wild coast of Mayo. The first Act passes on an evening of autumn, the other two Acts on the following day.

ACT I

SCENE. *Country public-house or shebeen, very rough and untidy. There is a sort of counter on the right with shelves, holding many bottles and jugs, just seen above it. Empty barrels stand near the counter. At back, a little to left of counter, there is a door into the open air; then, more to the left, there is a settle with shelves above it, with more jugs, and a table beneath a window. At the left there is a large open fireplace, with turf fire, and a small door into inner room. PEGEEN, a wild-looking but fine girl, of about twenty, is writing at table. She is dressed in the usual peasant dress.*

Pegeen (slowly as she writes). Six yards of stuff for to make a yellow gown. A pair of lace boots with lengthy heels on them and brassy eyes. A hat is suited for a wedding-day. A fine-tooth comb. To be sent with 'hrec barrels of porter in Jimmy Farrell's creel cart on the evening of the coming Fair to Mister Michael James Flaherty. With the best compliments of this season. Margaret Flaherty.

Shawn Keogh (a fat and fair young man comes in as she signs, looks round awkwardly, when he sees she is alone'). Where's himself?

Pegeen (without looking at him) He's coming. *(She directs the letter.)* To Mister Sheamus Mulroy, Wine and Spirit Dealer, Castlebar.

Shawn (uneasily). I didn't see him on the road.

Pegeen. How would you see him *(licks stamp and puts it on letter)* and it dark night this half hour gone by?

Shawn (turning towards the door again). I stood a while outside wondering would I have a right to pass on or to walk in and see you, Pegeen Mike *(comes to fire)*, and I could hear the cows breathing, and sighing in the stillness of the air, and not a step moving any place from this gate to the bridge.

Pegeen (putting letter in envelope). It's above at the cross-roads he is, meeting Philly Cullen; and a couple more are going along with him to Kate Cassidy's wake.

Shawn (looking at her blankly). And he's going that length in the dark night?

Pegeen (impatiently). He is surely, and leaving me lonesome on the scruff of the hill. *(She gets up and puts envelope on dresser, then winds clock.)* Isn't it long the nights are now, Shawn Keogh, to be leaving a poor girl with her own self counting the hours to the dawn of day?

Shawn (*with awkward humor*). If it is, when we're wedded in a short while you'll have no call to complain, for I've little will to be walking off to wakes or weddings in the darkness of the night.

Pegeen (*with rather scornful good humor*). You're making mighty certain, Shaneen, that I'll wed you now.

Shawn. Aren't we after making a good bargain, the way we're only waiting these days on Father Reilly's dispensation from the bishops, or the Court of Rome?

Pegeen (*looking at him teasingly, washing up at dresser*). It's a wonder, Shaneen, the Holy Father'd be taking notice of the likes of you; for if I was him I wouldn't bother with this place where you'll meet none but Red Linahan, has a squint in his eye, and Patcheen is lame in his heel, or the mad Mulrannies were driven from California and they lost in their wits. We're a queer lot these times to go troubling the Holy Father on his sacred seat.

Shawn (*scandalised*). If we are, we're as good this place as another, maybe, and as good these times as we were forever.

Pegeen (*with scorn*). As good, is it? Where now will you meet the like of Daneen Sullivan knocked the eye from a peeler,¹ or Marcus Quin, God rest him, got six months for maiming ewes, and he a great warrant to tell stories of holy Ireland till he'd have the old women shedding down tears about their feet? Where will you find the like of them, I'm saying?

Shawn (*timidly*). If you don't, it's a good job, maybe; for (*with peculiar emphasis on the words*) Father Reilly has small conceit to have that kind walking around and talking to the girls.

Pegeen (*impatiently, throwing water from basin out of the door*). Stop tormenting me with Father Reilly (*imitating his voice*) when I'm asking only what way I'll pass these twelve hours of dark, and not take my death with the fear. (*Looking out of door.*)

Shawn (*timidly*). Would I fetch you the Widow Quin, maybe?

Pegeen. Is it the like of that murderer? You'll not, surely.

¹The British police force was instituted by Sir Robert Peel in 1814. In Ireland the constables were nicknamed "peelers," in England "bobbies."

Shawn (*going to her, soothingly*). Then I'm thinking himself will stop along with you when he sees you taking on, for it'll be a long night-time with great darkness, and I'm after feeling a kind of fellow above in the furzy ditch, groaning wicked like a maddening dog, the way it's good cause you have, maybe, to be fearing now.

Pegeen (*turning on him sharply*). What's that? Is it a man you seen?

Shawn (*retreating*). I couldn't see him at all, but I heard him groaning out, and breaking his heart. It should have been a young man from his words speaking.

Pegeen (*going after him*). And you never went near to see was he hurted or what ailed him at all?

Shawn. I did not, Pegeen Mike. It was a dark, lonesome place to be hearing the like of him.

Pegeen. Well, you're a daring fellow, and if they find his corpse stretched above in the dews of dawn, what'll you say then to the peelers, or the Justice of the Peace?

Shawn (*thunderstruck*). I wasn't thinking of that. For the love of God, Pegeen Mike, don't let on I was speaking of him. Don't tell your father and the men is coming above; for if they heard that story, they'd have great blabbing this night at the wake.

Pegeen. I'll maybe tell them, and I'll maybe not.

Shawn. They are coming at the door. Will you whisht, I'm saying?

Pegeen. Whisht yourself.

(*She goes behind counter.* MICHAEL JAMES, *fat jovial publican, comes in followed by PHILLY CULLEN, who is thin and mistrusting, and JIMMY FARRELL, who is fat and amorous, about forty-five.*)

Men (*together*). God bless you. The blessing of God on this place.

Pegeen. God bless you kindly.

Michael (*to men who go to the counter*). Sit down now, and take your rest. (*Crosses to SHAWN at the fire*) And how is it you are, Shawn Keogh? Are you coming over the sands to Kate Cassidy's wake?

Shawn. I am not, Michael James. I'm going home the short cut to my bed.

Pegeen (speaking across the counter). He's right, too, and have you no shame, Michael James, to be quitting off for the whole night, and leaving myself lonesome in the shop?

Michael (good-humoredly). Isn't it the same whether I go for the whole night or a part only? And I'm thinking it's a queer daughter you are if you'd have me crossing backward through the Stocks of the Dead Women, with a drop taken.

Pegeen. If I am a queer daughter, it's a queer father'd be leaving me lonesome these twelve hours of dark, and I piling the turf with the dogs barking, and the calves mooing, and my own teeth rattling with the fear.

Jimmy (flatteringly). What is there to hurt you, and you a fine, hardy girl would knock the head of any two men in the place?

Pegeen (working herself up). Isn't there the harvest boys with their tongues red for drink, and the ten tinkers is camped in the east glen, and the thousand militia — bad cess to them! — walking idle through the land? There's lots surely to hurt me, and I won't stop alone in it, let himself do what he will.

Michael. If you're that afeard, let Shawn Keogh stop along with you. It's the will of God, I'm thinking, himself should be seeing to you now. *(They all turn on SHAWN.)*

Shawn (in horrified confusion). I would and welcome, Michael James, but I'm afeard of Father Reilly; and what at all would the Holy Father and the Cardinals of Rome be saying if they heard I did the like of that?

Michael (with contempt). God help you! Can't you sit in by the hearth with the light lit and herself beyond in the room? You'll do that, surely, for I've heard tell there's a queer fellow above, going mad or getting his death, maybe, in the gripe of the ditch, so she'd be safer this night with a person here.

Shawn (with plaintive despair). I'm afeard of Father Reilly, I'm saying. Let you not be tempting me, and we near married itself.

Philly (with cold contempt). Lock him in the west room. He'll stay then and have no sin to be telling to the priest.

Michael (to SHAWN, getting between him and the door). Go up now.

Shawn (at the top of his voice). Don't stop me, Michael James. Let me out of the door,

I'm saying, for the love of the Almighty God. Let me out *(trying to dodge past him)*. Let me out of it, and may God grant you His indulgence in the hour of need.

Michael (loudly). Stop your noising, and sit down by the hearth.

(Gives him a push and goes to counter laughing.)

Shawn (turning back, wringing his hands). Oh, Father Reilly and the saints of God, where will I hide myself to-day? Oh, Saint Joseph and Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid, and Saint James, have mercy on me now!

(SHAWN turns round, sees door clear, and makes a rush for it.)

Michael (catching him by the coat-tail). You'd be going, is it?

Shawn (screaming). Leave me go, Michael James, leave me go, you old Pagan, leave me go, or I'll get the curse of the priests on you, and of the scarlet-coated bishops of the courts of Rome.

(With a sudden movement he pulls himself out of his coat, and disappears out of the door, leaving his coat in MICHAEL'S hands.)

Michael (turning round, and holding up coat). Well, there's the coat of a Christian man. Oh, there's sainted glory this day in the lonesome west; and by the will of God I've got you a decent man, Pegeen, you'll have no call to be spying after if you've a score of young girls, maybe, weeding in your fields.

Pegeen (taking up the defense of her property"). What right have you to be making game of a poor fellow for minding the priest, when it's your own the fault is, not paying a penny pot-boy to stand along with me and give me courage in the doing of my work?

(She snaps the coat away from him, and goes behind counter with it.)

Michael (taken aback). Where would I get a pot-boy? Would you have me send the bellman screaming in the streets of Castlebar?

Shawn (opening the door a chink and putting in his head, in a small voice). Michael James!

Michael (imitating him). What ails you?

Shawn. The queer dying fellow's beyond looking over the ditch. He's come up, I'm thinking, stealing your hens. *(Looks over his shoulder.)* God help me, he's following

me-now (*he runs into room*), and if he's heard what I said, he'll be having my life, and I going home lonesome in the darkness of the night.

(*for a perceptible moment they watch the door with curiosity. Someone coughs outside. Then CHRISTY MAHON, a slight young man, comes in very tired and frightened and dirty.*)

Christy (*in a small voice*). God save all here!

Men. God save you kindly.

Christy (*going to the counter*). I'd trouble you for a glass of porter, woman of the house.

(*He -puts down com*)

Peegen (*serving him*). You're one of the tinkers, young fellow, is beyond camped in the glen?

Christy. I am not; but I'm destroyed walking.

Michael (*patronizingly*). Let you come up then to the fire. You're looking famished with the cold.

Christy. God reward you. (*He takes up his glass and goes a little way across to the left, then stops and looks about him.*) Is it often the police do be coming into this place, master of the house?

Michael. If you'd come in better hours, you'd have seen "Licensed for the sale of Beer and Spirits, to be consumed on the premises," written in white letters above the door, and what would the polls want spying on me, and not a decent house within four miles, the way every living Christian is a bona fide,¹ saving one widow alone?

Christy (*with relief*). It's a safe house, so.

(*He goes over to the fire, sighing and moaning. Then he sits down, putting his glass beside him and begins gnawing a turnip, too miserable to feel the others staring at him with curiosity.*)

Michael (*going after him*). Is it yourself is fearing the polis? You're wanting, maybe?

Christy. There's many wanting.

Michael. Many, surely, with the broken harvest and the ended wars. (*He picks up some stockings, etc., that are near the fire, and carries them away furtively.*) It should be larceny, I'm thinking?

¹ genuine person.

Christy (*dolefully*). I had it in my mind it was a different word and a bigger.

Peegen. There's a queer lad. Were you never slapped in school, young fellow, that you don't know the name of your deed?

Christy (*bashfully*). I'm slow at learning, a middling scholar only.

Michael. If you're a dunce itself, you'd have a right to know that larceny's robbing and stealing. Is it for the like of that you're wanting?

Christy (*with a flash of family pride*). And I the son of a strong farmer (*with a sudden qualm*), God rest his soul, could have bought up the whole of your old house a while since, from the butt of his tail-pocket, and not have missed the weight of it gone.

Michael (*impressed*). If it's not stealing, it's maybe something big.

Christy (*flattered*). Aye; it's maybe something big.

Jimmy. He's a wicked-looking young fellow. Maybe he followed after a young woman on a lonesome night.

Christy (*shocked*). Oh, the saints forbid, mister; I was all times a decent lad.

Philly (*turning on JIMMY*). You're a silly man, Jimmy Farrell. He said his father was a farmer a while since, and there's himself now in a poor state. Maybe the land was grabbed from him, and he did what any decent man would do.

Michael (*to CHRISTY, mysteriously*). Was it bailiffs?

Christy. The devil a one.

Michael. Agents?

Christy. The divil a one.

Michael. Landlords?

Chnsty (*peevishly*). Ah, not at all, I'm saying. You'd see the like of them stories on an' little paper of a Munster town. But I'm not calling to mind any person, gentle, simple, judge or jury, did the like of me.

(*They all draw nearer with delighted curiosity.*)

Philly. Well, that lad's a puzzle-the-world.

Jimmy. He'd beat Dan Davies' circus, or the holy missionaries making sermons on the villainy of man. Try him again, Philly.

P billy. Did you strike golden guineas out

of solder, young fellow, or shilling coins itself?

Christy. I did not, mister, not sixpence nor a farthing coin.

Jimmy. Did you marry three wives, maybe? I'm told there's a sprinkling have done that among the holy Luthers of the preaching north.

Christy (shyly). I never married with one, let alone with a couple or three.

¥ *billy.* Maybe he went righting for the Doers, the like of the man beyond, was judged to be hanged, quartered and drawn. Were you off east, young fellow, fighting bloody wars for Kruger and the freedom of the Boers?

Christy. I never left my own parish till Tuesday was a week.

Peegen (coming from counter). He's done nothing, so. (To CHRISTY.) If you didn't commit murder or a bad, nasty thing, or false coining, or robbery, or butchery, or the like of them, there isn't anything that would be worth your troubling for to run from now. You did nothing at all.

Christy (his feelings hurt). That's an unkindly thing to be saying to a poor orphaned traveler, has a prison behind him, and hanging before, and hell's gap gaping below.

Peegen (with a sign to the men to be quiet). You're only saying it. You did nothing at all. A soft lad the like of you wouldn't slit the windpipe of a screeching sow.

Christy (offended). You're not speaking the truth.

Peegen (in mock rage). Not speaking the truth, is it? Would you have me knock the head of you with the butt of the broom?

Christy (twisting round on her with a sharp cry of horror). Don't strike me. I killed my poor father, Tuesday was a week, for doing the like of that.

Peegen (with blank amazement). Is it killed your father?

Christy (subsiding). With the help of God I did surely, and that the Holy Immaculate Mother may intercede for his soul.

Philly (retreating with JIMMY). There's a daring fellow.

Jimmy. Oh, glory be to God!

Michael (with great respect). That was a hanging crime, mister ru'ney. You should have

had good reason for doing the like of that.

Christy (in a very reasonable tone). He was a dirty man, God forgive him, and he getting old and crusty, the way I couldn't put up with him at all.

Peegen. And you shot him dead?

Christy (shaking his head). I never used weapons. I've no license, and I'm a law-fearing man.

Michael. It was with a hiked knife, maybe? I'm told in the big world it's bloody knives they use.

Christy (loudly, scandalised). Do you take me for a slaughter-boy?

Peegen. You never hanged him, the way Jimmy Farrell hanged his dog from the license, and had it screeching and wriggling three hours at the butt of a string, and himself swearing it was a dead dog, and the peelers swearing it had life?

Christy. I did not, then. I just riz the loy¹ and let fall the edge of it on the ridge of his skull, and he went down at my feet like an empty sack, and never let a grunt or groan from him at all.

Michael (making a sign to PEGEEN to fill CHRISTY'S glass). And what way weren't you hanged, mister? Did you bury him then?

Christy (considering). Aye. I buried him then. Wasn't I digging spuds in the field?

Michael. And the peelers never followed after you the eleven days that you're out?

Christy (shaking his head). Never a one of them, and I walking forward facing hog, dog, or divil on the highway of the road.

Philly (nodding wisely). It's only with a common week-day kind of a murderer them lads would be trusting their carcass, and that man should be a great terror when his temper's roused.

Michael. He should, then. (To CHRISTY.) And where was it, mister honey, that you did the deed?

Christy (looking at him with suspicion). Oh, a distant place, master of the house, a windy corner of high, distant hills.

Philly (nodding with approval). He's a close man, and he's right, surely.

Peegen. That'd be a lad with the sense of Solomon to have for a pot-boy, Michael

¹ narrow spade.

James, if it's the truth you're seeking one at all.

Philly. The peelers is fearing him, and if you'd that lad in the house there isn't one of them would come smelling around if the dogs itself were lapping poteen from the dung-pit of the yard.

Jimmy. Bravery's a treasure in a lonesome place, and a lad would kill his father, I'm thinking, would face a foxy devil with a pitchpike on the flags of hell.

Pegeen. It's the truth they're saying, and if I'd that lad in the house, I wouldn't be fearing the loosed kharki cut-throats, or the walking dead.

Christy (swelling with surprise and triumph). Well, glory be to God!

Michael (with deference). Would you think well to stop here and be pot-boy, mister honey, if we gave you good wages, and didn't destroy you with the weight of work?

Shawn (coming forward uneasily). That'd be a queer kind to bring into a decent quiet household with the like of Pegeen Mike.

Pegeen (very sharply). Will you whisht? Who's speaking to you?

Shawn (retreating). A bloody-handed murderer the like of...

Pegeen (snapping at him). Whisht I am saying; we'll take no fooling from your like at all. *(To CHRISTY with a honeyed voice.)* And you, young fellow, you'd have a right to stop, I'm thinking, for we'd do our all and utmost to content your needs.

Christy (overcome with wonder). And I'd be safe in this place from the searching law?

Michael. You would, surely. If they're not fearing you, itself, the peelers in this place is decent drouhty poor fellows, wouldn't touch a cur dog and not give warning in the dead of night.

Pegeen (very kindly and persuasively). Let you stop a short while anyhow. Aren't you destroyed walking with your feet in bleeding blisters, and your whole skin needing washing like a Wicklow sheep?

Christy (looking round with satisfaction). It's a nice room, and if it's not humbugging me you are, I'm thinking that I'll surely stay.

Jimmy (jumps up). Now, by the grace of God, herself will be safe this night, with a

man killed his father holding danger from the door, and let you come on, Michael James, or they'll have the best stuff drunk at the wake.

Michael (going to the door with men). And begging your pardon, mister, what name will we call you, for we'd like to know?

Christy. Christopher Mahon.

Michael. Well, God bless you, Christy, and a good rest till we meet again when the sun'll be rising to the noon of day.

Christy. God bless you all.

Men. God bless you.

(They go out except SHAWN, who lingers at door.)

Shawn (to PEGEEN). Are you wanting me to stop along with you and keep you from harm?

Pegeen (gruffly). Didn't you say you were fearing Father Reilly?

Shawn. There'd be no harm staying now, I'm thinking, and himself in it too.

Pegeen. You wouldn't stay when there was need for you, and let you step off nimble this time when there's none.

Shawn. Didn't I say it was Father Reilly...

Pegeen. Go on, then, to Father Reilly *(in a jeering tone)*, and let him put you in the holy brotherhoods, and leave that lad to me.

Shawn. If I meet the Widow Quin...

Pegeen. Go on, I'm saying, and don't be waking this place with your noise. *(She hustles him out and bolts the door)* That lad would wear the spirits from the saints of peace. *(Bustles about, then takes off her apron and pins it up in the window as a blind.)* CHRISTY watching her timidly. *Then she comes to him and speaks with bland good humor* Let you stretch out now by the fire, young fellow. You should be destroyed traveling.

Christy (shyly again, drawing off his boots). I'm tired, surely, walking wild eleven days, and waking fearful in the night.

(He holds up one of his feet, feeling his blisters, and looking at them with compassion)

Pegeen (standing beside him, watching him with delight). You should have had great people in your family, I'm thinking, with the little, small feet you have, and you with a kind of quality name, the like of what you'd find on

the great powers and potentates of France and Spain.

Christy (with pride). We were great, surely, with wide and windy acres of rich Munster land.

Peegen. Wasn't I telling you, and you a fine, handsome young fellow with a noble brow?

Christy (with a flash of delighted surprise). Is it me?

Peegen. Aye. Did you never hear that from the young girls where you come from in the west or south?

Christy (with venom). I did not, then. Oh, they're bloody liars in the naked parish where I grew a man.

Peegen. If they are itself, you've heard it these days, I'm thinking, and you walking the world telling out your story to young girls or old.

Christy. I've told my story no place till this night, Peegen Mike, and it's foolish I was here, maybe, to be talking free, but you're decent people, I'm thinking, and yourself a kindly woman, the way I wasn't fearing you at all.

Peegen (jilting a sack with straw). You've said the like of that, maybe, in every cot and cabin where you've met a young girl on your way.

Christy (going over to her, gradually raising his voice). I've said it nowhere till this night, I'm telling you, for I've seen none the like of you the eleven long days I am walking the world, looking over a low ditch or a high ditch on my north or my south, into stony scattered fields, or scribes of bog, where you'd see young, limber girls, and fine, prancing women making laughter with the men.

Peegen. If you weren't destroyed traveling, you'd have as much talk and streeleen,¹ I'm thinking, as Owen Roe O'Sullivan or the poets of the Dingle Bay, and I've heard all times it's the poets are your like, fine, fiery fellows with great rages when their temper's roused.

Christy (drawing a little nearer to her). You've a power of rings, God bless you, and would there be any offense if I was asking are you single now?

¹ idle talk.

Peegen. What would I want wedding so young?

Christy (with relief). We're alike, so.

Peegen (she puts sack on settle and beats it up). I never killed my father. I'd be afraid to do that, except I was the like of yourself with blind rages tearing me within, for I'm thinking you should have had great tussling when the end was come.

Christy (expanding with delight at the first confidential talk he has ever had with a woman). We had not, then. It was a hard woman was come over the hill, and if he was always a crusty kind when he'd a hard woman setting him on, not the devil himself or his four fathers could put up with him at all.

Peegen (with curiosity). And isn't it a great wonder that one wasn't fearing you?

Christy (very confidentially). Up to the day I killed my father, there wasn't a person in Ireland knew the kind I was, and I there drinking, waking, eating, sleeping, a quiet, simple poor fellow with no man giving me heed.

Peegen (getting a quilt out of the cupboard and putting it on the sack). It was the girls were giving you heed, nuybe, and I'm thinking it's most conceit you'd have to be gaming with their like.

Christy (shaking his head, with simplicity). Not the girls itself, and I won't tell you a lie. There wasn't anyone heeding me in that place saving only the dumb beasts of the field.

(He sits down at fire.)

Peegen (with disappointment). And I thinking you should have been living the like of a king of Norway or the Eastern world.

(She comes and sits beside him after placing bread and mug of milk on the table.)

Christy (laughing piteously). The like of a king, is it? And I after toiling, moiling, digging, dodging from the dawn till dusk with never a sight of joy or sport saving only when I'd be abroad in the dark night poaching rabbits on hills, for I was a devil to poach, God forgive me *(very naively)*, and I near got six months for going with a dung fork and stabbing a fish.

Peegen. And it's that you'd call sport, is it,

¹ Christy's idea of fore.

to be abroad in the darkness with yourself alone?

Christy. I did, God help me, and there I'd be as happy as the sunshine of Saint Martin's Day, watching the light passing the north or the patches of fog, till I'd hear a rabbit starting to screech and I'd go running in the furze. Then when I'd my full share I'd come walking down where you'd see the ducks and geese stretched sleeping on the highway of the road, and before I'd pass the dunghill, I'd hear himself snoring out, a loud lonesome snore he'd be making all times, the while he was sleeping, and he a man'd be raging all times, the while he was waking, like a gaudy officer you'd hear cursing and damning and swearing oaths.

Peegen. Providence and Mercy, spare us all!

Christy. It's that you'd say, surely, if you seen him and he after drinking for weeks, rising up in the red dawn, or before it, maybe, and going out into the yard as naked as an ash tree in the moon of May, and shying clods against the visage of the stars till he'd put the fear of death into the banbhs¹ and the screeching sows.

Peegen. I'd be well-nigh afeard of that lad myself, I'm thinking. And there was no one in it but the two of you alone?

Christy. The devil a one, though he'd sons and daughters walking all great states and territories of the world, and not a one of them, to this day, but would say their seven curses on him, and they rousing up to let a cough or sneeze, maybe, in the deadness of the night.

Peegen (nodding her head). Well, you should have been a queer lot. I never cursed my father the like of that, though I'm twenty and more years of age.

Christy. Then you'd have cursed mine, I'm telling you, and he a man never gave peace to any, saving when he'd get two months or three, or be locked in the asylums for battering peelers or assaulting men (*with depression*) the way it was a bitter life he led me till I did up a Tuesday and halve his skull.

Peegen (jutting her hand on his shoulder). Well, you'll have peace in this place, Christy Mahon, and none to trouble you, and it's¹ old women.

near time a fine lad like you should have your good share of the earth.

Christy. It's time, surely, and I a seemly fellow with great strength in me and bravery of...

(Someone knocks.)

(*Clinging to PEGEEN.*) Oh, glory! it's late for knocking, and this last while I'm in terror of the peelers, and the walking dead.

(*Knocking again.*)

Peegen. Who's there?

Voice (outside). Me.

Peegen. Who's me?

Voice. The Widow Quin.

Peegen (jumping up and giving him the bread and milk). Go on now with your supper, and let on to be sleepy, for if she found you were such a warrant to talk, she'd be stringing gabble till the dawn of day.

(*He takes bread and sits shyly with his back to the door.*)

Peegen (opening door, with temper). What ails you, or what is it you're wanting at this hour of the night?

Widow Quin (coming in a step and peering at CHRISTY). I'm after meeting Shawn Keogh and Father Reilly below, who told me of your curiosity man, and they fearing by this time he was maybe roaring, romping on your hands with drink.

Peegen (pointing to CHRISTY). Look now is he roaring, and he stretched away drowsy with his supper and his mug of milk. Walk down and tell that to Father Reilly and to Shaneen Keogh.

Widow Quin (coming forward). I'll not see them again, for I've their word to lead that lad forward for to lodge with me.

Peegen (in blank amazement). This night, is it?

Widow Quin (going over). This night. "It isn't fitting," says the priesteen, "to have his likeness lodging with an orphaned girl." (*To CHRISTY.*) God save you, mister!

Christy (shyly). God save you kindly.

Widow Quin (looking at him with half-amazed curiosity). Well, aren't you a little smiling fellow? It should have been great and bitter torments did rouse your spirits to a deed of blood.

Christy (doubtfully). It should, maybe.

Widow Quin. It's more than "maybe" I'm

saying, and it'd soften my heart to see you sitting so simple with your cup and cake, and you fitter to be saying your catechism than slaying your da.

Peegen (at counter, washing glasses'). There's talking when any'd see he's fit to be holding his head high with the wonders of the world. Walk on from this, for I'll not have him tormented and he destroyed traveling since Tuesday was a week.

Widow Quin (peaceably). We'll be walking surely when his supper's done, and you'll find we're great company, young fellow, when it's of the like of you and me you'd hear the penny poets singing in an August Fair.

Christy (innocently). Did you kill your father?

Peegen (contemptuously). She did not. She hit himself with a worn pick, and the rusted poison did corrode his blood the way he never overed it, and died after. That was a sneaky kind of murder did win small glory with the boys itself.

(She crosses to CHRISTY'S '.)

Widow Quin (with good humor). If it didn't, maybe all knows a widow woman has buried her children and destroyed her man is a wiser comrade for a young lad than a girl, the like of you, who'd go helter-skeltenng after any man would let you a wink upon the road.

Peegen (breaking out into wild rage). And you'll say that, Widow Quin, and you gasping with the rage you had racing the hill beyond to look on his face.

Widow Quin (laughing derisively). Me, is it? Well, Father Reilly has cuteness to divide you now. *(She pulls CHRISTY upJ)* There's great temptation in a man did slay his da, and we'd best be going, young fellow; so rise up and come with me.

Peegen (seizing his ami). He'll not stir. He's pot-boy in this place, and I'll not have him stolen off and kidnaped while himself's abroad.

Widow Quin. It'd be a crazy pot-boy'd lodge him in the shebeen where he works by day, so you'd have a right to come on, young fellow, till you see my little houseen, a perch off on the rising hill.

Peegen. Wait till morning, Christy Mahon. Wait till you lay eyes on her leaky thatch is

growing more pasture for her buck goat than her square of fields, and she without a tramp itself to keep in order her place at all.

Widow Quin. When you see me contriving in my little gardens, Christy Mahon, you'll swear the Lord God formed me to be living lone, and that there isn't my match in Mayo for thatching, or mowing, or shearing a sheep.

Peegen (with noisy scorn). It's true the Lord God formed you to contrive, indeed. Doesn't the world know you reared a black lamb at your own breast, so that the Lord Bishop of Connaught felt the elements of a Christian, and he eating it after in a kidney stew? Doesn't the world know you've been seen shaving the foxy skipper from France for a threepenny bit and a sop of grass tobacco would wring the liver from a mountain goat you'd meet leaping the hills?

Widow Quin (with amusement). Do you hear her now, young fellow? Do you hear the way she'll be rating at your own self when a week is by?

Peegen (to CHRISTY). Don't heed her. Tell her to go into her pigsty and not plague us here.

Widow Quin. I'm going, but he'll come with me.

Peegen (shaking him). Are you dumb, young fellow?

Christy (timidly, to WIDOW QUIN). God increase you, but I'm pot-boy in this place, and it's here I'd liefer stay.

Peegen (triumphantly'). Now you have heard him, and go on from this.

Widow Quin (looking round the room). It's lonesome this hour crossing the hill, and if he won't come along with me, I'd have a right maybe to stop this night with yourselves. Let me stretch out on the settle, Peegen Mike; and himself can lie by the hearth.

Peegen (short and fiercely). Faith, I won't. Quit off or I will send you now.

Widow Quin (gathering her shawl up). Well, it's a terror to be aged a score. *(To CHRISTY.)* God bless you now, young fellow, and let you be wary, or there's right torment will await you here if you go romancing with her like, and she waiting only, as they bade me say, on a sheepskin parchment to be wed with Shawn Keogh of Killakeen.

Christy (going to PEGEEN as she bolts the door).
What's that she's after saying?

Peegen. Lies and blather you've no call to mind. Well, isn't Shawn Keogh an impudent fellow to send up spying on me? Wait till I lay hands on him. Let him wait, I'm saying.

Christy. And you're not wedding him at all?

Peegen. I wouldn't wed him if a bishop came walking for to join us here.

Christy. That God in glory may be thanked for that.

Peegen. There's your bed now. I've put a quilt upon you I'm after quilting a while since with my own two hands, and you'd best stretch out now for your sleep, and may God give you a good rest till I call you in the morning when the cocks walk crow.

Christy (as she goes to inner room). May God and Mary and Saint Patrick bless you and reward you, for your kindly talk. *(She shuts the door behind her. He settles his bed slowly, feeling the quilt with immense satisfaction.)* Well, it's a clean bed and soft with it, and it's great luck and company I've won me in the end of time — two fine women fighting for the likes of me — till I'm thinking this night wasn't I a foolish fellow not to kill my father in the years gone by.

ACT II

SCENE, *as before.* Brilliant morning light.

CHRISTY, looking bright and cheerful, is cleaning a girl's boots.

Christy (to himself, counting jugs on dresser). Half a hundred beyond. Ten there. A score that's above. Eighty jugs. Six cups and a broken one. Two plates. A power of glasses. Bottles, a schoolmaster'd be hard set to count, and enough in them, I'm thinking, to drunken all the wealth and wisdom of the County Clare. *(He puts down the boot carefully.)* There's her boots now, nice and decent for her evening use, and isn't it grand brushes she has? *(He puts them down and goes by degrees to the looking-glass.)* Well, this'd be a fine place to be my whole life talking out with swearing Christians, in place of my old dogs and cat, and I stalking around, smoking my pipe and drinking my fill, and never a day's work but drawing a cork an odd time,

or wiping a glass, or rinsing out a shiny tumbler for a decent man. *(He takes the looking-glass from the wall and puts it on the back of a chair; then sits down in front of it and begins washing his face.)* Didn't I know rightly I was handsome, though it was the devil's own mirror we had beyond, would twist a squint across an angel's brow; and I'll be growing fine from this day, the way I'll have a soft lovely skin on me and won't be the like of the clumsy young fellows do be ploughing all times in the earth and dung. *(He starts.)* Is she coming again? *(He looks out.)* Stranger girls. God help me, where'll I hide myself away and my long neck naked to the world? *(He looks out.)* I'd best go to the room, maybe, till I'm dressed again.

(He gathers up his coat and the looking-glass, and runs into the inner room.

The door is pushed open, and SUSAN BRADY looks in, and knocks on door.)

Susan. There's nobody in it.

(Knocks again.)

Nelly (pushing her in and following her, with HONOR BLAKE and SARA TANSEY). It'd be early for them both to be out walking the hill.

Susan. I'm thinking Shawn Keogh was making game of us and there's no such man in it at all.

Honor (pointing to straw and quilt). Look at that. He's been sleeping there in the night. Well, it'll be a hard case if he's gone off now, the way we'll never set our eyes on a man killed his father, and we after rising early and destroying ourselves running fast on the hill.

Nelly. Are you thinking them's his boots?

Sara (taking them up). If they are, there should be his father's track on them. Did you never read in the papers the way murdered men do bleed and drip?

Susan. Is that blood there, Sara Tanscy?

Sara (smelling it). That's bog water, I'm thinking, but it's his own they are, surely, for I never seen the like of them for whity mud, and red mud, and turf on them, and the fine sands of the sea. That man's been walking, I'm telling you.

(She goes down right, putting on one of his boots.)

Susan (& going to window). Maybe he's stolen

off to Bclmullet with the boots of Michael James, and you'd have a right so to follow after him, Sara Tansey, and you the one yoked the ass cart and drove ten miles to set your eyes on the man bit the yellow lady's nostril on the northern shore. (*She looks out?*)

Sara (*running to window with one loot on*). Don't be talking, and we fooled to-day. (*Putting on other boot.*) There's a pair do fit me well, and I'll be keeping them for walking to the priest, when you'd be ashamed this place, going up winter and summer with nothing worth while to confess at all.

Honor (*who has been listening at the door*). Whisht! there's someone inside the room. (*She pushes door a chink open.*) It's a man.

(SARA kicks off hoofs and puts them where they were. They all stand in a line looking through chink.)

Sara. I'll call him. Mister! Mister! (*He puts in his head*) Is Pegeen within?

Christy (*coming in as meek as a mouse, with the looking-glass held behind his back*). She's above on the cruceen,¹ seeking the nanny goats, the way she'd have a sup of goat's milk for to color my tea.

Sara. And asking your pardon, is it you's the man killed his father?

Christy (*sidling toward the nail where the glass was hanging*). I am, God help me!

Sara (*taking eggs she has brought*). Then my thousand welcomes to you, and I've run up with a brace of duck's eggs for your food to-day. Pegeen's ducks is no use, but these are the real rich sort. Hold out your hand and you'll see it's no lie I'm telling you.

Christy (*coming forward shyly, and holding out his left hand*). They're a great and weighty size.

Susan. And I run up with a patter of butter, for it'd be a poor thing to have you eating your spuds dry, and you after running a great way since you did destroy your da.

Christy. Thank you kindly.

Honor. And I brought you a little cut of cake, for you should have a thin stomach on you, and you that length walking the world.

Nelly. And I brought you a little laying pullet — boiled and all she is — was crushed at the fall of night by the curate's car. Feel the fat of that breast, mister.

¹ bluff.

Christy. It's bursting, surely.

(*He feels it with the back of his hand, in which he holds the presents.*)

Sara. Will you pinch it? Is your right hand too sacred for to use at all? (*She slips round behind him.*) It's a glass he has. Well, I never seen to this day a man with a looking-glass held to his back. Them that kills their fathers is a vain lot surely. (*Girls giggle.*)

Christy (*smiling innocently and piling presents on glass*). I'm very thankful to you all to-day ...

Widow Quin (*coming in quickly, at door*). Sara Tansey, Susan Brady, Honor Blake! What in glory has you here at this hour of day?

Girls (*giggling*). That's the man killed his father.

Widow Qitin (*coming to them*). I know well it's the man; and I'm after putting him down in the sports below for racing, leaping, pitching, and the Lord knows what.

Sara (*exuberantly*). That's right, Widow Quin. I'll bet my dowry that he'll lick the world.

Widow Quin. If you will, you'd have a right to have him fresh and nourished in place of nursing a feast. (*Baking presents.*) Are you fasting or fed, young fellow?

Christy. Fasting, if you please.

Widow Quin (*loudly*). Well, you're the lot. Stir up now and give him his breakfast (*To CHRISTY.*) Come here to me (*she puts him on bench beside her while the girls make tea and get his breakfast*) and let you tell us your story before Pegeen will come, in place of grinning your ears off like the moon of May.

Christy (*beginning to be pleased*). It's a long story; you'd be destroyed listening.

Widow Quin. Don't be letting on to be shy, a fine, gamey, treacherous lad the like of you. Was it in your house beyond you cracked his skull?

Christy (*shy but flattered*). It was not. We were digging spuds in his cold, sloping, stony, devil's patch of a field.

Widow Quin. And you went asking money of him, or making talk of getting a wife would drive him from his farm?

Christy. I did not, then; but there I was, digging and digging, and "You squinting idiot," says he, "let you walk down now and

tell the priest you'll wed the Widow Casey in a score of days."

Widow Quin. And what kind was she?

Christy (with horror). A walking terror from beyond the hills, and she twoscore and five years, and two hundredweights and five pounds in the weighing scales, with a limping leg on her, and a blinded eye, and she a woman of noted misbehavior with the old and young.

Girls (clustering round him, serving him). Glory be.

Widow Quin. And what did he want driving you to wed with her?

{She takes a bit of the chicken.}

Christy (eating with growing satisfaction). He was letting on I was wanting a protector from the harshness of the world, and he without a thought the whole while but how he'd have her hut to live in and her gold to drink.

Widow Quin. There's maybe worse than a dry hearth and a widow woman and your glass at night. So you hit him then?

Christy (getting almost excited). I did not. "I won't wed her," says T, "when all know she did suckle me for six weeks when I came into the world, and she a hag this day with a tongue on her has the crows and seabirds scattered, the way they wouldn't cast a shadow on her garden with the dread of her curse."

Widow Quin {teasmgly}. That one should be right company.

Sara {eagerly}. Don't mind her. Did you kill him then?

Christy. "She's too good for the like of you," says he, "and go on now or I'll flatten you out like a crawling beast has passed under a dray." "You will not if I can help it," says I. "Go on," says he, "or I'll have the devil making garters of your limbs to-night." "You will not if I can help it," says I. *{He sits up, brandishing his mug.}*

Sara. You are right, surely.

Christy (impressively). With that the sun came out between the cloud and the hill, and it shining green in my face. "God have mercy on your soul," says he, lifting a scythe; "or on your own," says I, raising the loy.

Susan. That's a grand story.

Honor. He tells it lovely.

Christy (flattered and confident, waving bone). He gave a drive with the scythe, and I gave a lep to the cast. Then I turned around with my back to the north, and I hit a blow on the ridge of his skull, laid him stretched out, and he split to the knob of his gullet.

{He raises the chicken bone to his}

Adam's apple.}

Girls (together). Well, you're a marvel! Oh, God bless you! You're the lad, surely!

Susan. I'm thinking the Lord God sent him this road to make a second husband to the Widow Quin, and she with a great yearning to be wedded, though all dread her here. Lift him on her knee, Sara Tansey.

Widow Quin. Don't tease him.

Sara (going over to dresser and counter very quickly, and getting two glasses and porter). You're heroes, surely, and let you drink a suppeen with your arms linked like the outlandish lovers in the sailor's song. *{She links their arms and gives them the glasses.}* There now. Drink a health to the wonders of the western world, the pirates, preachers, poteen-makers, with the jobbing jockies; parching peelers, and the juries fill their stomachs selling judgments of the English law.

{Brandishing the bottle.}

Widow Quin. That's a right toast, Sara Tansey. Now, Christy.

{They drink with their arms linked, he drinking with his left hand, she with her right. As they are drinking, PEGEEN MIKE comes in with a milk can and stands aghast. They all spring away from CHRISTY. He goes down left. WIDOW QUIN remains seated.}

Peegen {angrily, to SARA}. What is it you're wanting?

Sara {twisting her apron}. An ounce of tobacco.

Peegen. Have you tuppence?

Sara. I've forgotten my purse.

Peegen. Then you'd best be getting it and not fooling us here. *{To the WIDOW QUIN, with more elaborate scorn.}* And what is it you're wanting, Widow Quin?

Widow Quin {insolently}. A penn'orth of starch.

Peegen {breaking out}. And you without a

white shift or a shirt in your whole family since the drying of the flood! I've no starch for the like of you, and let you walk on now to Killamuck.

Widow Quin (turning to CHRISTY, as she goes out with the girls). Well, you're mighty huffy this day, Peegen Mike, and, you young fellow, let you not forget the sports and racing when the noon is by. *(They go out!)*

Peegen (imperiously). Fling out that rubbish and put them cups away. *(CHRISTY tidies away in great haste!)* Shove in the bench by the wall. *(He does so.)* And hang that glass on the nail. What disturbed it at all?

Christy (very meekly). I was making myself decent will, and this a fine country for young lovely girls.

Peegen (sharply). Whisht your talking of girls. *(Goes to counter, right.)*

Christy. Wouldn't any wish to be decent in a place...

Peegen. Whisht I'm saying.

Christy (looks at her face for a moment with great misgivings, then as a last effort, takes up a loy, and goes towards her, with feigned assurance). It was with a loy the like of that I killed my father.

Peegen (still sharply). You've told me that story six times since the dawn of day.

Christy (reproachfully). It's a queer thing you wouldn't care to be hearing it and them girls after walking four miles to be listening to me now.

Peegen (turning round astonished). Four miles!

Christy (apologetically). Didn't himself say there were only four bona fides living in the place?

Peegen. It's bona fides by the road they are, but that lot came over the river, lepping the stones. It's not three perches when you go like that, and I was down this morning looking on the papers the post-boy does have in his bag. *(With meaning and emphasis.)* For there was great news this day, Christopher Mahon. *(She goes into room, left.)*

Christy (suspiciously). Is it news of my murder?

Peegen (inside). Murder, indeed.

Christy (loudly). A murdered da?

Peegen (coming in again and crossing right). There was not, but a story filled half a page of the hanging of a man. Ah, that should be a fearful end, young fellow, and it worst of all for a man who destroyed his da, for the like of him would get small mercies, and when it's dead he is, they'd put him in a narrow grave, with cheap sacking wrapping him round, and pour down quicklime on his head, the way you'd see a woman pouring any frish-frash from a cup.

Christy (very miserably). Oh, God help me. Are you thinking I'm safe? You were saying at the fall of night, I was shut of jeopardy and I here with yourselves.

Peegen (severely). You'll be shut of jeopardy no place if you go talking with a pack of wild girls the like of them do be walking abroad with the peelers, talking whispers at the fall of night.

Christy (with terror). And you're thinking they'd tell?

Peegen (with mock sympathy). Who knows, God help you.

Christy (loudly). What joy would they have to bring hanging to the likes of me?

Peegen. It's queer joys they have, and who knows the thing they'd do, if it'd make the green stones cry itself to think of you swaying and swiggling at the butt of a rope, and you with a fine, stout neck, God bless you! the way you'd be a half an hour, in great anguish, getting your death.

Christy (getting his boots and putting them on). If there's that terror of them, it'd be best, maybe, I went on wandering like Esau or Cain and Abel on the sides of Neifin or the Erris plain.

Peegen (beginning to play with him). It would, maybe, for I've heard the Circuit Judges this place is a heartless crew.

Christy (bitterly). It's more than Judges this place is a heartless crew. *(Looking up at her.)* And isn't it a poor thing to be starting again and I a lonesome fellow will be looking out on women and girls the way the needy fallen spirits do be looking on the Lord?

Peegen. What call have you to be that lonesome when there's poor girls walking Mayo in their thousands now?

Christy (grimly). It's well you know what call I have. It's well you know it's a lonesome thing to be passing small towns with the lights shining sideways when the night is down, or going in strange places with a dog noising before you and a dog noising behind, or drawn to the cities where you'd hear a voice kissing and talking deep love in every shadow of the ditch, and you passing on with an empty, hungry stomach failing from your heart.

Peegen. I'm thinking you're an odd man, Christy Mahon. The oddest walking fellow I ever set my eyes on to this hour to-day.

Christy. What would any be but odd men and they living lonesome in the world?

Peegen. I'm not odd, and I'm my whole life with my father only.

Christy (with infinite admiration). How would a lovely handsome woman the like of you be lonesome when all men should be thronging around to hear the sweetness of your voice, and the little infant children should be pestering your steps, I'm thinking, and you walking the roads?

Peegen. I'm hard set to know what way a coaxing fellow the like of yourself should be lonesome either.

Christy. Coaxing?

Peegen. Would you have me think a man never talked with the girls would have the words you've spoken to-day? It's only letting on you are to be lonesome, the way you'd get around me now.

Christy. I wish to God I was letting on, but I was lonesome all times, and born lonesome, I'm thinking, as the moon of dawn.

(Going to door.)

Peegen (pulled by his talk). Well, it's a story I'm not understanding at all why you'd be worse than another, Christy Mahon, and you a fine lad with the great savagery to destroy your da.

Christy. It's little I'm understanding myself, saving only that my heart's scalded this day, and I going off stretching out the earth between us, the way I'll not be waking near you another dawn of the year till the two of us do arise to hope or judgment with the saints of God, and now I'd best be going with my wattle in my hand, for hanging is a poor

thing (*turning to go*'), and it's little welcome only is left me in this house to-day.

Peegen (sharply). Christy! (*He turns round.*) Come here to me. (*He goes towards her.*) Lay down that switch and throw some sods on the fire. You're pot-boy in this place, and I'll not have you mitch off from us now.

Christy. You were saying I'd be hanged if I stay.

Peegen (quite kindly at last). I'm after going down and reading the fearful crimes of Ireland for two weeks or three, and there wasn't a word of your murder. (*Getting up and going over to the counter.*) They've likely not found the body. You're safe so with ourselves.

Christy (astonished, slowly). It's making game of me you were (*following her with fearful joy*), and I can stay so, working at your side, and I not lonesome from this mortal day.

Peegen. What's to hinder you from staying, except the widow woman or the young girls would inveigle you off?

Christy (with rapture). And I'll have your words from this day filling my ears, and that look is come upon you meeting my two eyes, and I watching you loafing around in the warm sun, or rinsing your ankles when the night is come.

Peegen (kindly, but a little embarrassed). I'm thinking you'll be a loyal young lad to have working around, and if you vexed me a while since with your leaguings with the girls, I wouldn't give a thraneen¹ for a lad hadn't a mighty spirit in him and a gamey heart.

(SHAWN KEOGH runs in carrying a cleave' on his back, followed by the WIDOW QUIN.)

Shawn (to PEGEEN). I was passing below, and I seen your mountainy sheep eating cabbages in Jimmy's field. Run up or they'll be bursting, surely.

Peegen. Oh, God mend them!

(She puts a shawl over her head and runs out.)

Christy (looking from one to the other. Still in high spirits). I'd best go to her aid, maybe. I'm handy with ewes.

Widow Quin (closing the door). She can do

¹ a bit; literally, a blade of grass.
³ literally, cliff or hillside.

that much, and there is Shanccn has long speeches for to tell you now.

(*She sits down with an amused smile.*)

Shawn (*taking something from his pocket and offering it to CHRISTY*). Do you see that, mister?

Christy (*looking at it*). The half of a ticket to the Western States!

Shawn (*trembling with anxiety*). I'll give it to you and my new hat (*pulling it out of hamper*); and my breeches with the double seat (*pulling it off*); and my new coat is woven from the blackest shearings for three miles around (*giving him the coat*); I'll give you the whole of them, and my blessing, and the blessing of Father Reilly itself, maybe, if you'll quit from this and leave us in the peace we had till last night at the fall of dark.

Christy (*with anew arrogance*). And for what is it you're wanting to get shut of me?

Shawn (*looking to the WIDOW for help*). I'm a poor scholar with middling faculties to coin a lie, so I'll tell you the truth, Christy Mahon. I'm wedding with Pegeen beyond, and I don't think well of having a clever fearless man the like of you dwelling in her house.

Christy (*almost pugnaciously*). And you'd be using bribery for to banish me?

Shawn (*in an imploring voice*). Let you not take it badly, mister honey; isn't beyond the best place for you where you'll have golden chains and shiny coats and you riding upon hunters with the ladies of the land?

(*He makes an eager sign to the WIDOW QUIN to come to help him.*)

Widow Quin (*coming over*). It's true for him, and you'd best quit off and not have that poor girl setting her mind on you, for there's Shaneen thinks she wouldn't suit you, though all is saying that she'll wed you now.

(*CHRISTY beams with delight.*)

Shawn (*in terrified earnest*). She wouldn't suit you, and she with the devil's own temper the way you'd be strangling one another in a score of days. (*He makes the movement of strangling with his hands.*) It's the like of me only that she's fit for, a quiet, simple fellow wouldn't raise a hand upon her if she scratched itself.

Widow Quin (*putting SHAWN'S hat on CHRISTY*). Fit them clothes on you, any-

how, young fellow, and he'd maybe loan them to you for the sports. (*Pushing him towards inner door.*) Fit them on and you can give your answer when you have them tried.

Christy (*beaming, delighted with the clothes*). I will, then. I'd like herself to see me in them tweeds and hat.

(*He goes into room and shuts the door.*)

Shawn (*in great anxiety*). He'd like herself to see them! He'll not leave us, Widow Qum. He's a score of divils in him the way it's well-nigh certain he will wed Pegeen.

Widow Quin (*jeeringly*). It's true all girls are fond of courage and do hate the like of you.

Shawn (*walking about in desperation*). Oh, Widow Quin, what'll I be doing now? I'd inform again him, but he'd burst from Kilmainham and he'd be sure and certain to destroy me. If I wasn't so God-fearing, I'd near have courage to come behind him and run a pike into his side. Oh, it's a hard case to be an orphan and not to have your father that you're used to, and you'd easy kill and make yourself a hero in the sight of all. (*Coming up to her.*) Oh, Widow Quin, will you find me some contrivance when I've promised you a ewe?

Widow Quin. A ewe's a small thing, but what would you give me if I did wed him and did save you so?

Shawn (*with astonishment*). You?

Widow Qum. Aye. Would you give me the red cow you have and the mountamy ram, and the right of way across your rye path, and a load of dung at Michaelmas, and turbary upon the western hill?

Shawn (*radiant with hope*). I would, surely, and I'd give you the wedding ring I have, and the loan of a new suit, the way you'd have him decent on the wedding day. I'd give you two kids for your dinner, and a gallon of poteen, and I'd call the piper on the long car to your wedding from Crossmolina or from Ballina. I'd give you...

Widow Quin. That'll do so, and let you whisht, for he's coming now again.

(*CHRISTY comes in very natty in the new clothes. WIDOW QUIN goes to him admiringly.*)

Widow Quin. If you seen yourself now, I'm

thinking you'd be too proud to speak to us at all, and it'd be a pity surely to have your like sailing from Mayo to the Western World.

Christy (as proud as a peacock). I'm not going. If this is a poor place itself, I'll make myself contented to be lodging here.

(WIDOW QUIN *makes a sign to SHAWN to leave them.*)

Shawn. Well, I'm going measuring the race-course while the tide is low, so I'll leave you the garments and my blessing for the sports to-day. God bless you!

(*tic wriggles out.*)

Widow Quin (admiring CHRISTY). Well, you're mighty spruce, young fellow. Sit down now while you're quiet till you talk with me.

Christy (swaggering). I'm going abroad on the hillside for to seek Pegeen.

Widow Quin. You'll have time and plenty for to seek Pegeen, and you heard me saying at the fall of night the two of us should be great company.

Christy. From this out I'll have no want of company when all sorts is bringing me their food and clothing (*he swaggers to the door, tightening his belt*), the way they'd set their eyes urTon a gallant orphan cleft his father with one blow to the breeches belt. (*He opens door, then staggers back.*) Saints of glory! Holy angels from the throne of light!

Widow Quin (going over). What ails you?

Christy. It's the walking spirit of my murderedda?

Widow Quin (looking out). Is it that trumper?

Christy (wildly). Where'll I hide my poor body from the ghost of hell?

(*The door is pushed open, and old MAHON appears on threshold. CHRISTY darts in behind door.*)

Widow Quin (in great amusement). God save you, my poor man.

Mahon (gruffly). Did you see a young lad passing this way in the early morning or the fall of night?

Widow Quin. You're a queer kind to walk in not saluting at all.

Mahon. Did you see the young lad?

Widow Quin (stiffly). What kind was he?

Mahon. An ugly young streeler¹ with a
' idler.

murderous gob¹ on him, and a little switch in his hand. I met a trumper seen him coming this way at the fall of night,

Widow Quin. There's harvest hundreds do be passing these days for the Shgo boat. For what is it you're wanting him, my poor man?

Mahon. I want to destroy him for breaking the head on me with the clout of a loy. (*He takes off a big hat, and shows his head in a mass of bandages and plaster, with some pride.*) It was he did that, and amn't I a great wonder to think I've traced him ten days with that rent in my crown?

Widow Quin (taking his head in both hands and examining it with extreme delight). That was a great blow. And who hit you? A robber, maybe?

Mahon. It was my own son hit me, and he the divil a robber, or anything else, but a dirty, stuttering lout.

Widow Quin (letting go his skull and wiping her hands in her apron). You'd best be wary of a mortified scalp, I think they call it, lepping around with that wound in the splendor of the sun. It was a bad blow, surely, and you should have vexed him fearful to make him strike that gash in his da.

Mahon. Is it me?

Widow Quin (amusing herself). Aye. And isn't it a great shame when the old and hardened do torment the young?

Mahon (raging). Torment him, is it? And I after holding out with the patience of a martyred saint till there's nothing but destruction on, and I'm driven out in my old age with none to aid me.

Widow Quin (greatly amused). It's a sacred wonder the way that wickedness will spoil aman.

Mahon. My wickedness, is it? Amn't I after saying it is himself has me destroyed, and he a liar on walls, a talker of folly, a man you'd see stretched the half of the day in the brown ferns with his belly to the sun.

Widow Quin. Not working at all?

Mahon. The divil a work, or if he did himself, you'd see him raising up a haystack like the stalk of a rush, or driving our last cow till he broke her leg at the hip, and when he

¹ snout.

wasn't at that he'd be fooling over little birds he had — finches and felts — or making mugs at his own self in the bit of a glass we had hung on the wall.

Widow Quin (looking at CHRISTY). What way was he so foolish? It was running wild after the girls, maybe?

Mahon (with a shout of derision). Running wild, is it? If he seen a red petticoat coming swinging over the hill, he'd be off to hide in the sticks, and you'd see him shooting out his sheep's eyes between the little twigs and the leaves, and his two ears rising like a hare looking out through a gap. Girls, indeed!

Widow Quin. It was drink, maybe?

Mahon. And he a poor fellow would get drunk on the smell of a pint. He'd a queer rotten stomach, I'm telling you, and when I gave him three pulls from my pipe a while since, he was taken with contortions till I had to send him in the ass cart to the females' nurse.

Widow Quin (clasping her hands). Well, I never till this day heard tell of a man the like of that!

Mahon. I'd take a mighty oath you didn't, surely, and wasn't he the laughing joke of every female woman where four baronies meet, the way the girls would stop their weeding if they seen him coming the road to let a roar at him, and call him the looney of Mahon's.

Widow Quin. I'd give the world and all to see the like of him. What kind was he?

Mahon. A small, low fellow.

Widow Quin. And dark?

Mahon. Dark and dirty.

Widow Quin (considering). I'm thinking I seen him.

Mahon (eagerly). An ugly young black-guard.

Widow Quin. A hideous, fearful villain, and the spit of you.

Mahon. What way is he fled?

Widow Quin. Gone over the hills to catch a coasting steamer to the north or south.

Mahon. Could I pull up on him now?

Widow Quin. If you'll cross the sands below where the tide is out, you'll be in it as soon as himself, for he had to go round ten miles

by the top of the bay. (*She points to the door?*) Strike down by the head beyond and then follow on the roadway to the north and east.

(*Mahon goes abruptly.*)

Widow Quin (shouting after him). Let you give him a good vengeance when you come up with him, but don't put yourself in the power of the law, for it'd be a poor thing to see a judge in his black cap reading out his sentence on a civil warrior the like of you.

(*She swings the door to and looks at*

CHRISTY, who is cowering in terror, for a moment, then she bursts into a laugh?)

Widow Quin. Well, you're the walking Playboy of the Western World, and that's the poor man you had divided to his breeches belt.

Christy (looking out: then, to her). What'll Pegeen say when she hears that story? What'll she be saying to me now?

Widow Quin. She'll knock the head of you, I'm thinking, and drive you from the door. God help her to be taking you for a wonder, and you a little schemer making up the story you destroyed your da.

Christy (turning to the door, nearly speechless with rage, half to himself). To be letting on he was dead, and coming back to his life, and following after me like an old weasel tracing a rat, and coming in here laying desolation between my own self and the fine women of Ireland, and he a kind of carcass that you'd fling upon the sea...

Widow Quin (more soberly). There's talking for a man's one only son.

Christy (breaking out). His one son, is it? May I meet him with one tooth and it aching, and one eye to be seeing seven and seventy devils in the twists of the road, and one old timber leg on him to limp into the scalding grave. (*Looking out.*) There he is now crossing the strands, and that the Lord God would send a high wave to wash him from the world.

Widow Quin (scandalised). Have you no shame? (*Putting her hand on his shoulder and turning him round.*) What ails you? Near crying, is it?

Christy (in despair and grief). Amn't I after seeing the love-light of the star of knowledge

shining from her brow, and hearing words would put you thinking on the holy Brigid speaking to the infant saints, and now she'll be turning again, and speaking hard words to me, like an old woman with a spavindy ass she'd have, urging on a hill.

Widow Quin. There's poetry talk for a girl you'd see itching and scratching, and she with a stale stink of poteen on her from selling in the shop.

Christy (impatiently). It's her like is fitted to be handling merchandise in the heavens above, and what'll I be doing now, I ask you, and I a kind of wonder was jilted by the heavens when a day was by.

(There is a distant noise of girls' voices.

WIDOW QUIN looks from window and comes to him' hurriedly)

Widow Quin. You'll be doing like myself, I'm thinking, when I did destroy my man, for I'm above many's the day, odd times in great spirits, abroad in the sunshine, darning a stocking or stitching a shift; and odd times again looking out on the schooners, hookers, trawlers is sailing the sea, and I thinking on the gallant hairy fellows are drifting beyond, and myself long years living alone.

Christy (interested). You're like me, so.

Widow Quin. I am your like, and it's for that I'm taking a fancy to you, and I with my little houseen above where there'd be myself to tend you, and none to ask were you a murderer or what at all.

Christy. And what would I be doing if I left Pegeen?

Widow Quin. I've nice jobs you could be doing, gathering shells to make a whitewash for our hut within, building up a little goose-house, or stretching a new skin on an old curragh I have, and if my hut is far from all sides, it's there you'll meet the wisest old men, I tell you, at the corner of my wheel, and it's there yourself and me will have great times whispering and hugging—

Voices (outside, calling far away). Christy! Christy Mahon! Christy!

Christy. Is it Pegeen Mike?

Widow Quin. It's the young girls, I'm thinking, coming to bring you to the sports below, and what is it you'll have me to tell them now?

Christy. Aid me for to win Pegeen. It's herself only that I'm seeking now. (*Wmow QUIN gets up and goes to window*) Aid me for to win her, and I'll be asking God to stretch a hand to you in the hour of death, and lead you short cuts through the Meadows of Ease, and up the floor of Heaven to the Footstool of the Virgin's Son.

Widow Quin. There's praying.

Voices (nearer). Christy! Christy Mahon!

Christy (with agitation). They're coming. Will you swear to aid and save me for the love of Christ?

Widow Quin (looks at him for a moment). If I aid you, will you swear to give me a right of way I want, and a mountain ram, and a load of dung at Michaelmas, the time that you'll be master here?

Christy. I will, by the elements and stars of night.

Widow Quin. Then we'll not say a word of the old fellow, the way Pegeen won't know your story till the end of time.

Christy. And if he chances to return again?

Widow Quin. We'll swear he's a maniac and not your da. I could take an oath I seen him raving on the sands to-day. (*Girls run in*)

Susan. Come on to the sports below. Pegeen says you're to come.

Sara Tansey. The lepping's beginning, and we've a jockey's suit to fit upon you for the mule race on the sands below.

Honor. Come on, will you?

Christy. I will, then, if Pegeen's beyond.

Sara Tansey. She's in the boreen¹ making game of Shaneen Keogh.

Christy. Then I'll be going to her now.

(He runs out followed by the girls)

Widow Quin. Well, if the worst comes in the end of all, it'll be great game to see there's none to pity him but a widow woman, the like of me, has buried her children and destroyed her man. (*She goes out*)

ACT III

SCENE, as before. Later in the day. JIMMY comes in' slightly drunk.

Jimmy (calls). Pegeen! (*Crosses to inner door*) Pegeen Mike! (*Comes back again into*
¹ lane.

the room.') Pegccn! (PHILLY comes in in the same state.) (To PHILLY.) Did you sec herself?

Philly. I did not; but I sent Shawn Keogh with the ass cart for to bear him home. (Trying cupboards which are locked?) Well, isn't he a nasty man to get into such staggers at a morning wake? And isn't herself the devil's daughter for locking, and she so fussy after that young gaffer, you might take your death with drought and none to heed you?

Jimmy. It's little wonder she'd be fussy, and he after bringing bankrupt ruin on the roulette man, and the trick-o'-the-loop man, and breaking the nose of the cockshot-man, and winning all in the sports below, racing, lepping, dancing, and the Lord knows what! He's right luck, I'm telling you.

Philly. If he has, he'll be rightly hobbled yet, and he not able to say ten words without making a brag of the way he killed his father, and the great blow he hit with the loy.

Jimmy. A man can't hang by his own informing, and his father should be rotten by now. (Old MAHON passes window slowly.)

Philly. Supposing a man's digging spuds in that field with a long spade, and supposing he flings up the two halves of that skull, what'll be said then in the papers and the courts of law?

Jimmy. They'd say it was an old Dane, maybe, was drowned in the flood. (Old MAHON comes in and sits down near door, listening.) Did you never hear tell of the skulls they have in the city of Dublin, ranged Out like blue jugs in a cabin of Connaught?

Philly. And you believe that?

Jimmy (pugnaciously). Didn't a lad see them and he after coming from harvesting in the Liverpool boat? "They have them there," says he, "making a show of the great people there was one time walking the world. White skulls and black skulls and yellow skulls, and some with full teeth, and some haven't only but one."

Philly. It was no lie, maybe, for when I was a young lad there was a graveyard beyond the house with the remnants of a man who had thighs as long as your arm. He was a horrid man, I'm telling you, and there was many a fine Sunday I'd put him together for

fun, and he with shiny bones, you wouldn't meet the like of these days in the cities of the world.

Mahon (getting up). You wouldn't, is it? Lay your eyes on that skull, and tell me where and when there was another the like of it, is splintered only from the blow of a loy.

Philly. Glory be to God! And who hit you at all?

Mahon (triumphantly). It was my own son hit me. Would you believe that?

Jimmy. Well, there's wonders hidden in the heart of man!

Philly (suspiciously). And what way was it done?

Mahon (wandering about the room). I'm after walking hundreds and long scores of miles, winning clean beds and the fill of my belly four times in the day, and I doing nothing but telling stories of that naked truth. (He comes to them a little aggressively.) Give me a supeen and I'll tell you now.

(WIDOW QUIN comes in and stands aghast behind him. He is facing JIMMY and PHILLY, who are on the left.)

Jimmy. Ask herself beyond. She's the stuff hidden in her shawl.

Widow Quin (coming to MAHON quickly). You here, is it? You didn't go far at all?

Mahon. I seen the coasting steamer passing, and I got a drought upon me and a cramping leg, so I said, "The devil go along with him," and turned again. (Looking under her shawl.) And let you give me a supeen, for I'm destroyed traveling since Tuesday was a week.

Widow Quin (getting a glass, in a cajoling tone). Sit down then by the fire and take your ease for a space. You've a right to be destroyed, indeed, with your walking, and fighting, and facing the sun (giving him poteen from a stone jar she has brought in). There now is a drink for you, and may it be to your happiness and length of life.

Mahon (taking glass greedily and sitting down by fire). God increase you!

Widow Quin (taking men to the right stealthily). Do you know what? That man's raving from his wound to-day, for I met him a while since telling a rambling tale of a tinker had him destroyed. Then he heard of Christy's

deed, and he up and says it was his son had cracked his skull. Oh, isn't madness a fright, for he'll go killing someone yet, and he thinking it's the man has struck him so?

Jimmy (entirely convinced). It's a fright, surely. I knew a party was kicked in the head by a red mare, and he went killing horses a great while, till he eat the insides of a clock and died after.

Philly (with suspicion). Did he see Christy?

Widow Quin. He didn't. *Q*With a warning gesture.} Let you not be putting him in mind of him, or you'll be likely summoned if there's murder done. *(Looking round at MAHON.)* Whisht! He's listening. Wait now till you hear me taking him easy and unraveling all. *(She goes to MAHON.)* And what way are you feeling, mister? Are you in contentment now?

Mahon (slightly emotional from his drink). I'm poorly only, for it's a hard story the way I'm left to-day, when it was I did tend him from his hour of birth, and he a dunce never reached his second book, the way he'd come from school, many's the day, with his legs lamed under him, and he blackened with his beatings like a tinker's ass. It's a hard story, I'm saying, the way some do have their next and highest raising up a hand of murder on them, and some is lonesome getting their death with lamentation in the dead of night.

Widow Quin (not knowing what to say). To hear you talking so quiet, who'd know you were the same fellow we seen pass to-day?

Mahon. I'm the same, surely. The wrack and ruin of threescore years; and it's a terror to live that length, I tell you, and to have your sons going to the dogs against you, and you wore out scolding them, and skelping them, and God knows what.

Philly (to JIMMY). He's not raving. *(To WIDOW QUIN.)* Will you ask him what kind was his son?

Widow Quin (to MAHON, with a peculiar look). Was your son that hit you a lad of one year and a score, maybe, a great hand at racing and lepping and licking the world?

Mahon (turning on her with a roar of rage). Didn't you hear me say he was the fool of men, the way from this out he'll know the

orphan's lot with old and young making game of him and they swearing, raging, kicking at him like a mangy cur.

{A great burst of cheering outside, some way off.}

Mahon (jutting his hands to his ears). What in the name of God do they want roaring below?

Widow Quin (with the shade of a smile). They're cheering a young lad, the champion Playboy of the Western World.

(More cheering.)

Mahon (going to window). It'd split my heart to hear them, and I with pulses in my brain-pan for a week gone by. Is it racing they are?

Jimmy (looking from door). It is, then. They are mounting him for the mule race will be run upon the sands. That's the playboy on the winkered mule.

Mahon (pulled). That lad, is it? If you said it was a fool he was, I'd have laid a mighty oath he was the likeness of my wandering son *(uneasily, -putting his hand to his head).* Faith, I'm thinking I'll go walking for to view the race.

Widow Quin (storing htm, sharply). You will not. You'd best take the road to Belmullet, and not be dilly-dallying in this place where there isn't a spot you could sleep.

Philly (coming forward). Don't mind her. Mount there on the bench and you'll have a view of the whole. They're hurrying before the tide will rise, and it'd be near over if you went down the pathway through the crags below.

Mahon (mounts on bench, WIDOW QUIN beside him). That's a right view again the edge of the sea. They're coming now from the point. He's leading. Who is he at all?

Widow Quin. He's the champion of the world, I tell you, and there isn't a hop'orth isn't falling lucky to his hands to-day.

Philly (looking out, interested in the race). Look at that. They're pressing him now.

Jimmy. He'll win it yet.

Philly. Take your time, Jimmy Farrell. It's too soon to say.

Widow Quin (shouting). Watch him taking the gate. There's riding.

Jimmy (cheering). More power to the young lad!

Mahon. He's passing the third.

Jimmy. He'll lick them yet!

Widow Quin. He'd lick them if he was running races with a score itself.

Mahon. Look at the mule he has, kicking the stars.

Widow Quin. There was a lep! (*Catching hold of MAHON in her excitement.*) He's fallen! He's mounted again! Faith, he's passing them all!

Jimmy. Look at him skelping her!

Philly. And the mountain girls hooshing him on!

Jimmy. It's the last turn! The post's cleared for them now!

Mahon. Look at the narrow place. He'll be into the bogs! (*With ayell?*) Good rider! He's through it again!

Jimmy. He neck and neck!

Mahon. Good boy to him! Flames, but he's in! (*Great cheering, in which all join.*)

Mahon (with hesitation.) What's that? They're raising him up. They're coming this way. (*With a roar of rage and astonishment.*) It's Christy! by the stars of God! I'd know his way of spitting and he astride the moon.

(*He jumps down and makes for the door, but WIDOW QUIN catches him and pulls him back.*)

Widow Quin. Stay quiet, will you! That's not your son. (*To JIMMY.*) Stop him, or you'll get a month for the abetting of manslaughter and be fined as well.

Jimmy. I'll hold him.

Mahon (struggling). Let me out! Let me out, the lot of you! till I have my vengeance on his head to-day.

Widow Quin (shaking him, vehemently). That's not your son. That's a man is going to make a marriage with the daughter of this house, a place with fine trade, with a license, and with potteen too.

Mahon (amazed). That man marrying a decent and a moneyed girl! Is it mad you are? Is it in a crazy-house for females that I'm landed now?

Widow Quin. It's mad yourself is with the blow upon your head. That lad is the wonder of the Western World.

Mahon. I seen it's my son.

Widow Quin. You seen that you're mad. (*Cheering outside.*) Do you hear them cheering him in the zigzags of the road? Aren't you after saying that your son's a fool, and how would they be cheering a true idiot born?

Mahon (getting distressed). It's maybe out of reason that that man's himself. (*Cheering again.*) There's none surely will go cheering him. Oh, I'm raving with a madness that would fright the world! (*He sits down with his hand to his head.*) There was one time I seen ten scarlet devils letting on they'd cork my spirit in a gallon can; and one time I seen rats as big as badgers sucking the life blood from the butt of my lug; but I never till this day confused that dribbling idiot with a likely man. I'm destroyed surely.

Widow Quin. And who'd wonder when it's your brain-pan that is gaping now?

Mahon. Then the blight of the sacred drought upon myself and him, for I never went mad to this day, and I not three weeks with the Limerick girls drinking myself silly, and parlatic from the dusk to dawn. (*To WIDOW QUIN, suddenly.*) Is my visage astray?

Widow Quin. It is, then. You're a sniggering maniac, a child could see.

Mahon (getting up more cheerfully). Then I'd best be going to the union beyond, and there'll be a welcome before me, I tell you (*with great pride*), and I a terrible and fearful case, the way that there I was one time, screeching in a straitened waistcoat, with seven doctors writing out my sayings in a printed book. Would you believe that?

Widow Quin. If you're a wonder itself, you'd best be hasty, for them lads caught a maniac one time and pelted the poor creature till he ran out, raving and foaming, and was drowned in the sea.

Mahon (with philosophy). It's true mankind is the devil when your head's astray. Let me out now and I'll slip down the boreen, and not see them so.

Widow Quin (showing him out). That's it. Run to the right, and not a one will see.

(*He runs off.*)

Philly (wisely). You're at some gaming, Widow Quin; but I'll walk after him and give him his dinner and a time to rest, and

I'll sec then if he's raving or as sane as you.

Widow Qum (annoyed). If you go near that lad, let you be wary of your head, I'm saying. Didn't you hear him telling he was crazed at times?

Philly. I heard him telling a power; and I'm thinking we'll have right sport, before night will fall. *(He goes out?)*

Jimmy. Well, Philly's a conceited and foolish man. How could that madman have his senses and his brain-pan slit? I'll go after them and see him turn on Philly now.

(He goes; WIDOW QUIN hides poteen behind counter. Then hubbub outside.)

Voices. There you are! Good jumper! Grand lepper! Darhnt boy! He's the racer! Bear him on, will you!

(CHRISTY comes in, in jockey's dress, with PEGEEN MIKE, SARA, and other girls, and men.)

Pegeen (to crowd). Go on now and don't destroy him and he drenching with sweat. Go along, I'm saying, and have your tug-of-warring till he's dried his skin.

Crowd. Here's his prizes! A bagpipes! A fiddle was played by a poet in the years gone by! A flat and three-thorned blackthorn would lick the scholars out of Dublin town!

Christy (taking prices from the men). Thank you kindly, the lot of you. But you'd say it was little only I did this day if you'd seen me a while since striking my one single blow.

Town Crier (putside, ringing a bell). Take notice, last event of this day! Tug-of-warring on the green below! Come on, the lot of you! Great achievements for all Mayo men!

Pegeen. Go on, and leave him for to rest and dry. Go on, I tell you, for he'll do no more.

(She hustles crowd out; WIDOW QUIN following them.)

Men (going). Come on, then. Good luck for the while!

Pegeen (radiantly, wiping his face with her shawl). Well, you're the lad, and you'll have great times from this out when you could win that wealth of prizes, and you sweating in the heat of noon!

Christy (looking at her with delight). I'll have great times if I win the crowning prize I'm seeking now, and that's your promise that you'll wed me in a fortnight, when our banns is called.

Pegeen (backing away from him). You've right daring to go ask me that, when all knows you'll be starting to some girl in your own townland, when your father's rotten in four months, or five.

Christy (indignantly). Starting from you, is it? *(He follows her.)* I will not, then, and when the airs is warming in four months, or five, it's then yourself and me should be pacing Neifin in the dews of night, the times sweet smells do be rising, and you'd see a little shiny new moon, maybe, sinking on the hills.

Pegeen (looking at him playfully). And it's that kind of a poacher's love you'd make, Christy Mahon, on the sides of Neifin, when the night is down?

Christy. It's little you'll think if my love's a poacher's, or an earl's itself, when you'll feel my two hands stretched around you, and I squeezing kisses on your puckered lips, till I'd feel a kind of pity for the Lord God is all ages sitting lonesome in his golden chair.

Pegeen. That'll be right fun, Christy Mahon, and any girl would walk her heart out before she'd meet a young man was your like for eloquence, or talk, at all.

Christy (encouraged). Let you wait, to hear me talking, till we're astray in Erris, when Good Friday's by, drinking a sup from a well, and making mighty kisses with our wetted mouths, or gaming in a gap or sunshine, with yourself stretched back unto your necklace, in the flowers of the earth.

Pegeen (in a lowered voice, moved by his tone). I'd be nice so, is it?

Christy (with rapture). If the mitred bishops seen you that time, they'd be the like of the holy prophets, I'm thinking, do be straining the bars of Paradise to lay eyes on the Lady Helen of Troy, and she abroad, pacing back and forward, with a nosegay in her golden shawl.

Pegeen (with real tenderness). And what is it I have, Christy Mahon, to make me fitting entertainment for the like of you, that has

such poet's talking, and such bravery of heart?

Christy (in a low voice). Isn't there the light of seven heavens in your heart alone, the way you'll be an angel's lamp to me from this out, and I abroad in the darkness, spear- ing salmon's in the Owen, or the Carrowmore?

Pegeen. If I was your wife, I'd be along with you those nights, Christy Mahon, the way you'd see I was a great hand at coaxing bailiffs or coining funny nicknames for the stars of night.

Christy. You, is it? Taking your death in the hailstones, or in the fogs of dawn.

Pegeen. Yourself and me would shelter easy in a narrow bush (*with a qualm of dread*), but we're only talking, maybe, for this would be a poor, thatched place to hold a fine lad is the like of you.

Christy (jutting his arm round her). If I wasn't a good Christian, it's on my naked knees I'd be saying my prayers and paters to every jackstraw you have roofing your head, and every stony pebble is paving the laneway to your door.

Pegeen (radiantly). If that's the truth, I'll be burning candles from this out to the miracles of God that have brought you from the south to-day, and I, with my gowns bought ready, the way that I can wed you, and not wait at all.

Christy. It's miracles, and that's the truth. Me there toiling a long while, and walking a long' while, not knowing at all I was drawing all times nearer to this holy day.

Pegeen. And myself, a girl, was tempted often to go sailing the seas till I'd marry a Jew-man, with ten kegs of gold, and I not knowing at all there was the like of you drawing nearer, like the stars of God.

Christy. And to think I'm long years hearing women talking that talk, to all bloody fools, and this the first time I've heard the like of your voice talking sweetly for my own delight.

Pegeen. And to think it's me is talking sweetly, Christy Mahon, and I the fright of seven townlands for my biting tongue. Well, the heart's a wonder; and, I'm thinking, there won't be our like in Mayo, for gallant lovers, from this hour, to-day. (*Drunken*

singing is heard outside.) There's my father coming from the wake, and when he's had his sleep we'll tell him, for he's peaceful then. (*They separate.*)

Michael (singing outside).

The jailor and the turnkey

They quickly ran us down,

And brought us back as prisoners

Once more to Cavan town.

(*He comes in supported by SHAWN.*)

There we lay bewailing

All in a prison bound—

(*He sees CHRISTY. Goes and shakes him drunkenly by the hand, while PEGEEN and SHAWN talk on the left.*)

Michael (to CHRISTY). The blessing of God and the holy angels on your head, young fellow. I hear tell you're after winning all in the sports below; and wasn't it a shame I didn't bear you along with me to Kate Cassidy's wake, a fine, stout lad, the like of you, for you'd never see the match of it for flows of drink, the way when we sunk her bones, at noonday in her narrow grave, there were five men, aye, and six men, stretched out retching speechless on the holy stones.

Christy (uneasily watching PEGEEN). Is that the truth?

Michael. It is, then, and aren't you a louty schemer to go burying your poor father unbeknownst when you'd a right to throw him on the crupper of a Kerry mule and drive him westwards, like holy Joseph in the days gone by, the way we could have given him a decent burial, and not have him rotting beyond, and not a Christian drinking a smart drop to the glory of his soul?

Christy (gruffly). It's well enough he's lying, for the likes of him.

Michael (slapping him on the back). Well, aren't you a hardened slayer? It'll be a poor thing for the household man where you go sniffing for a female wife; and (*jointing to SHAWN*) look beyond at that shy and decent Christian I have chosen for my daughter's hand, and I after getting the gilded dispensation this day for to wed them now.

Christy. And you'll be wedding them this day, is it?

Michael (drawing himself up). Aye. Arc you thinking, if I'm drunk itself, I'd leave my

daughter living single with a little frisky rascal is the like of you?

Pegeen (breaking away from SHAWN). Is it the truth the dispensation's come?

Michael (triumphantly). Father Reilly's after reading it in gallow Latin, and "It's come in the nick of time," says he; "so I'll wed them in a hurry, dreading that young gaffer who'd capsize the stars."

Pegeen (fiercely). He's missed his nick of time, for it's that lad, Christy Mahon, that I'm wedding now.

Michael (loudly with horror). You'd be making him a son to me, and he wet and crusted with his father's blood?

Pegeen. Aye. Wouldn't it be a bitter thing for a girl to go marrying the like of Shaneen, and he a middling kind of a scarecrow, with no savagery or fine words in him at all?

Michael (gasping and sinking on a chair). Oh, aren't you a heathen daughter to go shaking the fat of my heart, and I swamped and drowned with the weight of drink? Would you have them turning on me the way that I'd be roaring to the dawn of day with the wind upon my heart? Have you not a word to aid me, Shaneen? Are you not jealous at all?

Shaneen (in great misery). I'd be afeard to be jealous of a man did slay his da.

Pegeen. Well, it'd be a poor thing to go marrying your like. I'm seeing there's a world of peril for an orphan girl, and isn't it a great blessing I didn't wed you, before himself came walking from the west or south?

Shawn. It's a queer story you'd go picking a dirty tramp up from the highways of the world.

Pegeen (playfully). And you think you're a likely beau to go straying along with, the shiny Sundays of the opening year, when it's sooner on a bullock's liver you'd put a poor girl thinking than on the lily or the rose?

Shawn. And have you no mind of my weight of passion, and the holy dispensation, and the drift of heifers I am giving, and the golden ring?

Pegeen. I'm thinking you're too fine for the like of me, Shawn Keogh of Killakeen, and let you go off till you'd find a radiant lady with droves of bullocks on the plains

of Meath, and herself bedizened in the diamond jewelries of Pharaoh's ma. That'd be your match, Shaneen. So God save you now!

(She retreats behind CHRISTY.)

Shawn. Won't you hear me telling you...?

Christy (with ferocity). Take yourself from this, young fellow, or I'll maybe add a murder to my deeds to-day.

Michael (springing up with a shriek). Murder, is it? Is it mad yous are? Would you go making murder in this place, and it piled with poteen for our drink tonight? Go on to the foreshore if it's fighting you want, where the rising tide will wash all traces from the memory of man.

(Pushing SHAWN towards CHRISTY.)

Shawn (shaking himself free, and getting behind MICHAEL). I'll not fight him, Michael James. I'd liefer live a bachelor, simmering in passions to the end of time, than face a lepping savage the like of him has descended from the Lord knows where. Strike him yourself, Michael James, or you'll lose my drift of heifers and my blue bull from Sneem.

Michael. Is it me fight him, when it's father-slaying he's bred to now? *(Pushing SHAWN.)* Go on, you fool, and fight him now.

Shawn (coming forward a little'). Will I strike him with my hand?

-Michael. Take the loy is on your western side.

Shawn. I'd be afeard of the gallows if I struck him with that.

Christy (taking up the loy). Then I'll make you face the gallows or quit off from this.

(SHAWN flies out of the door!)

Christy. Well, fine weather be after him *(going to MICHAEL, coaxingly')*, and I'm thinking you wouldn't wish to have that quaking blackguard in your house at all. Let you give us your blessing and hear her swear her faith to me, for I'm mounted on the springtide of the stars of luck, the way it'll be good for any to have me in the house.

Pegeen (at the other side of MICHAEL). Bless us now, for I swear to God I'll wed him, and I'll not renege.

Michael (standing up in the center, holding on to both of them). It's the will of God, I'm thinking, that all should win an easy or a

cruel end, and it's the will of God that all should rear up lengthy families for the nurture of the earth. What's a single man, I ask you, eating a bit in one house and drinking a sup in another, and he with no place of his own, like an old braying jackass strayed upon the rocks? (*To CHRISTY.*) It's many would be in dread to bring your like into their house for to end them, maybe, with a sudden end; but I'm a decent man of Ireland, and I liefer face the grave untimely and I seeing a score of grandsons growing up little gallant swearers by the name of God, than go peopling my bedside with puny weeds the like of what you'd breed, I'm thinking, out of Shaneen Keogh. (*H' jotsn their hands.*") A daring fellow is the jewel of the world, and a man did split his father's middle with a single clout, should have the bravery of ten, so may God and Mary and Saint Patrick bless you, and increase you from this mortal day.

Christy and Pegeen. Amen, O Lord!

(*Hubbub outside?*)

(*Old MAHON rushes in, followed by all the crowd, and WIDOW QUIN. He makes a rush at CHRISTY, knocks him down, and begins to beat him.*)

Pegeen (*dragging back his arm*). Stop that, wily you! Who are you at all?

Mahon. His father, God forgive me!

Pegeen (*arawing back*). Is it rose from the dead?

Mahon. Do you think I look so easy quenched with the tap of a loy?

(*Beats CHRISTY again.*)

Pegeen (*glaring at CHRISTY*). And it's lies you told, letting on you had him slitted, and you nothing at all.

Christy (*catching MAHON's stick*). He's not my father. He's a raving maniac would scare the world. (*Pointing to WIDOW QUIN.*) Himself knows it is true.

Crowd. You're fooling Pegeen! The Widow Quin seen him this day, and you likely knew! You're a liar!

Christy (*dumbfounded*). It's himself was a liar, lying stretched out with an open head on him, letting on he was dead.

Mahon. Weren't you off racing the hills before I got my breath with the start I had seeing you turn on me at all?

Pegeen. And to think of the coaxing glory we had given him, and he after doing nothing but hitting a soft blow and chasing northward in a sweat of fear. Quit off from this.

Christy (*piteously*). You've seen my doings this day, and let you save me from the old man; for why would you be in such a scorch of haste to spur me to destruction now?

Pegeen. It's there your treachery is spurring me, till I'm hard set to think you're the one I'm after lacing in my heart-strings half an hour gone by. (*To MAHON.*) Take him on from this, for I think bad the world should see me raging for a Munster liar, and the fool of men.

Mahon. Rise up now to retribution, and come on with me.

Crowd (*jeenngly*). There's the playboy! There's the lad thought he'd rule the roost in Mayo. Slate him now, mister.

Christy (*getting up in shy terror*). What is it drives you to torment me here, when I'd asked the thunders of the might of God to blast me if I ever did hurt to any saving only that one single blow?

Mahon (*loudly*). If you didn't, you're a poor good-for-nothing, and isn't it by the like of you the sins of the whole world are committed?

Christy (*raising his hands*). In the name of the Almighty God ...

Mahon. Leave troubling the Lord God. Would you have Him sending down drouhts, and fevers, and the old hen and the cholera morbus?

Christy (*to WIDOW QUIN*). Will you come between us and protect me now?

Widow Quin. I've tried a lot, God help me, and my share is done.

Christy (*looking round in desperation*). And I must go back into my torment, is it, or run off like a vagabond straying through the Unions¹ with the dusts of August making mudstains in the gullet of my throat, or the winds of March blowing on me till I'd take an oath I felt them making whistles of my ribs within?

Sara. Ask Pegeen to aid you. Her like does often change.

¹ The common name for workhouses, which were maintained by the union of several districts.

Christy. I will not, then, for there's torment in the splendor of her like, and she a girl any moon of midnight would take pride to meet, facing southwards on the heaths of Keel. But what did I want crawling forward to scorch my understanding at her flaming brow?

Pegeen (to MAHON, *vehemently, fearing she will break into tears*). Take him on from this or I'll set the young lads to destroy him here.

Mahon (going to him, *shaking his stick*). Come on now if you wouldn't have the company to see you skelped.

Pegeen (half laughing, *through her tears*). That's it, now the world will see him panded, and he an ugly liar was playing off the hero, and the fright of men.

Christy (to MAHON, *very sharply*). Leave me go!

Crowd. That's it. Now Christy. If them two set fighting, it will lick the world.

Mahon (making a grab at CHRISTY). Come here to me.

Christy (more threateningly). Leave me go, I'm saying.

Mahon. I will, maybe, when your legs is limping, and your back is blue.

Crowd. Keep it up, the two of you. I'll back the old one. Now the playboy.

Christy (in low and intense voice). Shut your yelling, for if you're after making a mighty man of me this day by the power of a lie, you're setting me now to think if it's a poor thing to be lonesome, it's worse maybe to go mixing with the fools of earth.

(MAHON makes a movement towards him.)

Christy (almost shouting). Keep off... lest I do show a blow unto the lot of you would set the guardian angels winking in the clouds above.

(He swings round with a sudden rapid movement and picks up a loyJ)

Crowd (half frightened, half amused). He's going mad! Mind yourselves! Run from the idiot!

Christy. If I am an idiot, I'm after hearing my voice this day saying words would raise the topknot on a poet in a merchant's town. I've won your racing, and your lepping, and...

Mahon. Shut your gullet and come on with me.

Christy. I'm going, but I'll stretch you first.

(He runs at old MAHON with the loy, chases him out of the door, followed by crowd and WIDOW QUIN. There is a great noise outside, then a yell, and dead silence for a moment. CHRISTY comes in, half dated, and goes to fire.)

Widow Quin (coming in, hurriedly, and going to him). They're turning again you. Come on, or you'll be hanged, indeed.

Christy. I'm thinking, from this out, Pegeen'll be giving me praises the same as in the hours gone by.

Widow Quin (impatiently). Come by the back door. I'd think bad to have you stifled on the gallows tree.

Christy {indignantly}. I will not, then. What good'd be my lifetime, if I left Pegcen?

Widow Quin. Come on, and you'll be no worse than you were last night; and you with a double murder this time to be telling to the girls.

Christy. I'll not leave Pegeen Mike.

Widow Quin (impatiently). Isn't there the match of her in every parish public, from Binghamstown unto the plain of Meath? Come on, I tell you, and I'll find you finer sweethearts at each waning moon.

Christy. It's Pegeen I'm seeking only, and what'd I care if you brought me a drift of chosen females, standing in their shifts itself, maybe, from this place to the Eastern World?

Sara (runs in, pulling off one of her petticoats). They're going to hang him. (Holding out petticoat and shawl.) Fit these upon him, and let him run off to the east.

Widow Quin. He's raving now; but we'll fit them on him, and I'll take him, in the ferry, to the Achill boat.

Christy (struggling feebly). Leave me go, will you? when I'm thinking of my luck to-day, for she will wed me surely, and I a proven hero in the end of all.

(They try to fasten petticoat round himJ)

Widow Quin. Take his left hand, and we'll pull him now. Come on, young fellow.

Christy {suddenly starting up~}. You'll be

taking me from her? You're jealous, is it, of her wedding me? Go on from this.

(He snatches up a stool, and threatens them with it.)

Widow Quin *(going)*. It's in the mad-house they should put him, not in jail, at all. We'll go by the back door, to call the doctor, and we'll save him so.

(She goes out, with SARA, through inner room. Men crowd in the doorway.)

CHRISTY sits down again by the fire.)

Michael *(in a terrified whisper)*. Is the old lad killed surely?

Philly. I'm after feeling the last gasps quitting his heart.

(They peer in at CHRISTY.)

Michael *(with a rope)*. Look at the way he is. Twist a hangman's knot on it, and slip it over his head, while he's not minding at all.

Philly. Let you take it, Shaneen. You're the soberest of all that's here.

Shawn. Is it me to go near him, and he the wickedest and worst with me? Let you take it, Pegeen Mike.

Pegeen. Come on, so.

(She goes forward with the others, and they drop the double hitch over his head.)

Christy. What ails you?

Shawn *(triumphantly, as they pull the rope tight on his arms)*. Come on to the peelers, till they stretch you now.

Christy. Me!

Michael. If we took pity on you, the Lord God would, maybe, bring us ruin from the law to-day, so you'd best come easy, for hanging is an easy and a speedy end.

Christy. I'll not stir. *(To PEGEEN.)* And what is it you'll say to me, and I after doing it this time in the face of all?

Pegeen. I'll say, a strange man is a marvel, with his mighty talk; but what's a squabble in your back yard, and the blow of a loy, have taught me that there's a great gap between a gallous story and a dirty deed. *(To Men.)* Take him on from this, or the lot of us will be likely put on trial for his deed to-day.

Christy *(with horror in his voice)*. And it's yourself will send me off, to have a horny-fingered hangman hitching his bloody slip-knots at the butt of my ear.

Men *(pulling rope)*. Come on, will you?

(He is pulled down on the floor.)

Christy *(twisting his legs round the table)*. Cut the rope, Pegeen, and I'll quit the lot of you, and live from this out, like the madmen of Keel, eating muck and green weeds, on the faces of the cliffs.

Pegeen. And leave us to hang, is it, for a saucy liar, the like of you? *(To Men.)* Take him on, out from this.

Shawn. Pull a twist on his neck, and squeeze him so.

Philly. Twist yourself. Sure he cannot hurt you, if you keep your distance from his teeth alone.

Shawn. I'm afraid of him. *(To PEGEEN.)* Lift a lighted sod, will you, and scorch his leg.

Pegeen *(blowing the fire, with a bellows)*. Leave go now, young fellow, or I'll scorch your shins.

Christy. You're blowing for to torture me. *(His voice rising and growing stronger.)* That's your kind, is it? Then let the lot of you be wary, for, if I've to face the gallows, I'll have a gay march down, I tell you, and shed the blood of some of you before I die.

Shawn *(in terror)*. Keep a good hold, Philly, Be wary, for the love of God. For I'm thinking he would liefest wreak his pains on me.

Christy *(almost gaily)*. If I do lay my hands on you, it's the way you'll be at the fall of night, hanging as a scarecrow for the fowls of hell. Ah, you'll have a gallous jaunt I'm saying, coaching out through Limbo with my father's ghost.

Shawn *(to PEGEEN)*. Make haste, will you? Oh, isn't he a holy terror, and isn't it true for Father Reilly, that all drink's a curse that has the lot of you so shaky and uncertain now?

Christy. If I can wring a neck among you, I'll have a royal judgment looking on the trembling jury in the courts of law. And won't there be crying out in Mayo the day I'm stretched upon the rope with ladies in their silks and satins sniveling in their lacy kerchiefs, and they rhyming songs and ballads on the terror of my fate?

(He squirms round on the floor and bites SHAWN'S leg.)

Shawn *(shrieking)*. My leg's bit on me.

He's the like of a mad dog, I'm thinking, the way that I will surely die.

Christy (delighted with himself). You will, then, the way you can shake out hell's flags of welcome for my coming in two weeks or three, for I'm thinking Satan hasn't many have killed their da in Kerry, and in Mayo too.

(Old MAHON comes in behind on all fours and looks on unnoticed.)

Men (to PEGEEN). Bring the sod, will you?

Pegeen (coming over). God help him so.

(Burns his leg.)

Christy (kicking and screaming). Oh, glory be to God!

(tie kicks loose from the table, and they all drag him towards the door.)

Jimmy (seeing old MAHON). Will you look what's come in?

(They all drop CHRISTY and run, left.)

Christy (scrambling on his knees face to face with old MAHON). Are you commg to be killed a third time, or what ails you now?

Mahon. For what is it they have you tied?

Christy. They're taking me to the peelers to have me hanged for slaying you.

Michael (apologetically). It is the will of God that all should guard their little cabins from the treachery of law, and what would my daughter be doing if I was ruined or was hanged itself?

Mahon (grimly, loosening CHRISTY). It's little I care if you put a bag on her back, and went picking cockles till the hour of death; but my son and myself will be going our own

way, and we'll have great times from this out telling stories of the villainy of Mayo, and the fools is here. *(To CHRISTY, who is freed.)* Come on now.

Christy. Go with you, is it? I will, then, like a gallant captain with his heathen slave. Go on now and I'll see you from this day stewing my oatmeal and washing my spuds, for I'm master of all fights from now. *(Pushing MAHON.)* Go on, I'm saying.

Mahon. Is it me?

Christy. Not a word out of you. Go on from this.

Mahon (walking out and looking back at CHRISTY over his shoulder). Glory be to God! *(With a broad smile.)* I am crazy again!

(Goes.)

Christy. Ten thousand blessings upon all that's here, for you've turned me a likely gaffer in the end of all, the way I'll go romancing through a romping lifetime from this hour to the dawning of the judgment day.

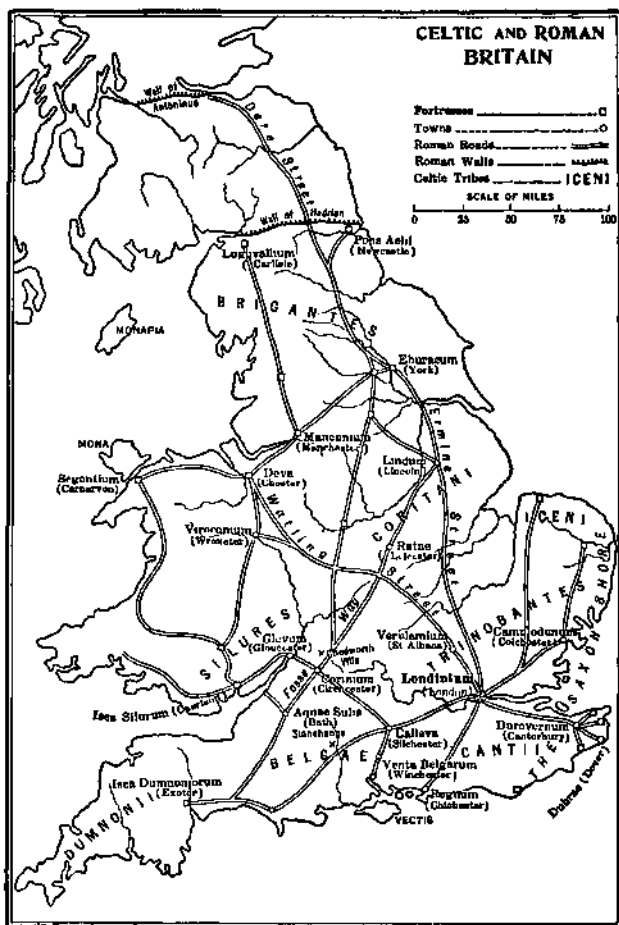
(He goes out.)

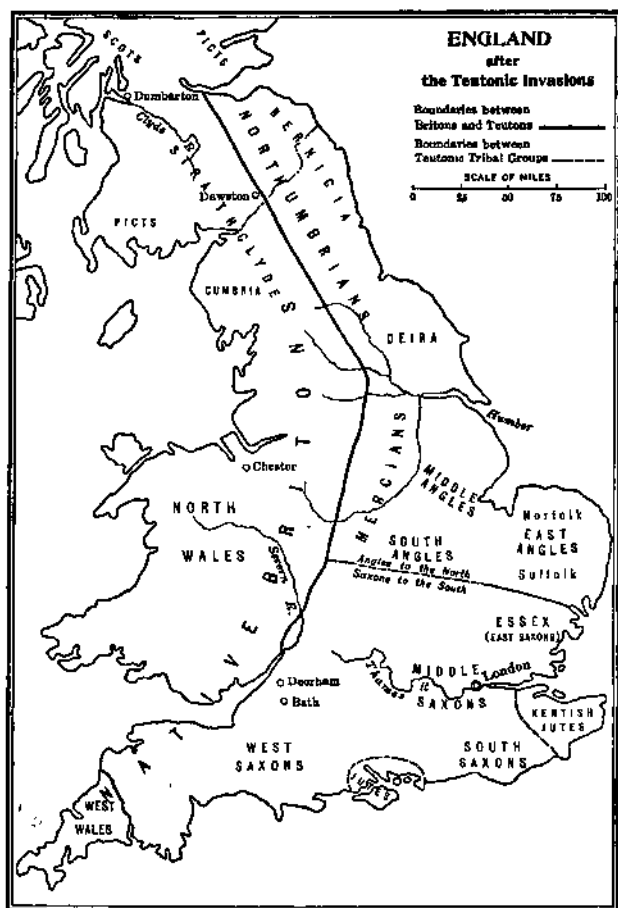
Michael. By the will of God, we'll have peace now for our drinks. Will you draw the porter, Pegeen?

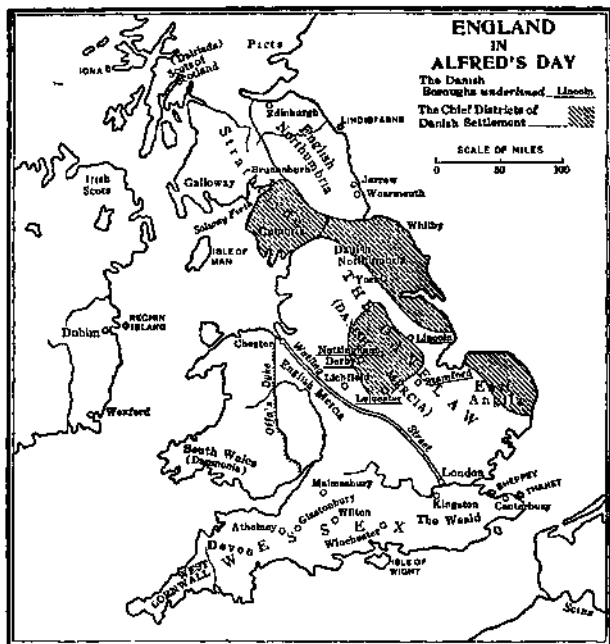
Shawn (going up to her). It's a miracle Father Reilly can wed us in the end of all, and we'll have none to trouble us when his vicious bite is healed.

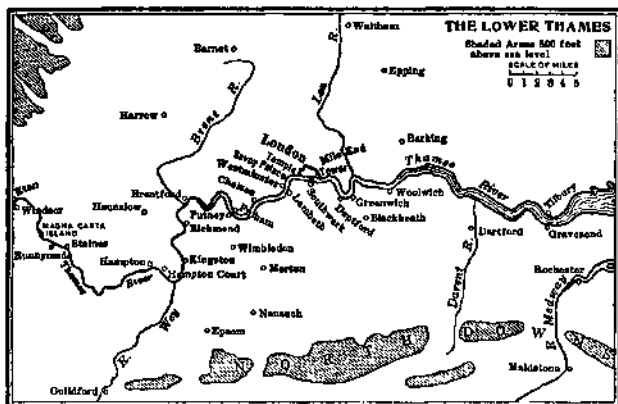
Pegeen (hitting him a box on the ear). Quit my sight. *(Putting her shawl over her head and breaking out into wild lamentations.)* Oh, my grief, I've lost him surely. I've lost the only Playboy of the Western World.

APPENDIX









Index to the Map

These places are named on the map printed as the frontispiece. The letters (e.g., Ca) correspond with those in the margin of the map, and indicate the blocks formed by meridians and parallels within which the places are included.

Abbotsford, Ca.	Cockermouth, Ca.	Harwich, EC.	Naseby, Db.	South Downs, DC.
Acton River, Ba.	Cooper's Hill, DC.	Hastings, EC.	Naze, The, EC.	Souhampton, DC.
Aldborough, Eb.	Cornwall, Be.	Hawarden, Ch.	Nen River, Db.	Safford, Da.
Alderney, Ec.	Coventry, Db.	Hawkeshead, Ca.	Nether Stowey, Cc.	Stamford Bridge, Db.
Alington, Ec.	Coxwold, Da.	Hawthorn, Db.	Newark, Db.	Start Point, Cc.
Alloway Kirk, Ba.	Craigentpock, Ca.	Hawthornden, Ca.	Newcastle, Da.	Stillington, Da.
Amesbury, DC.	Cumberlan, Ca.	Helvellyn Mount, Ca.	New Forest, DC.	Stoke Newington, EC.
Anglesey, Eb.	Cumbrian Mts., Ca.	Hereford, Ch.	New Radnor, Ch.	Stoke Poles, DC.
Annan, Ca.		Hertford, DC.	Newstead Abbey, Db.	Stonehenge, DC.
Appleby, Ca.	Dartmoor, Cc.	Hipswell, Da.	Newton, Cc.	Stour River, Cc.
Afran, Island of, Ba.	Dartmouth, Cc.	Hitchin, DC.	Nith River, Ca.	Strait of Dover, EC.
Auchinleck, Ba.	Dean, Forest of, Cc.	Holyhead, Eb.	Norfolk, Eb.	Stratford on Avon, Db.
Avon River, Ch.	Dean Prior, Cc.	Jorham, DC.	Northallerton, Da.	Strawberry Hill, DC.
Ayr, Ba.	Dee River, Ch.	Horton, DC.	Northampton, Db.	Suffolk, Eb.
	Denbigh, Ch.	Hull, Db.	North Channel, Ba.	Surry, DC.
Baldeswell, Eb.	Dentford, EC.	Humber River, Db.	North Downs, DC.	Sussex, Cc-Ec.
Banbury, Db.	Derby, Db.	Huntingdon, Db.	Northumberland, Ca-Da.	Sutton Gold Field, Db.
Bangor, Bb.	Derwent River, Db.	Hursley, DC.	North York Moors, Da.	Sutton-in-the-Forest, Da.
Bardsey, Bb.	Derwent Water, Ca.		Nottingham, Db.	Swale River, Da.
Barnstable, Be.	Devon, Be-Cc.	Ilslington, Cc.	Nottingham, Db.	Swansea, Cc.
Barnstable Bay, Be.	Dolgelley, Ch.	Ipswich, Eb.	Nuneaton, Db.	Swineshead Abbey, Db.
Bath, Cc.	Dor River, Db.	Irish Sea, Bb.		
Battle Abbey, EC.	Doon River, Ba.	Island of Bute, Aa.		
Beachy Head, EC.	Dorchester, Cc.	Islay, Aa.	Olney, Db.	Taff River, Cc.
Beaconsfield, DC.	Dorset, Cc.	Isle of Man, Ba.	Osse River (Norfolk), Eb.	Tamar River, Be.
Bedford, Db.	Dover, EC.	Isle of Wight, DC.	Osse R. (Yorkshire), Db.	Taunton, Cc.
Bemerton, DC.	Dryburgh Abbey, Ca.	Jarrow, Da.	Otterby, Ca.	Tavistock, Be.
Berkshire, Cc.	Dublin, Ab.	Jersey, Cd.	Oxford, DC.	Taw River, Bc-Cc.
Berwick-upon-Tweed, Da.	Dulwich, DC.	Jura, Aa-Ba.		Tees River, Da.
Biderford, Be.	Dumfries, Cc.		Paston, Eb.	Teifi River, Bb.
Bilton, Db.	Dunwich, Eb.	Kemlworth, Db.	Peak, The, Db.	Teign River, Cc.
Binfield, DC.	Durham, Da.	Keswick, Ca.	Pembroke, Be.	Tewkesbury, Cc.
Birkenhead, Ch.		Kilmarnock, Ba.	Pennine Range, Ca.	Thames River, EC.
Birmingham, Db.	Ecclefechan, Ca.	Kings Lynn, Eb.	Penzance, Be.	Tintagel, Be.
Blyth, Da.	Eddystone Light House, Be.	Kintyre, Ch.	Pemburgh, EC.	Tintern Abbey, Cc.
Boston, Db.	Edinburgh, Ca.	Kirkby Wiske, Da.	Penzance, Be.	Tone River, Cc.
Bosworth Field, Db.	Ednam, Ca.	Kirkcaldy, Ca.	Peterborough, Db.	Towry River, Ch.
Boulogne, EC.	Egdon Heath, Cc.	Kirkcudbright, Ba.	Petersfield, DC.	Trent River, Ch.
Bournemouth, DC.	Elstow, Db.	Knutsford, Ch.	Pewsey, EC.	Tunbridge Wells, EC.
Bradford, Db.	Elvington, Db.		Plymouth, Cc.	Tweed River, Ca.
Brach-y-Pwll, Bb.	Elly, Eb.	Lammermoor Hills, Ca.	Portland Bill, Cc.	Twickenham, Da.
Brantwood, Ca.	Emley, Ch.	Lancashire, Ch.	Portsmouth, DC.	Tyne River, Ca.
Brecknock, Chb.	Essex, EC.	Lancaster, Ca.	Prestonpans, Ca.	Tynemouth, Da.
Brecon, Cc.	Eton, DC.	Land's End, Be.		
Bridgewater, Cc.	Exeter, Cc.	Leeds, Db.	Quantock Hills, Cc.	
Bristol, DC.	Exmoor, Bc-Cc.	Leicester, Db.	Radnor, Ch.	Reading, Ch.
Bristol Channel, Cc.		Lichfield, Db.	Richmond, DC.	Roche, Ch.
Brue River, Cc.	Falmouth, Be.	Liggett or Perran Bay, Be.	Rochester, EC.	Rothley Temple, Db.
Brunanburh, Ca.	Fame Islands, Da.	Lincoln, Db.	Rugby, Db.	Rufimmed, DC.
Brumpe, Db.	Farringford, Ch.	Lindisfarne, Da.	Rutland, Db.	Rydal Mount, Ca.
Buckingham, DC.	Firth of Clyde, Ba.	Liverpool, Ch.		
Budleigh, Ch.	Flamborough Head, Da.	Lizard Point, Bd.		
Bury St. Edmunds, Eb.	Flint, Ch.	Llanthony, Cc.		
Bute, Ba.	Flodden Field, Da.	London, DC.		
	Formby Point, Ch.	Louth, Db.	Saffron Walden, EC.	St. Albans, DC.
Cader Idris, Ch.		Lowestoft, Eb.	St. Asaph, Ch.	St. David's Head, Be.
Caerleon, Cc.	Gadshill, EC.	Ludlow, Ch.	St. George's Channel, Bb.	Salisbury, DC.
Caermarthen, Be.	Glamorgan, Cc.	Lundy Island, Be.	Sark, Ch.	Scarborough, Da.
Caernarvon, Bb.	Glasgow, Ba.	Lutterworth, Db.	Selborne, DC.	Selsey Bill, DC.
Cam River, Bb.	Glasstonbury, Cc.		Sherwood Forest, Db.	Severn, The, Cc.
Cambridge, Eb.	Gloucester, Cc.	Maidstone, EC.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Sheffield, Db.
Camelford, Be.	Grasmere, Ca.	Maldon, EC.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Shrewsbury, DC.
Canterbury, EC.	Great Grimby, Db.	Malvern Hills, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Shropshire, Ch.
Cardiff, Ch.	Great Marlow, DC.	Man, Isle of, Ba.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Sittingbourne, EC.
Cardigan, Bb.	Great Yarmouth, Eb.	Manchester, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Skiddaw, Mount, Ca.
Cardigan Bay, Bb.	Greenock, Ba.	Marston Moor, Db.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Skidell, Ba.
Cansbrooke, DC.	Greenwich, DC.	Melrose Abbey, Ca.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Snoddon, mountain, Bb.
Carlisle, Ca.	Gretna, Cc.	Merioneth, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Solent, The, DC.
Castlet'n, I. of Man, Ba.	Grimsey, Cd.	Mersey River, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Solway Firth, Ca.
Chalfont St. Giles, DC.	Guildford, DC.	Middlesex, DC.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Somersby, EC.
Channel Islands, Cd.	Halifax, Db.	Milford Haven, Be.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	Somerset, Cc.
Chelmsford, EC.	Hampole, Db.	Monmouth, Cc.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Chertsey, DC.	Hampshire, DC.	Montgomery, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Chester, Ch.	Hartland Point, Be.	Morecambe Bay, Ch.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Cheviot Hills, Ca.	Hartlepool, Da.	Mounds Bay, Be.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Chichester, DC.		Mull of Galloway, Ba.	Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Cleobury Mortimer, Ch.			Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Clevedon, Cc.			Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Clovelly, Bb.			Sharnham Park, Cc.	
Clyde River, Ba.			Sharnham Park, Cc.	

A Guide to Versification

IT is a common observation of teachers of poetry that students are frequently oblivious of the form of the verse which they are reading. Obviously the poet chooses a special meter, line, and stanza-form because of its applicability to his subject matter; or the material that he is using gives rise to a special form. It is a necessary part of the study of poetry to note at the outset the number of feet in the line, the kinds of feet determined by the number of syllables and the distribution of stresses, and the arrangement of lines in the unit or stanza. To avoid tedious repetition in connection with the many poems included in this volume, a few of the more common forms of metrical usage are here defined.

Stress

The rhythmical basis of English versification is the recurrence at regular time-intervals of stressed syllables, i.e., of syllables spoken with more energy of utterance than the syllables immediately preceding and following. These regularly recurring stresses, which are analogous to musical beats, determine the rhythmical pattern of the line. Often the poet will announce his fixed pattern in the opening line of a poem. Witness the beginning of *Paradise Lost*. Changes or variations are introduced in the regular line to produce emotional or musical effects. To avoid the monotony of a too obvious and insistent pattern, poets will often, particularly at the beginning of a line, break the regularity of recurring stresses by exchanging the positions of stressed and unstressed syllables, or by increasing or decreasing the number of syllables in a foot. More important still, they will vary the heaviness of their stresses. Only rarely will all of the stresses in a line be equally emphatic. A stress which coincides with the primary accent of an important word will be a heavy one; a stress which falls on such words as *of*, *and*, or *is* will be so light as to be almost imperceptible. In the line:

Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,

the stress on the second syllable of *amid* is lighter than those on *circle* and *gilded*, the stress on the word *on* is a very light one.

To read poetry well one must keep the fundamental pattern in mind, but one must be equally careful not to exaggerate it. Such

exaggeration will tend to make the verse mere sing-song. Without forgetting the pattern, one must in his reading give also full importance to the logical value of the words. The meaning of a line is as important as its music.

The Foot

The smallest unit of versification is the foot, consisting of two or three or four syllables, distinguished by the placing of the stress (or accent). The most common foot in English verse is the *iambic*, consisting of two syllables in which the stress falls upon the second, e.g.,

Of Mán's | first dí's | obéd | ience, and | the frúit.
When the stress falls on the first syllable the foot is *trochaic*, e.g.,

Cómrades | leáve me | hére a | líttle | wíhile as | yét
'tis | éarly | morn.

When the foot consists of three syllables the stress may fall upon the first syllable, in which case the foot is called *dactylic*, e.g.,

Half a league, | half a league, | half a league j
onward.

When the accent falls upon the last syllable the foot is an *anapest*, e.g.,

See the char | iot at hand | here of love.

Where a foot consists of two syllables both of which are equally stressed it is called a *spondee*, e.g.,

Large and j smoky | red the | sun's cold | disc drops.

The student will realize the value of these different metrical units for various types of subject matter. The iambic is adapted to sustained narrative and to conversational verse. The trochaic foot gives an immediate release of energy suitable to the emotion of a lyric. The dactyl may have the same effect, as in the example cited; but it is also accordant with a sustained and elevated type of poetry, such as we find in the classical epic. The anapest yields a light, tripping measure, to vary the steady flow of iambic verse, as in Coleridge's lines which mingle the iambic, trochaic and anapestic:

The one I red leaf, I the last | of its clan,
That danc'es as oft, en as danc'd, it can —
Swinging | so light | and swing | ing so high
Where the top | most twig | looks up | at the sky.

The Line

Lines are named according to the number of feet which each contains — the *dimeter* of two feet, the *trimeter* of three, the *tetrameter* of four, the *pentameter* of five, the *hexameter* of six, etc. Of these the tetrameter is used for rapid narrative as in Scott's and Byron's longer poems. The pentameter is the most common line in English poetry, owing to its use in the rhymed couplet and in blank verse. The dactylic hexameter was the established form of classical epic poetry. It has been a challenge to English poets from the Renaissance to Clough, but it is certainly not adapted to English usage.

Rhyme

Rhyme is the identity in sound between words, determined by the vowel and final consonant; e.g., forever, never. It is commonly used at the end of the line to mark the metrical unit, but it may occur within the line. A partial similarity of vowel sounds on which the accent falls, with usually a difference in final consonant, constitutes an imperfect rhyme, or *assonance*; e.g., room, done. The agreement of sound at the beginning of words is called *alliteration*; kindest of critics; all alone. It is the principle upon which Old

English verse was built. The unit of two lines connected by rhyme is called a *couplet*. The adaptability of couplet verse for sustained narrative was discovered by Chaucer. Its aptitude for satire was one reason for its popularity in the eighteenth century, when it became the standard form for English poetry. As a strictly defined unit, in which the sentence properly came to an end with the second line, it was known as the heroic couplet, e.g.,
Here, thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes tea.

The romantic poets of the nineteenth century, however, permitted the sense to carry over from one couplet to the next, as in Keats's *Endymion*:

A thing of beauty is a joy forever.
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep, etc.

Blank verse, introduced into English poetry by the Earl of Surrey, seems originally to have been thought of as the couplet without rhyme, but poets speedily took advantage of the freedom it offered to compose in large units corresponding to paragraphs in prose. Pentameter blank verse became the characteristic form of the poetic drama and of such epic narratives as Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. In blank verse the placing of the pause within the line, known as the *caesura*, became an important principle of variety, as in the opening of the second book of *Paradise Lost*:

High on a throne of royal state | which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus | and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East | with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl | and gold,
Satan exalted sat | by merit raised
To that bad eminence.

The caesura is equally important as a principle of variety in the *pentameter* of the heroic couplet.

The Stanza

A device employed by the masters of the heroic couplet was the occasional admission of a unit of three lines, or *triplet*, usually at a division point in the subject matter. In general the unit of three lines is little used in

English poetry, but one distinguished form should be noted, the *terza rima* employed by Dante in his *Divine Comedy*, in which the rhyme scheme, a b a, is carried forward from stanza to stanza, b c b, c d c, etc. A magnificent example is furnished by Shelley, in his *Ode to the West Wind*.

A stanza of four lines is called a quatrain. It is usually composed of lines of four or of five feet, rhyming alternately. The ballad is usually in a quatrain of alternating fours and threes. This is the "common measure" of many familiar hymns. Tennyson and Rossetti both wrote the tetrameter quatrain with the interior lines rhyming, a b b a, the famous stanza of *In Memoriam*. The pentameter stanza, a b a b, called the heroic quatrain, was used by Gray in the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*. A bold variation of the quatrain was practiced by Edward Fitzgerald in his translation of Omar Khayyam, in which the third line falls outside of the rhyme-scheme, giving an effect of great enlargement and freedom.

It is impossible in brief space to discuss and exemplify the many stanza-forms employed by English poets. The sonnet, however, should be recognized in its two usual forms, the Italian, or Petrarchan, introduced by Wyatt, which consists of two members, one of eight lines, the octave, rhyming a b b a a b b a, and one of six, the sestet, with rhymes C d e variously combined; and the English or Shakespearean sonnet, which consists of three quatrains concluded by a couplet, a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, gg. The former was practiced by Milton and Wordsworth.

A stanza used for narrative by Chaucer and William Morris is known as the rime royal, so called because it was used by the royal poet, King James I of Scotland. It consists of seven pentameter lines rhyming a b a b b c c. An enlargement of this form is the well-known Spenserian stanza, of nine lines, rhyming a b a b b c b c c, the last line, called an alexandrine, being of six feet. The revival of this form in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century by Thomson and others marked the

revolt against the domination of the heroic couplet. Its continued use by Shelley and Keats is an evidence of their romantic taste. Another form which should be noted is the *ottava rima*, or stanza of eight lines rhyming a b a b a b c c. This was a favorite of the Italian epic poets of the Renaissance, Ariosto and Tasso, and was chosen by Byron for *Don Juan*, where the sharp turn of the couplet at the close of the stanza lends itself happily to his satiric intention.

Appreciation

If the student will keep in mind these more common forms of English verse, he will have a basis for appreciating the technical devices which contribute to the charm of poetry. No one ever enjoyed a sonnet the less for knowing it to be a sonnet and recognizing the architectural merit of its structure in either its Italian or English type.

The pleasure-giving function of poetry may be said to reside first in the choice of words, with their suggestion of overtones of meaning and feeling, as in Shakespeare's evocation of the sorrow of age in

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

To this is added the exhilaration of movement determined by the metre, as in Swinburne's

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain.

And finally there is the sound-content of the phrase, the association between sound and meaning which is in general called tone-color, or, more specifically, onomatopoeia. Tennyson's *Lotos Eaters* furnishes an example of the latter.

These suggestions with reference to the technique and mechanics of verse are offered in the hope that they will stimulate the student to become aware of its elements and resources. But analysis will carry him only a little way into the mystery of the charm of poetry, a charm which grows more powerful with much reading.

A Guide to the Study of Types of Literature

The general arrangement of this anthology is intended to present the development of English literature in historical sequence. For a simultaneous study of forms and types of literature the following classification is offered.

The Epic

The epic is a long narrative poem written in an elevated style, based on a racial or national theme, and dealing with supernatural and heroic characters. Folk epics arose spontaneously among primitive peoples; examples are *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Imitations of these in more sophisticated times are called literary epics, the classical example of which is Virgil's *SEneid*. The epic is also imitated for humorous effect in the mock-heroic poem.

MOCK EPICS

Early Nineteenth Century

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON
Don Juan, 155

The Ballad

The ballad is a short story in song. It employs a simple meter, usually stanzas of four lines, alternately of four and three feet, sometimes with a refrain. Like the folk epic, the ballad arose spontaneously in primitive times. It was preserved by memory, and only later were the original ballads written down. Most of the famous old ballads in English date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The revival of interest in the past during the eighteenth century led to the recovery and preservation of ballads — Percy's *Reliques of Old English Poetry* being the most famous collection — and to their imitation, as a form of literature.

Early Nineteenth Century

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 69
SIR WALTER SCOTT
Jock of Hazeldean, 113
JOHN KEATS
La Belle Dame sans Merci, 223
ROBERT SOUTHEY
The Inchcape Rock, 342
The Legend of Bishop Hatto, 343
THOMAS CAMPBELL
Lord Ullin's Daughter, 345

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON
The Revenge, 548
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI
Sister Helen, 772
Troy Town, 776
OSCAR WILDE
The Ballad of Reading Gaol, 889
RUDYARD KIPLING
A Ballad of East and West, 954

The Romance

The romance is a type of narrative in verse or prose which flourished especially in the Middle Ages. It dealt with aristocratic themes of war, adventure, and love, in a spirit of idealism. It was revived in modern times, particularly in connection with the romantic movement of the nineteenth century. Browning developed a type of narrative poem which he called the dramatic romance, examples of which have been included under this heading.

Early Nineteenth Century

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
Christabel, 78
JOHN KEATS
The Eve of St. Agnes, 212
Lamia, 225

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON
The Lady of Shalott, 500
Morte D'Arthur, 513
ROBERT BROWNING
My Last Duchess, 565
The Last Ride Together, 580
A Grammarian's Funeral, 582
The Statue and the Bust, 583
"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," 587
CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI
Goblin Market, 792
WILLIAM MORRIS
The Defence of Guenevere, 800
The Haystack in the Floods, 805

Other Narrative Poems

Early Nineteenth Century

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lucy Gray, 13
Michael, 14
Laodamia, 49

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

The Prisoner of Chillon, 140
Mazeppa, 145

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

A Fiesolan Idyl, 237

LEIGH HUNT

Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel, 348

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Voyage, 541
Rizpah, 550

The Lyric

The lyric is a short poem expressive of the emotion of the author or of some character whom he represents. It was originally intended to be sung, but often in modern times it merely suggests a connection with music. The lyric is various in its forms and uses.

THE SONNET

Of the established forms of lyric the sonnet is most important. Originating in Southern France in the twelfth century, it was introduced into Italy, where it was practiced by Dante, Petrarch, and other poets. It was brought to England in the early sixteenth century by Sir Thomas Wyatt. It enjoyed great vogue in the later years of the century, as an expression of courtly love. Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Daniel, Drayton, and many others wrote series or sequences of sonnets. The sonnet was also turned to reflective and religious, and later to political themes.

The form of the sonnet is described in the *Guide to Versification* above. Sonnets are often written in a series or sequence. The sonnet sequence lends itself to narrative as in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* and in Meredith's *Modern Love*, where the "sonnet" is expanded to sixteen lines.

Early Nineteenth Century

Wm LIAM WORDSWORTH

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, 35
Composed by the Seaside near Calais, 35
It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free, 35
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic, 36
To Toussaint L'Ouverture, 36
Near Dover, September, 1802, 36
Written in London, 1802, 36

London, 1802, 37

The World is Too Much with Us, 47

Mutability, 53

Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, 53

The Trosachs, 53

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Sonnet on Chillon, 140

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ozymandias, 171

JOHN KEATS

Sonnet, 208

To My Brothers, 208

Two Sonnets on Fame, 224

To Sleep, 224

Sonnet: To a Young Lady Who Sent Me a Laurel Crown, 224

Sonnet, 234

Later Nineteenth Century

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Quiet Work, 660

Shakespeare, 660

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Sonnets from the Portuguese, 757

To George Sand, 759

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The House of Life:

The Sonnet, 777

Love-Sight, 778

Silent Noon, 778

The Choice, 778

Vain Virtues, 779

Lost Days, 779

A Superscription, 779

The One Hope, 779

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot, 836

Hope and Fear, 836

GEORGE MEREDITH

Modern Love, 932

Lucifer in Starlight, 938

A Certain People, 938

THOMAS HARDY

Revulsion, 949

Embarcation, 950

THE ODE

The ode was a form of lyric poetry of recognized structure among the Greeks. Pindar's odes have been imitated by English poets, notably Cowley and Gray, but in general the term is applied by poets freely to sustained lyric utterances, based on elevated themes and often intended for some dignified celebration. The ode form usually connotes irregular structure, permitting change of rhythm, meter, and rhyme scheme according to the mood.

Early Nineteenth Century

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Ode to Duty, 41

Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood, 44

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Dejection: An Ode, 86

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ode to the West Wind, 176

JOHN KEATS

Ode, 218

Ode on Indolence, 219

Ode on a Grecian Urn, 220

Ode to a Nightingale, 221

Ode on Melancholy, 222

To Autumn, 222

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington (Elegy), 534

FRANCIS THOMPSON

The Hound of Heaven, 927

THE ELEGY

The eclogue and elegy were originally of late Greek origin. The poet Theocritus in Alexandria, remembering the songs of goatherds which he had heard in his native Sicily, imitated them in more cultivated form. Some of these were love songs, others, songs sung in competition among shepherds for prizes, others were dirges on the death of a dead shepherd. This pastoral verse was imitated by Virgil, and later by the poets of the Renaissance. In particular, the elegy became a recognized medium for the expression of grief, and many of the great mourning poems in English have taken this form.

Early Nineteenth Century

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Adonais, 183

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Early Nineteenth Century

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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SIR WALTER SCOTT

Soldier, Rest! Thy Warfare O'er: From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto I, inCoronach: From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto III, 112Proud Maisie: From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 114

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Rose Aylmer, 237

THOMAS HOOD

The Death Bed, 354

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON

Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead: From *The Princess*, 525

In Memoriam A. H. H., 527

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Requiescat, 671

Thyrsis, 675

Rugby Chapel, 680

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

Margaritae Sorori, 865

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

To an Athlete Dying Young, 960

THE DRAMATIC LYRIC

The dramatic lyric is a poem defined by Brown¹ as lyric in expression, but dramatic in principle, the thought or feeling attributed to some person other than the author.

Early Nineteenth Century

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Prometheus Unbound: End of the last act, 178

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON

(Enone, 502

Ulysses, 517

Locksley Hall, 518

Sir Galahad, 523

Northern Farmer, Old Style, 543

Northern Farmer, New Style, 545

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ROBERT BROWNING

Cavalier Tunes:

Marching Along, 563

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Boot and Saddle, 564

"How They Brought the Good News," 564

Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, 566

The Lost Leader, 567

Meeting at Night, 568

Parting at Morning, 568

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad, 568

Love Among the Ruins, 573

Up at a Villa -- Down in the City, 574

A Toccata of Galuppi's, 576

One Way of Love, 578

Respectability, 578

Memorabilia, 580

MATTHEW ARNOLD

The Forsaken Merman, 660

WILLIAM MORRIS

The Eve of Crecy, 805

THOMAS HARDY

Her Dilemma, 949

At Casterbridge Fair:

After the Club-Dance, 952

The Inquiry, 953

A Wife Waits, 953

RUDYARD KIPLING

Fuzzy-Wuzzy, 956

Gunga Din, 957

MISCELLANEOUS LYRICS

Many lyrics which cannot be indexed under the foregoing divisions may be classified according to subject matter under: Religion, Love, Friendship, Drinking Songs, Nature, Patriotism and War, Childhood, Reflection.

RELIGION

Early Nineteenth Century

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

The Destruction of Sennacherib, 119

Later Nineteenth Century

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

The Pillar of the Cloud, 449

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ALFRED TENNYSON

Wages, 547

The Higher Pantheism, 547

Crossing the Bar, 561

ROBERT BROWNING

The Guardian-Angel, 579

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Qui Laborat, Oat, 788

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Little Jesus, 930

The Kingdom of God, 930

RUDYARD KIPLING

Recessional, 958

LOVE

Early Nineteenth Century

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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When We Two Parted, 118

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So We'll Go No More A Roving, 145

Stanzas, 166

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

The Indian Serenade, 178

To—, 195

THOMAS MOORE

Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms, 346

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Love and Age, 349

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ALFRED TENNYSON

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ROBERT BROWNING

A Woman's Last Word, 572

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My Star, 577

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The Blessed Damozel, 771

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JAMES THOMSON

Mater Tenebrarum, 819

From *Sunday at Hampstead*, 820

ALGERNON CHARLESSWINBURNE

A Match, 827

FRANCIS THOMPSON

The Poppy, 926

GEORGE MEREDITH

Love in the Valley, 933

THOMAS HARDY

At Casterbridge Fair:

The Ballad-Singer, 952

The Market-Girl, 953

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

Oh, When I was in Love with You, 960

White in the Moon the Long Road Lies, 960

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

When You are Old, 968

The Falling of the Leaves, 969

FRIENDSHIP

Early Nineteenth Century

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

She Walks in Beauty, 119

To Thomas Moore, 145

JOHN KEATS

To Leigh Hunt, Esq., 211

CHARLES LAMB

The Old Familiar Faces, 255

THOMAS MOORE

The Light of Other Days, 347

Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

When I Came Last to Ludlow, 961

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Early Nineteenth Century

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

T J Thomas Moore, 145

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ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

"Terence, this is stupid stuff," 961

JOHN MASEFIELD

London Town, 966

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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The Simplan Pass, 14

To the Cuckoo, 33

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The Solitary Reaper, 39

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, 40

To a Skylark, 42

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Kubla Khan, or A Vision in a Dream, 68

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Brignall Banks: From *Rokeby*, 112

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

The Cloud, 179

To a Skylark, 180

To Night, 182

A Dirge, 195

JAMES HOGG

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Later Nineteenth Century

ALFRED TENNYSON

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The Splendor Falls on Castle Walls: From *The Princess*, 525

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal: From *The Princess*, 526

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MATTHEW ARNOLD

Lines written in Kensington Gardens, 669

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

It to Domum Saturze, Venit Hesperus, 788

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On the Way to Kew, 866

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The Darkling Thrush, 951

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, 47

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Prologue to *The Lady of the Lake*, 110

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Pibroch of Donald Dhu, 113

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Here's a Health to King Charles, 116

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The Minstrel Boy, 347

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A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea, 348

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The Burial of Sir John Moore, 350

Later Nineteenth Century

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The Charge of the Light Brigade, 538

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ALFRED TENNYSON

Sweet and Low: From *The Princess*, 525

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The Cry of the Children, 759

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

A Child's Future, 836

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ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

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The Ballad of Dead Ladies: From Francois Villon, 776

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At Casterbridge Fair:

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With Rue My Heart Is Laden, 961
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Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey,
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The Spirit of Shakespeare, 937
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Satire

The satire was originally a poem holding up to ridicule and condemnation follies and vices, private or public. In modern literature satire is a mood rather than a specific form.

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ROBERT SOUTHEY

The Battle of Blenheim, 341

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ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

From *Dipsychus*, 786
 The Latest Decalogue, 787

The Epigram

The epigram is a condensed statement of fact or opinion, usually in four lines.

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WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

On His Seventy-Fifth Birthday, 238

The Essay

The essay is a form of prose which, like the lyric, is of wide and various application. Originally applied by Bacon to what he called "a set of dispersed meditations," as suggestive of their tentative character, it has been used to designate writings as different as Lamb's whimsical personalities, and Macaulay's brief biographies. Certain types of the essay may be distinguished as Personal or Familiar, Reflective or Philosophical, Historical, or as Criticism of Literature and Art, and Criticism of Life.

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The Dialogue

The dialogue was a form of exposition and argument, largely used by Greek and Roman writers, the dialogues of Plato being most famous. It is only occasionally employed in modern times. Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* are in part directed to developing ideas and opinions; in part to revealing character.

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Biography and Autobiography

The biography was written in Greece and Rome largely for purposes of commemoration of, or inspiration to, civic virtue. In the Renaissance it became important as a record of experience, and this function has increased its interest and value until at present it is one of the most popular forms of literature. Realism and frankness of portrayal

are necessary elements, in both of which Boswell's *Johnson* set a standard. Autobiography likewise owes its value to these qualities, of which Pepys' *Diary* is a notable instance.

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The Drama and the Novel

In this anthology, the medieval mystery is represented by the comedy, *The Second Shepherds' Play*; Elizabethan drama by Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* for tragedy, and Jonson's *Volpone* for comedy; the heroic play of the seventeenth century by Dryden's *All for Love*, artificial comedy by Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, and Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*; and modern realistic comedy by Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. The headnotes to these plays trace the progress of the drama from its beginnings to the present.

For a fuller collection of plays, with commentaries, see Matthews and Lieder, *The Chief British Dramatists*.

The novel is a long narrative in prose, partaking of the qualities of the epic, the romance, the tale, and, particularly in its modern form, of the biography. Features of the novel may also be attributed to the influence of the drama, the essay, and the lyric. In the Elizabethan period, large numbers of stories were translated and adapted, one of them furnishing the germ of John Lyly's *Euphues*, a didactic narrative, accompanied by essays, which in the second part, *Euphues and His England*, becomes a sort of novel of manners. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* shows the influence of the epic, through the Greek romance, and the romance of chivalry. A novel by Thomas Nash, called *The Unfortunate Traveller*, imitated in England a type of novel destined to be very popular, the picaresque romance, in which the hero of the chivalric romance, intent on idealistic adventure, is replaced by the *picaro*, or rogue, whose motive is the realistic one of cheating his way through the world.

An account of the development of the English novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is given in the introductions to those periods.

For a history and analysis of the English novel, see Lovett and Hughes, *History of the Novel in England*, 1932.

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