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Poets 1927

THE BOOKMAN TREASURY
OF LIVING POETS

SPECIAL SCHOOL EDITION
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The
Bookman
Treasury of
Living Poets

Edited by
St. John Adcock

SCHOOL EDITION

Part I

LONDON

1927

INTRODUCTION

MANY have set out to tell us What is Poetry, but they might as hopefully have attempted to define the kingdom of heaven. Most other words are amenable to the conjuring of the philologist, but he can no more put what the word Poetry means for all of us into a sentence, or into a treatise, than he could decant the seven seas into a pocket-flask. Coleridge's "best words in the best order" probably comes as near as we ever shall come to a definition of its outward form, and that is as much of it as can adequately be defined. The thing itself is all spirit, vision, emotion, and you can only say of it as Tennyson said of the flower—

" If I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

It is everywhere and in everything, though none of us has the insight and breadth of sympathy to find it in everything everywhere. It is the light that never was on sea or land, and the homely glow in the cottage window ; the star in the sky, and the fire on the hearth ; the careless laughter of children, and the dreams of the man of business ; the glare of the footlights, and the sacred flame on the altar ; the jewels of the privileged few, and the common coinage that everybody handles ; the romance of remembered yesterdays, and the realities of to-day ; it is life and death, the solid but perishable earth and the intangible eternity ; the heights and the depths are as one to it, and it walks as familiarly in the

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magnificence of kings as in the homespun of peasants or the rags of the beggar. It speaks in "Hamlet," and in "We are Seven"; in Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," and in Longfellow's "Resignation"; in Shelley's "Adonais," and in Cowper's "Lines on Receiving his Mother's Picture." But there is never an end to such cataloguing—

"When I have done, I have not done,"

but leave still to say infinitely more than I have said.

One star may differ from another in magnitude, but no astronomer would be so arrogant as to deny even the smallest its place in the solar system; and you may depend it is some deficiency of culture, some narrowness of feeling in yourself if you are not sensitive to the poetry of Cowper, for example, or of Pope. Wit and humour are as poetical in essence as are any of the higher moods of the poet. Longfellow, again, who is too often disdained by superior minds because he makes a more general, less intellectual, less subtly imaginative appeal than Donne, is as true a poet in his place as, however far removed from him, is the loftiest of the hierarchy. He seldom rises to the height of great arguments, but he clothes the poetry of common human experience in the ordinary language that is natural to it and gives it most ample expression. That is his art, and you may prove the authenticity of it by trying to translate his simple, heartfelt utterances—"The Two Angels," "The Ladder of Saint Augustine," "Suspira," "Haunted Houses"—into the nobler, richer language of greater poets, and finding how most of the quiet beauty, tenderness, emotion that are the poetry of them is lost in the process. If they are not fine enough for a taste whose very delicacy restricts its capacity for enjoyment, they have given delight to a robuster many whose tastes are equally limited in a different direction, and to æsthetic faculties which are none the less sensitive for being

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less parochial. So you may take it that if Longfellow's popularity means anything, it does not necessarily mean anything more unflattering than did their ancient popularity to the songs of Homer.

For no poetry has been specially written for the learned, or for exceptional persons. Every poet writes for the general public, or he would not complain when it neglects him ; and the greater poets sooner or later make the wider appeal. Like everything else, and all of us, poetry has risen from humble origins. When it was a matter of folk-songs, ballads and story-telling it was not seriously regarded as an art but as a form of entertainment. It was sung or recited at fairs and festivals, in the courtyard and the market-place, and the best and truest of it was also the most popular. Nowadays, when we are more cultured, we collect those unsophisticated old ballads and songs and metrical tales and write learnedly about them, and sometimes try to imitate them, but their magic is a wonder beyond our learning. They have not risen to immortality by splendour of diction or nice perfection of technique, but by the truth and naturalness of thought, feeling and drama that live in their stark simplicity of phrase and are the life and beauty of it.

There are good poets who in theme and manner are too essentially poets of their time to be poets of all time. As they come down the years into a new atmosphere they lose much of the quality and significance that was theirs in a world with whose tastes and ideals they were wholly in harmony. I don't believe Campion's songs are so lovely to us as they were to his contemporaries ; and the great vogue of Cowley will never return to him, because we can never return to the frame of mind and fashion of thought that chimed with his own and so found natural beauty and " the language of his heart " in verses that to our later age seem to have the studied artificiality of a Dutch garden. In the earliest of anthologies—" England's Helicon," " A Paradyse of Dainty

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Devises," and the rest of those delightful Elizabethan miscellanies—there are poems that never would have come down to us at all if they had not been preserved by the anthologists ; they have only escaped being forgotten long ago by the chance that left them embalmed in these collections. But in their own day they were eagerly alive, and they are fragrant still with the poetical spirit of their period ; they belong more wholly to that period than do the enduring lyrics of those greater writers by association with whom they have been withheld from oblivion ; and because they were so intrinsically of their period they help at least toward the more intimate interpretation of it to us, as obsolete costumes do and old letters about local and transitory things.

All these considerations have influenced me in compiling "The Bookman Treasury of Living Poets." If, instead of trying to give it a catholic inclusiveness, I had whittled it down to an exhibition of my individual preferences, rejecting what I know appeals to others though it may not appeal so potently to me, it would have been misleading to offer this as a collection representing the range and variety of work that is being done by the poets who are living to-day in the British Commonwealth of nations. The poetry of our overseas Dominions is less known in these islands than it should be, and here takes its due place in a general anthology of English verse for the first time. I have endeavoured to select something of what seems to me the best that has been done by living poets of every grade and of every different school, so that the book might serve as a sort of poetical cosmography, a reading in which should be a liberal education in the poetry that reflects the thought and moods and manners of contemporary life, as well as in that which still, in our days, draws inspiration from the fields of old romance. No doubt I shall be told I have omitted things I should have included, and included things I should have omitted ; that is inevitable, since

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in matters of taste no two of us are likely to be in complete agreement. Of course there are poems here, as in every such miscellany, that will not please everybody, but so far as my judgment goes there is none that will not please somebody. The only way to know what is poetry is not to read about it but to read it, and such as touches you and answers to your own needs is the real thing so far as you are concerned, and whether it has the approval of few or many others should be a matter of indifference to you. No definition being possible, if you want any guide at all as to what is poetry, you can have nothing better than old Samuel Daniel's wisely comprehensive assertion that " whatsoever force of words doth move, delight, and sway the affections of men, in what Scythian sort soever it be disposed or uttered : that is true number, measure, eloquence, and the perfection of speech." I confess I am of his faith, and have applied his touchstone in this matter.

One or two poets are not so fully represented here as they would have been if copyright difficulties had not restrained me ; and I regret that at least two are absent, their omission being discovered too late for remedy.

I have to thank the authors and publishers mentioned in the list of Contents for very kindly giving me permission to reprint the poems in this volume ;—immediately after the names of all poems in the Contents are the titles of the books from which they are taken and the names of their publishers ; or the names of periodicals that have kindly given permission for the reproduction of some that have not appeared in book form. Where no such indication appears, the poem is still in manuscript, and the author has allowed me to print it before it appears in a book of his own.

St. J. A.

PREFATORY NOTE TO SCHOOL EDITION

THE chief virtue of every Anthology lies in its educational value. It cannot, at its best, pretend to be a concise substitute for the literature of any period, of any kind, or even of any one author; but fulfils its proper function if it is so compiled that it interests and gives pleasure to the reader and serves him, at need, as a useful introduction to the particular class of literature or phase in literary development with which it is concerned. It has been the aim of "The Bookman Treasury of Living Poets" to offer the student of poetry such an introduction to the work, in every variety, that is being done by poets of to-day in all parts of the British Empire; and a general recognition that it fulfils this purpose more amply than does any other existing anthology has led to its re-issue in the present edition.

ST. J. A.

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LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

His subtle, imaginative narrative and dramatic verse is as rugged and metaphysical as Donne's. " Interludes and Poems " (1908); " Mary and the Bramble " (1910); " The Sale of St. Thomas " (1911); " Emblems of Love " (1912); " Deborah " (1912).

Soul and Body

BODY :

ART thou for breaking faith, after these years,
These many married years
Wherein we have ourselves so well delighted ?
Why art thou sick ? Art thou beginning fears
That our dear joys have been unholy things ?
Trust me, since we have been so long plighted,—
Whate'er be this white worship thou dost mean
To reach on these unlucky wings,—
Thou wilt miss the wonder I have made for thee
Of this dear world with my fashioning senses,
The blue, the fragrance, the singing, and the green
And thou wilt find, not having me,
Crippled thy high powers, gone to doubt
Thy indignation and thy love, without
Help of my lust and the anger of my blood
And my tears.
Try me again ; dost thou remember how we stood
And lookt upon the world exultingly ?
What is for rapture better than these ?—
Great places of grassy land, and all the air
One quiet, the sun taking golden ease
Upon an afternoon ;
Tall hills that stood in weather-blinded trances
As if they heard, drawn upward and held there,
Some god's eternal tune ;
I made them so, I with my fashioning senses
Made the devoted hills : have their great patencies
Not lent thee any health of ecstasy ?

Lascelles Abercrombie

Or when the north came shouting to the beach,
Wind that would gag in his throat a lion's speech,
And spindrift with a whirring hiss went by
Like swords,—wert thou not glad with me?
O who will lodge thee better than I have done
In exultation?—I who alone
Can wash thee in the sacring of moonlight,
Or send thee soaring even that above
Into the wise and unimaginable night,
The chambers of the holy fear,
Or bring thee to the breasts of love.

SOUL :

Dear Body, my beloved friend, poor thanks have I
For all this service. As if fires had made me clean,
I come out of thy experience,
Thy blue, thy fragrance, thy singing and thy green,
Passions of love, and most, that holy fear :
Well hast thou done to me with every sense.
But there's for me a fiercer kind
Of joy, that feels not, knows not, deaf and blind :
And these but led to it, that we did try
When we were person, thou and I ;
Woe for me if I should dare
Partake in person now I see
The lights of unware ecstasy.
I must not in amazement stay,
Henceforth I am for a way
Beyond thy senses, beauty and fear,
Beyond wonder even.
I want neither earth nor heaven,
I will not have ken or desire,
But only joy higher and higher
Burning knowledge in its white fire
Till I am no more aware
And no more saying " I am I,"
But all is perfect ecstasy.

J. R. ACKERLEY

“ Poems by Four Authors ” (1923).

The Conjurer on Hammersmith Bridge

HE smiled at me in manner undismayed,
And then, with an expressive glance and shiver,
He flung his leg across the balustrade
And dropped into the river.

Alone I watched his exit from the world ;
Alone I ran to peer into the gloom,
And saw the way the swelling ripples curled
Above his midnight tomb.

I watched his hat drift down upon the tide,
A witness of his scorn of God and men.
His head rose up as though dissatisfied,
And slowly sank again.

Not mine the parting guest to speed or stay ;
Not mine to interfere in private sorrow,
Or force a man who so disliked to-day
To wait upon to-morrow.

I wondered would his last expiring breath
In other folk breed equal hate and strife.
I hoped he was enjoying more his death
Than he had liked his life.

He rose no more. The waters ceased their stir ;
But in my mind I saw him, pinched and sick,
Yet calm and smiling—like a conjurer
About to do a trick.

Arthur Adams

A trick that was ineffable, sublime,
That loosed despair and hatred into space,
That flicked a human being out of time
And never left a trace——

Except the hat. I watched it turn and sway
And wander from the place where he had drowned ;
The conjurer had tricked himself away,
And could not hand it round.

ARTHUR ADAMS

New Zealand poet, novelist, dramatist and journalist. Has lived much in Australia and done most of his journalistic work for the *Sydney Bulletin*. "Maoriland and Other Verses" (Sydney, 1899) ; "The Nazarene" (London, 1902) ; "London Streets" (London, 1906) ; "Collected Poems" (1913).

Sydney

IN her grey majesty of ancient stone
She queens it proudly, though the sun's caress
Her piteous cheeks, ravished of bloom, confess,
And her dark eyes his bridegroom-glance have known.
Robed in her flowing parks, serene, alone,
She fronts the East ; and with the tropic stress
Her smooth brow ripples into weariness ;
Yet hers the sea for footstool, and for throne
A continent predestined. Round her trails
The turbid squalor of her streets, and dim
Into the dark heat-haze her domes flow up ;
Her long lean fingers, with their grey old nails,
Giving her thirsty lips to the cool brim
Of the bronze beauty of her harbor's cup.

The Australian

ONCE more this Autumn-earth is ripe,
Parturient of another type.

While with the Past old nations merge
His foot is on the Future's verge.

They watch him, as they huddle, pent,
Striding a spacious continent,

Above the level desert's marge
Looming in his aloofness large.

No flower with fragile sweetness graced—
A lank weed wrestling with the waste ;

Pallid of face and gaunt of limb,
The sweetness withered out of him ;

Sombre, indomitable, wan,
The juices dried, the glad youth gone.

A little weary from his birth,
His laugh the spectre of a mirth,

Bitter beneath a bitter sky,
To Nature he has no reply.

Wanton, perhaps, and cruel. Yes,
Is not his sun more merciless ?

So drab and neutral is his day,
He finds a splendour in the grey

And from his life's monotony
He draws a dreary melody.

Arthur Adams

When earth so poor a banquet makes
His pleasures at a gulp he takes ;

The feast is his to the last crumb :
Drink while he can . . . the drought will come.

His heart a sudden tropic flower,
He loves and loathes within an hour.

Yet you who by the pools abide,
Judge not the man who swerves aside ;

He sees beyond your hazy fears ;
He roams the desert of the years ;

Rearing his cities in the sand,
He builds where even God has banned ;

With green a continent he crowns,
And stars a wilderness with towns ;

With paths the distances he snares :
His gyves of steel the great plain wears.

A child who takes a world for toy,
To build a nation or destroy,

His childish features frozen stern,
His manhood's task he has to learn—

From feeble tribes to federate
One white and peace-encompassed State.

But if there be no goal to reach ? . . .
The track lies open, dawns beseech !

Enough that he lay down his load
A little further on the road.

So, toward undreamt-of destinies
He slouches down the centuries.

Andromeda

SHE is a snared and prisoned thing—
A meek white moth with broken wing.
Life took her heart when it was yet
Too young for grieving or regret,
And slowly tamed his prisoner—
That glowing woman's heart of her !

She did not guess what earth could give ;
She did not know she did not live ;
Caught from the sun in Work's grey net
And in a gloomy office set,
Her breast sometimes forgot to sigh :
Some days she hardly missed the sky.

Her dewy gladness dull work took
To write dead figures in a book ;
And on her high stool, hour by hour,
She sits—a frail and long-stemmed flower !
And the days drag, each day the same :
She is so soft a thing to maim !

She, made for love, of love compact,
Has half-forgot the love she lacked ;
She waits, a harp of slackened strings :
One word of love its music brings.
Each hour is but a death she dies :
One hand in hers is Paradise.

And when I kiss her lips at night
She is a pool of still delight,
Her low laugh a triumphant thing,
Her voice a bird on buoyant wing ;
And when I whisper low her name
Her soul is but a shaken flame !

Her soul that dreams it is alive
The grey ghouls take—from nine till five.
She adds up figures—who to me
Is a god-given mystery !

Richard Aldington

They shut her heart in ledgers up—
Her heart that is a thirsty cup !

So long her life has bled and bled,
They pay dead wages to one dead.
Ah, still we change, our gods to mock,
Andromeda upon the rock !
But that young stifled heart of her—
Unbind me, gods ! her rescuer !

RICHARD ALDINGTON

One of the Imagist group of poets. "Images, 1910-1915" (1915—reissued with additional poems, 1919); "Images of Desire" (1919); "Images of War" (1919); "Poems of Meleager" (1920); "Exile and Other Poems" (1923).

Meditation

AS I sit here alone in the calm lamplight,
Watching the red embers
Slowly fade and crumble into grey dust,
With that impenetrable silence
Of long night about me
And the companionship of the immemorial dead
At hand upon my shelves,
Then, when I have freed myself
From trivial designs and false longings,
When I have fortified my soul
To endure the rough shock of truth,
Then I can think without trembling or whimpering
That I must see you dead,
That I must press down your useless eyelids,
Extend your arms, smooth down your hair,
And set upon your lips a withered flower,
The poor last kiss.

Egerton Ryerson

In the imagination
I have endured all that without a tear ;
Yet, if it were not that above all things
I seek and cling to my own truth,
I would cozen my agony with any lie,
Any far-fetched similitude, any dream
Which would lighten with hope this heavy certitude ;
I would kiss the feet of man or woman
Who would prove to me your immortality,
Prove to me your new life circles this life
As the immense sky, naked and starry,
Circles with its illimitable round
The low white roof of our cottage.

Yet, as I would not catch your love with a lie,
But force you to love me as I am,
Faulty, imperfect, human,
So I would not cheat your inward being
With untrue hopes nor confuse pure truth with a legend.
This only I have :
I am true to my truth, I have not faltered ;
And my own end, the sudden departure
From the virile earth I love so eagerly,
Once such a sombre matter, now appears nothing
Beside this weightier, more torturing bereavement.

WILLIAM T. ALLISON

Canadian poet and journalist. Professor of English Literature
at University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. "The Amber Army"
(1909).

Egerton Ryerson

HERE in the Chapel's holy, melting light,
A tenderness comes o'er the square-hewn face,

William T. Allison

A rich, transforming touch of twilight grace
That makes the brow's full majesty and might
Seem less severe, and shows the eyes more bright
And gentler in their granite cavities ;
But naught can smooth from this our Hercules
The lines of stress about those lips locked tight.

For he it was who fought our fight and fared
Of old as our brave knight, our pioneer
He blazed the easy road for you and me,
He struggled for us all, he planned, he dared,
He gave us liberty ; behold him here,
Strong servant of that truth which makes us free.

The Grays and the Browns

LEAGUE upon league of ice and snow,
 And February's bitter chill—
Yet " Bob White " marks with fairy show
 His tiny trail up Indian Hill.

And through the bitter, blustering day,
 With snowshoes on her scaly feet,
The ruffed grouse picks her happy way
 To her low-hidden, snug retreat.

Brave little fluffs in grays and browns
 Breasting the cheerless winter skies,
Men winter-worn in grumbling towns
 Might look to you with shame-filled eyes.

LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA

Novelist and poet. Daughter of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, O.M., R.A. "Songs of Womanhood" (1903); "A Few Lyrics" (1909).

Victory

WHEN that my soul, too far from God,
In earthly furrows crawled about,
An insect on a dusty clod
Wandering wingless in and out :

At deepest dark I looked above
And saw a million worlds alight
That burnt the mortal veils of Love
And left it shining infinite :

I gazed and gazed with lifted head
Until I found my heart had wings,
And now my soul has ceased to dread
The weary dust of worldly things.

The Stranger

HER door stood open all day long,
And as the men went past
They heard her wheel, her gentle song
That said "He'll come at last!"

A stranger halted at the gate
One evening and smiled ;
Said she then : "He for whom I wait
Is wingèd, and a child."

Reginald Arkell

He turned from her with wondrous mien,
And never a word he spoke ;
But from afar she saw the sheen
Of wings beneath his cloak. . . .

REGINALD ARKELL

Playwright and journalist ; author of much witty and whimsical light verse. The following is one of the shorter poems in his volume, "Columbine : A Fantasy" (1913).

The Buryin'

THE mists be on the river bed,
The roses all be gone ;
And here be I, about to die,
Wi' harvest coming on.
Dear Lord, I've trapsed some weary miles,
I'll be main glad to rest awhile.

The folk'll soon be in the fields,
A-getting in the grain.
For most of those, the time I've chose
Be awkerd in the main.
Though not so bad, 'tis sure, for they
As be a-working by the day.

September be a better month
For all the carter men ;
And when I die don't signify,
So let I bide till then.
The wagons 'll be standing by,
And there'll be time to bury I.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

Since he became known as a poet, has made a second reputation as critic, novelist and writer of short stories. "Exodus" (1912); "Thirty New Poems" (1918); "The Buzzards" (1921).

The Young Bather

DOWN by the water a boy stood there,
Stripped to bathe, on a rock shelf narrow,
 Sweet-curved, spare,
 With clustering hair,
Pure as a lily-bud, slim as an arrow.

Over his back in the breezes warm
Shine and shadow danced free and fickle,
 Then, palm to palm,
 Of each lifted arm,
Sweet and slight as the young moon's sickle,

He dived. And seeing that child of May,
A whim of beauty, a wonder of slimness,
 I nigh could pray
 That the Gods would slay
And keep him there in the weedy dimness.

But lank and dripping his brown head rose :
He crawls ashore and the leafage severs,
 And the branches close
 On a form that goes
With all sweet things else down the Years' great rivers.

To think that the glory must leave his head,
And his young, white beauty must all forsake him ;
 I had almost said
 That the gods were dead,
Did it need not the hand of a god to make him.

Martin Armstrong

The Explorers

WE are those wandering souls that never rest :
No ancient laws can bind us, for the zest
And hunger of the eternal in us burn,
Driving us to adventure and to spurn
Ease and the humble joys within our ken
In the narrow earthly heavens of little men :—
Hunger for great experience, wisdom deep
Of nature and ourselves, those truths that leap
Flame-like to greet the faithful stress of soul
'That forges on, seeking the glittering pole
'Through pain and terror and heart's agony,
And many a windy battle on the sea.

Sunsets chaotic, fierce and beautiful
Fire the long furrow of our cleaving hull
And gild the coasts with wild and changing lights
Still ominous of elemental fights.
And the known coasts fall behind, the plunging ship
Leaps through untravelled seas, and lo, the grip
About our hearts of a sudden delighted fear
As the starry wonders glimmer and grow clear
Nightly, to nourish the unsated will
That goads us ever on to struggle still
On weltering decks in the roaring of ripped sails,
With maniac seas and screaming winds and the flails
Of lashing rain, in the clatter of hurled spray,
Through nights moonless and starless, through long day
Of twilight windless, till at evenfall
Thunder and lightning usher in the squall.

The loudest storms die down and cease to be,
But nourished with their strength and laughter we,
Unbeaten wrestlers, ever onward roll
With warm sea-freshened body and laughing soul,

The Fool

Still eager for whatever shall befall ;
And still, like lion-tamers, proudly call
New terrors and wonders forth from the unknown :
Gathering from toil and terrors overthrown,
From keen adventure and unabashed endeavour
The ambrosial food that keeps us young for ever ;
Seeking new worlds until our soul shall be
Wide as the frontiers of divinity.

HENRY BAERLEIN

Better known as a novelist and writer of travel books. "Wind-rush and Evenlode" (1915) ; "Rimes of the Diabes Bleus" (1917). Some of his finest poetry is in "The Diwan of Abu'l Ala" (1908) and other translations from the Persian.

The Fool

"EVER, ever," the lady said,
"Dost thou sit with a downcast head ;
Surely one of the motley race
Should have laughter upon his face.

"Weave me a tale that is blithe and gay
Or abandon my court to-day.
All are sad when they gaze on thee."
"I will tell you a tale," quoth he.

Long he looked on her sitting there,
Under a halo of golden hair,
Then he said, "I will weave for you
Something merry and something true.

"In a garden the flowers were gay,
Red, white, yellow—they danced all day,

Henry Baerlein

And the gardener was their guide,
Piping them over the countryside.

“ But one night to a starlit pool
Did the gardener come, poor fool—
Never he thought that the world could hold
Such a glorious flower of gold.

“ Soon this magical thing of night
Put the charms of the sun to flight,
And, magical lady, he ceased to play
With the clamorous flowers of day.

“ Though he knew he would grasp in vain,
For the stalk was a fairy’s chain,
Still that flower did he love the best.
Think not, lady, I speak in jest.”

“ Fool,” said she, “ in this tale of thine
Sorrow and loveliness intertwine,
Yet how can such a fairy-tale
Make the cheek of a jester pale ? ”

“ Ah ! but often I dream,” quoth he,
“ That the gardener lives in me,
Then, O lady, I hang my head.”
“ Thou art a foolish fool,” she said.

Those Little Feet Have Passed

THOSE little feet have passed
Away for ever more,
Now they are loitering
Upon a pallid shore.

Ah no, they tread, they tread
Upon this heart of me—
I did not know that little feet
Could fall so heavily.

MAURICE BARING

An Admirable Crichton of letters, whose poems, books of travel, plays, essays, short stories, novels and translations fill many volumes. "The Black Prince and Other Poems" (1902); "Desiderio" (1906); "Sonnets and Short Poems" (1906); "Collected Poems" (1911); "Poems: 1914-1919" (1920).

WE drift apart, nor can we quite forget;—
Some link is lost; and that affinity
That binds us not and will not set us free,
Still tinges all our friendship with regret.

And now I feel at last our hearts have met
In perfect tune; that God made you for me
And me for you; and now that he has set
This veil between us, this mute mystery.

Yet when I wash away the dust of earth,
In the cool kingdoms of celestial dew,
I trust that you will meet me with a smile,
The old smile made undying with new birth;
And I'll say this: "I loved you all the while."
And you will say "I loved you and I knew."

I DARE not pray to thee, for thou art won
Rarely by those by whom thou hast been wooed;
Thou comest unsolicited, unsued,
Like sudden splendour of the midnight sun.

Yet in my heart the prayer doth still abide
That thou hast haply heard my unbreathed prayer;
That in the stifling moment of despair,
I shall turn round and find thee by my side,

May Bateman

Like a sad pilgrim who has wandered far,
And hopes not any longer for the day,
But blinded by black thickets finds no way,
Comes to a rift of trees, in that sad plight,
And suddenly sees the unending aisles of night
And in the emerald glow the morning star.

Vale

I AM for ever haunted by one dread
That I may suddenly be swept away,
Nor have the leave to see you, and to say
Goodbye : then this is what I should have said :

I have loved summer and the longest day ;
The leaves of trees, the slumberous film of heat,
The bees, the swallow, and the waving wheat,
The whistling of the mowers in the hay.

I have loved words which left the soul with wings,
Words that are windows to eternal things.
I have loved souls that to themselves are true,
Who cannot stoop and know not how to fear,
Yet hold the talisman of pity's tear :
I have loved these because I have loved you.

MAY BATEMAN

“ Sonnets and Songs ” (1895).

The Call of the Sea

TO watch the salt sea-spray
Break in a myriad star-showers on the sand,

The Call of the Sea

While the sun's kisses warm the rose-lit bay
And the mainland ;

To hear strange voices call,
Echo of mermaids' singing from below,
Deep in their coral castles, while the slow
Night shadows fall ;

To feel in all around
The spell of life's rare silences ; the calm
Hush that succeeds the palpitating sound
Of the world's psalm ;

To wake with,—not a prayer ;
Hardly a thought, perhaps,—unconscious love
Rising, because of all the beauty there,
To God above ;

To strive to make our own
Even the *dream* of something widely pure ;
To hear God in the stillness, and, alone,
Learn to endure ;—

This is to understand
All the pent throbbing of the wordless storm ;
The majesty of the skies' starry band,—
Worlds multiform ;

And if, before the last,
We lay love's passion on the vast sea's breast
And watch it drift far, as the tide ebbs fast,—
This is,—to rest.

CLIFFORD BAX

Dramatist and poet. "Poems Dramatic and Lyrical" (1911);
"A House of Words" (1920); "The Traveller's Tale"
(1921).

Youth

WITHIN a primrose wood I lay content
Upon a certain blithe blue day of spring,
And, ever near, my lover came or went
And gathering violets ever did she sing.

So fair she was I laughed for love, and cried
"Still can I see how yesterday you stood,
Your whole fair frame rejoicing in its pride
And lovelier than the whole spring-lovely wood!"

Ah then she paused and coming where I sat
Smiled, and with one dear hand upon my head,
"O love, my love, may you remember that
When I am no more beautiful," she said.

Memory

WALKING by windy trees
And hearing that hoary sound
(For older than man himself
Is the sound of windy trees)
On a sudden—like that dread
Fall from the edge of sleep—
I felt the present collapse
And time swallowing time,
And I was a man far back
In the virgin green of the earth.

The South Country

There, by the windy trees,
For a moment full as a day
I saw the world outspread
Like toys on the floor, and moved
At will through a thousand years
And all the cities of old :
And once could hear, in a lull,
As though the door were ajar,
Voices of men who talked
In the streets of Athens and Rome.

Was it a sleight of the brain,—
A trick of the windy trees ?
The rest may judge as they will,
For he that has known, as I,
This tidal wave of the soul,
Knows that eternal change—
Though it burn up worlds and suns—
May neither consume nor cloud
The diamond spirit in man.

HILAIRE BELLOC

Mr. Belloc's novels, essays, studies in biography, historical, polemical and journalistic works, to say nothing of such delightful frivolities as "The Bad Child's Book of Beasts," have rather overshadowed his poetry, of which he has written too little, but that little includes things that will endure.

"Verses" (1910); "Verses and Sonnets" (1924).

The South Country

WHEN I am living in the Midlands,
That are sodden and unkind,

Hilaire Belloc

I light my lamp in the evening ;
My work is left behind ;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country,
They stand along the sea,
And it's there, walking in the high woods,
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day ;
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are vast and grey ;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the rocks
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies ;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air ;

Dawn Shall Over Lethe Break

Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there,
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend ;
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend ?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex weald ;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if I ever grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood,
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

Dawn Shall Over Lethe Break

LADY, when your lovely head
Sinks to lie among the Dead,
And the quiet Places keep
You that so divinely sleep :

Laurence Binyon

Then the Dead shall blesséd be
With a New Solemnity.
For such beauty so descending
Pledges them that death is ending.
Sleep your fill :—But when you wake
Dawn shall over Lethe break.

LAURENCE BINYON

Poet and dramatist ; essentially lyrical even in his dramas and early epics. " Lyric Poems " (1894) ; " Poems " (1895) ; " London Visions " (Book I, 1895 ; Book II, 1898 ; Collected edition, 1908) ; " Porphyron " (1898) ; " Odes " (1900) ; " The Death of Adam " (1903) ; " Penthesilea " (1905) ; " England and Other Poems " (1909) ; " Auguries " (1913) ; " The Winnowing Fan " (1915) ; " The Anvil " (1916) ; " The Cause " (1917) ; " The New World " (1918) ; " The Four Years " (1919) ; " The Syrens " (1925).

For the Fallen

WITH proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill : Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

Whitechapel High Road

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old :
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again ;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home ;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time ;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night ;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Whitechapel High Road

LUSTY life her river pours
Along a road of shining shores.
The moon of August beams
Mild as upon her harvest slopes ; but here
From man's full-breath'd abounding earth
Exiled she walks, as one of alien birth,
The pale, neglected foster-mother of dreams.
For windows with resplendent stores
Along the pavements dazzle and outstare
The booths that front them ; there,
To the throng which loiters by in laughing streams
Babble the criers ; and 'mid eager sounds
The flaming torches toss to the wind their hair,
And ruddy in trembling waves the light
Flushes cheeks of wondering boys
Assembled, their lips parted and eyes bright,

Laurence Binyon

As the medicine-seller his magic herb expounds,
Or some old man displays his painted toys.
Deaf with a vacant stillness of the tomb,
At intervals a road deserted gapes,
Where night shrinks back into her proper gloom,
Frighted by boisterous flare
Of the flame, that now through a cluster of green grapes
Shines wanly, or on striped apple and smooth pear
Flits blushing; now on rug or carpet spread
In view of the merry buyers, the rude dyes
Re-crimsons, or an antic shadow throws
Over the chestnut-brazier's glowing eyes;
And now the sleeping head
Of a gipsy child in his dim corner shows,
Huddled against a canvas wall, his bed
An ancient sack: nor torch, nor hundred cries
Awake him from his sweet profound repose.

But thou, divine moon, with thine equal beam
Dispensing patience, stealest unawares
The thoughts of many that pass sorrowful on
Else undiverted, amid the crowd alone:
Embroiderest with beauties the worn theme
Of trouble; to a fancied harbour calm
Steerest the widow's ship of heavy cares;
And on light spirits of lovers, radiant grown,
Droppest an unimaginable balm.
Yet me to-night thy peace rejoices less
Than this warm human scene, that of rude earth
Pleasantly savours, nor dissembles mirth,
Nor grief nor passion: sweet to me this press
Of life unnumbered, where if hard distress
Be tyrant, hunger is not fed
Nor misery pensioned with the ill-tasting bread
Of pity; but such help as earth ordains
Betwixt her creatures, bound in common pains,
One from another, without prayer, obtains.

WILLIAM BLANE

Lived long in South Africa, is included in anthologies of South African poets, but published his latest volume since his return to England. "Lays of Life and Hope" (1889); "The Silent Land" (1906); "A Ballad of Men and Other Verses" (1913)

A Prayer

O THOU who unto Jairus' fervent prayer
Did'st lend Thine ear,
And to his house amid the crowd repair,
My pleadings hear.

"My daughter lieth at the point of death,"
He cried to Thee;
His words I now repeat with bated breath—
Oh, hear Thou me!

The crowd oppressed Thee on that fateful day—
The sick drew nigh
And sought to touch Thy garment and delay
Thy passing by.

Till one who tidings unto Jairus bore
Pressed near and said,
"Why troublest thou the Master any more?
Thy child is dead."

O Christ who then beheld that father's face
And saw his grief,
Try not my strength so fiercely; of Thy grace
Grant me relief.

"Talitha Cumi" now no more is said
When life is flown;
Haste then, and lay Thy hand upon her head
Ere she be gone!

William Blane

A word from Thee, Lord Christ, a word, a touch
And all were well !
To thee so little, and to me how much
No lips can tell. . . .

Behold how beautiful she is, how dear,
How sweet, how good,
Enlinking girlhood in her nineteenth year
With womanhood.

It seems so short a time since at my knee,
So dear, so small,
She knelt and lisped her childish prayer to Thee
At even-fall.

As round her girlish years my memory clings,
Tears flow unbid ;
For I recall a thousand little things
She said and did.

Alas, my faith and hope are weak indeed ;
My thoughts are wrong ;
And humanly, in faltering words, I plead—
Love only strong.

Oh, if Thou wilt not come, all help is past
And death is near :
This night, O Christ, they say may be the last
For one so dear. . . .

I cannot even frame my prayer aright,
And only know
That with her life the loveliness and light
Of mine would go.

The Shepherd

Forgive me then, O Master ! And if Thou,
Who knowest best,
From this poor life of pain and sorrow now
Would'st give her rest,

Be near her spirit as it steals away
Beyond our ken ;
When by her side in helpless love we pray,
Oh, help her then !

Be near her—let her feel her trembling hand
Held firm by Thee,
When first the wonders of the Unknown Land
Her eyes shall see. . . .

Be near me, too ! When for her voice, her touch,
I yearn alone—
Be near me, Lord, for I shall need Thee much
When she is gone !

EDMUND BLUNDEN

A pastoral poet, more scholarly than Clare, whose work he edited, but not less true to rural life and character. "Pastorals" (1915) ; "The Barn" ; "Three Poems" (1916) ; "The Waggoner" (1920) ; "The Shepherd and other Poems of Peace and War" (1922).

The Shepherd

EVENING has brought the glow worm to the green,
And early stars to heaven, and joy to men ;
The sun is gone, the shepherd leaves the pen
And hobbles home, while we for leisure lean
On garden gates. O shepherd old and kind,

Edmund Blunden

Sweet may your musings and your slumbers prove !—
When the rude chairs, of untanned osiers wove,
Creak to the dead of night, his rest he'll find ;
And at his feet well pleased his dog will doze,
And not a traveller passes but he knows.

A country god to every childish eye—
Who sees the shepherd save when he comes home,
With untrimmed staff, smock stitched like honeycomb,
With great-tongued boots, and buskins to the thigh !
A seer, a country god—as thought conceives
His oracles of seasons foul or fair,
His weather-bitten looks and wild white hair
That on his shoulders thatches like an eaves :
And he himself, proud of his antique toil,
Gossips with none that might such honour soil.

Sleep comes upon the village, the rich bee
From honeyed bells of balsams high is gone ;
The windows palely shine ; the owls whoop on,
But bats have slunk into their hollow tree.
The shepherd hours before has closed his eyes,
But he unseen will take his staff in hand
And walk to wake the morning through the land
Before the cockerel knows 'tis time to rise.
High on the hill he dares the mist and dew
And sings before a sunbeam ventures through.

Now when the morning ripens and unfolds
Like beds of flowers the glories of the plain,
His heart leaps up at every steeple vane
And barn and kiln and windmill on the wolds ;
For boyhood knew them all and not a brook
But he has bathed and played the miller there ;
By every green he's hurried to the fair
And tended sheep in every whitethorn nook.
Thus dreaming does he hurdle up the pen
And thinks how soon comes clipping time agen.

The Shepherd

His sheep his children are, each one he knows,
And well might know, who lay through winter storm
In cramping hulks with bracken scarce kept warm
While each one came from the poor frightened yoes.
He never bids or wants for holiday,
His sheep his children are and his delight :
The shepherd's harvest makes the May so bright
When round his feet the lambs so frisk and play
And nuzzle in his sleeve and twitch his hand—
The prettiest dears, he calls them, in the land.

But May, when music grows on every tree,
Too quickly passes, shepherds'-roses die—
New dipt and shorn, they still delight the eye :
How fast they gather to his " Cub—burree " :
Even crows and jackdaws scrambling for the beans
Among their troughs are of his rustic clan
And know him king of bird and sheep and man ;
And where he breaks his bread the emmet gleans.
The great sun gives him wisdom, the wind sings
Clear to his simple heart the hardest things.

The stubble browsing comes, and grand and grave
Autumn in shadow swathes the rolling weald,
The blue smoke curls with mocking stealth afield,
And far off lights, like wild eyes in a cave,
Stare at the shepherd on the bleaching grounds.
Deeply he broods on the dark tide of change,
And starts when echo sharp and sly and strange,
To his gap-stopping, from the sear wood sounds,
His very sheep bells seem to bode him ill
And starling whirlwinds strike his bosom chill.

Then whispering all his eighty years draw nigh,
And mutter like an Advent mind, and grieve
At perished summer, bid him take his leave
Of toil and take some comfort ere he die.
The hounded leaf has found a tongue to warn

Gordon Bottomley

How fierce the pang of winter, the lead rain
Brings him old pictures of the drowning plain,
When even his dog sulks, loath to face the morn,
The sun drops cold in a watery cloud, the briars
Like starved arms still snatch at his withered fires.

But shepherd goes to warm him in his chair,
And in the blaze his dog growls in his dreams,
And on the hearth the leaping firelight gleams
That makes him think of one with ruddy hair
Who kept the sheep in ancient Bethlehem.
With trusting heart he takes his Bible, reads
Once more of still green banks and glittering meads
Where storms are not, nor ever floods to stem ;
Where the kind shepherd never takes them wrong
And gently leads the goes that are with young.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

His finest work is in his poetical dramas, "King Lear's Wife," "Riding to Lithend," "Midsummer Eve," etc.; but he has written lyrics of charm and delicate beauty. "The Gate of Smaragdus" (1904); "Chambers of Imagery" (1907), second series (1912); "Collected Poems" (1925).

A Carol for Christmas Day Before Dawn

O, BETHLEM town to-night is cold,
And Bethlem town is very dark ;
Down tumbling street, on upland wold
Stir neither wife nor patriarch ;
No travellers the inn-door seek
Where still the gusty sign-boards creak.

Our Lady of Consolation

The dull, dumb shepherds of the heath
Are warm beside their wives in bed ;
The mildewed manger chills beneath
The wet thatch gaping over-head ;
The ancient stars are tired and dim
And no new star announces Him.

Or is it that we cannot hear
The least of spiritual songs,
And know not some strange joy more near
Than too familiar angel-throngs ?—
Of Him the greater is our need
Whose life has dwindled to a creed.

Because we know the Lord once woke
Unto a far-off people's pain,
We dream, a numb bewildered folk,
That He might think to come again
To heal by new, enlightening cares,
A world more sorrowful than theirs.

Our Lady of Consolation

WE seek you in the garden to and fro,
Thinking how much it was your loved abode ;
We gather heartsease from the seed you sowed,
And every blossom seems a gift from you.
Then we remember your hushed bed, and go
Where rosemary and roses round you strewed
Droop tenderly, by dying faintness bowed,
While dreams of girlhood smooth your white worn brow.
Ah, lately lost and always unforgot,
Come oft unseen and sit with us again
And soothe us with your old benignity.
We cannot think you do not share our lot,
For here your heart was when you were not nigh,
And all our hearts are with you now as then.

F. VICTOR BRANFORD

“Titans and Gods” (1922); “Five Poems” (1922); “The White Stallion” (1925).

Man

HE walks the world with mountains in his breast,
And holds the hiltless wind in vassalage.
Transtellar spaces are his fields of quest,
Eternity his spirit’s embassy.
The unearned acre of the firmaments
Under his hungry harrow, yields increase.
While from the threshold of dim continents
They beckon him, who bear the stars in lease.

And yet is he a thane of foreigners,
On sapphire throned, but in an unkinged house,
Arrased with honours, broidered in gold sheen—
A palace in a town of sepulchres.
Voices he hears, but knows not what they mean,
His own to him the most mysterious.

ROBERT BRIDGES

Poet laureate since 1913, and a master of metrical harmonies. “Prometheus the Firegiver” (1883); “Eros and Psyche” (1885); “The Growth of Love” (1876-89); “Shorter Poems” (1890-4); “Demeter” (1905); Poetical works (2 vols., 1898-9); Poetical works, excluding the eight dramas (1912).

From “The Growth of Love”

REJOICE, ye dead, where’er your spirits dwell,
Rejoice that yet on earth your fame is bright;

On a Dead Child

And that your names, remember'd day and night,
Live on the lips of those that love you well.
'Tis ye that conquer'd have the power of hell,
Each with the special grace of your delight :
Ye are the world's creators, and thro' might
Of everlasting love ye did excel.

Now ye are starry names, above the storm
And war of Time and nature's endless wrong
Ye flit, in pictured truth and peaceful form,
Wing'd with bright music and melodious song,—
The flaming flowers of heaven, making May—dance
In dear Imagination's rich pleasance.

THE world still goeth about to shew and hide,
Befool'd of all opinion, fond of fame :
But he that can do well taketh no pride,
And see'th his error, undisturb'd by shame :
So poor's the best that longest life can do,
The most so little, diligently done ;
So mighty is the beauty that doth woo,
So vast the joy that love from love hath won.

God's love to win is easy, for He loveth
Desire's fair attitude, nor strictly weighs
The broken thing, but all alike approveth
Which love hath aim'd at Him : that is heaven's praise :
And if we look for any praise on earth,
'Tis in man's love : all else is nothing worth.

On a Dead Child

PERFECT little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair !
Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on
thee.

Robert Bridges

Thy mother's treasure wert thou ;—alas ! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy ; to be
 Thy father's pride ;—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength make
stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond ;
 Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and holds it :
But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heartbreaking
and stiff ;
 Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing,—
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed !—
 Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet ! doth the change content thee ?—Death, whither
hath he taken thee ?
To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of this ?
 The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee and
awaken thee ?

Ah ! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
 Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and have
heard of, fail us.

Contentment

From " Later Poems "

ONE grief of thine
if truth be confest
Was joy to me ;
for it drave to my breast
Thee, to my heart
to find thy rest.

How long it was
I never shall know :
I watcht the earth
so stately and slow,
And the ancient things
that waste and grow.

But now for me
what speed devours
Our heavenly life,
our brilliant hours !
How fast they fly,
the stars and flowers !

THOMAS BURKE

Author of " Limehouse Nights," " Nights in Town," " The Outer Circle," " The Wind and the Rain," and other sketches and stories of London life ; of an early book of " Verses," now unobtainable, and " The Song-Book of Quong Lee of Limehouse " (1920).

Contentment

WHAT though a man be money-poor ?
There's honeysuckle by the door,

Thomas Burke

Peacefully perfumed lavender,
And wilding weed and gossamer.

There's plenty cheese and plenty bread,
And russet ale and apples red ;
And breezes from the garden bring
A busy voice that loves to sing

Songs of our happy English clime,
Of Lily, Lavender, and Lime !
And children in the sunshine shout
For joy that tedious school is out.

Indeed, with friends, and cheese, and bread,
And russet ale, and apples red,
And honeysuckle by the door,
Great joy is mine, though I be poor.

Paddington

DEEP in a dusk of lilac the station lies,
Vasty and echo-haunted and fiercely made ;
Speared all about with suns where the arches rise,
Leaping on lusty limbs over pools of shade.
Oh, lovely are her lean lines, and lovely her poise,
Empanoplying the long, dim frenzy of noise

But her most beauty she holds until the night,
Even as Love, until the brute day be ended,
When all her thousand eyes in a tempest of light
Shatter the cathedral gloom, and show her splendid.
Splendid we know her, and ever splendid she stands ;
Clean from the splendid sweat of human hands.

Night-piece

LADY, the world is old, and we are young.
The world is old to-night and full of tears

To All Mourners

And tumbled dreams, and all its songs are sung,
And echoes rise no more from the tombed years.
Lady, the world is old, but we are young.

Once only shines the mellow moon so fair ;
One speck of Time is Love's Eternity.
Once only can the stars so light your hair,
And the night make your eyes my psaltery.
Lady, the world is old. Love still is young.

Let us take hand ere the swift moment end.
My heart is but a lamp to light your way,
My song your counsellor, my love your friend,
Your soul the shrine whereat I kneel and pray.
Lady, the world grows old. Let us be young.

C. KENNETT BURROW

Novelist and poet. "London Dead and Other Verses" (1908); "Carmen Varia" (1912); "Poems in Time of War and Peace" (1919).

To All Mourners

I DO not bid you, tired ones, cease to weep—
There is a time for tears ;
Nor do I bid you less securely keep
Remembrance of past years :
I bid you only stand as those who reap
Amongst life's living ears.

I bid you still look eastward for the light,
And, musing on the dead,
Draw to yourselves the beauty and the might

May Byron

That with their spirits fled :
Thus, doubly strong, toil onward through the night
Fed by this sacred bread.

The granaries of Death cannot withhold
From you the living seed :
The empty husk, the hollow tarnished gold,
His guerdon and his need ;
But unto you still live the noble-soul'd,
Still live, and love, and plead.

I do not bid you, tired ones, love them less,
I bid you love them more ;
So, in the hour of utter loneliness,
When soul and sense implore,
They shall, with holy benediction, bless
From their serener shore.

MAY BYRON

“The Wind on the Heath” (1911).

The Fold

WHEN God shall ope the gates of gold,
The portals of the heavenly fold,
And bid his flock find pasture wide
Upon a new earth's green hill-side—

What poor strayed sheep shall thither fare,
Black-smirched beneath the sunny air,
To wash away in living springs
The mud and mire of earthly things !

The Combatant

What lonely ewes with eyes forlorn,
With weary feet and fleeces torn,
To whose shorn back no wind was stayed,
Nor any rough ways smooth were made !

What happy little lambs shall leap
To those sad ewes and spattered sheep,
With gamesome feet and joyful eyes,
From years of play in Paradise !

The wind is chill, the hour is late ;
Haste thee, dear Lord, undo the gate ;
For grim wolf-sorrows prowling range
These bitter hills of chance and change :

And from the barren wilderness
With homeward face Thy flocks do press :
Their worn bells ring a jangled chime—
Shepherd, come forth, 'tis eventime !

The Combatant

WHEN thou shalt stand, a naked shivering soul,
Stripped of thy shows and trappings, made most bare
Of all the fleshly glory thou didst wear—
And hear the thunder of God's judgment roll
Above thy head ; while to their hard-won goal
His own elect ascend the golden stair—
What plea wilt proffer, when, too late for pray'r,
Of thy lost life thou see'st the sum and whole ?

“ I have no armour dented by the fight,
No broken sword, no casque with cloven rim ;
Was none to witness to the grisly sight,
For all alone we strove in darkness dim ;
Yet in the Valley of Death, O Lord, one night,
I met Apollyon and I vanquished him.”

SIR HALL CAINE

Though the novelist has left the poet in eclipse, before he became known as a novelist Sir Hall Caine was a poet of distinction, and his poems, chiefly in sonnet form, appeared for the most part in the *Athenæum* and the *Academy* during the '80's, certain of his sonnets winning high praise from Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Edited "Sonnets of Three Centuries" (1882).

After Sunset

VOCAL yet voiceless, lingering, lambent, white
With the wide wings of evening on the fell,
The tranquil vale, the enchanted citadel,—
Another day swoons to another night.
Speak low : from bare Bencathra's purple height
The sound o' the ghyll falls furled ; and, loath to go,
A continent of cloud its plaited snow
Wears far away athwart a lake of light.

Is it the craft of hell that while we lie
Enshaded, lulled, beneath heaven's breezeless sky,
The garrulous clangours and assoil'd shows
Of London's burrowing mazes haunt us yet ?
City, forgive me : mother of joys and woes
Thy shadow is here, and lo, our eyes are wet.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

His only book of verse contains a "pageant of the types that stand for the nation of to-day," drawn from almost every part of Ireland. "Irishry" (1913).

Loafers

IF highest Heaven were no more
Than this : an undulating floor

Loafers

Of flowering furze and lawny grass ;
White clouds, like ships, that pass and pass ;
An April sun warming my neck ;
Two corbies playing at pick-a-back ;
A lark trilling, a butterfly
That mounts and falls and flutters by
My Thoreau open at "Walden Pond" ;
Blue hills of mystery beyond—
'Twould be enough. Or, having this,
Who'd die to win more perfect bliss ?

And who's the wiser ? I, or he
Who props a wall at Eden Quay,
And spits innumerably between
His drinks ? while April like a queen
Rides over noisome lane and street,
Bringing the breath of meadow-sweet,
Of flowering furze and daffodils
That toss their beauty to the hills,
Of wall-flowers, purple, brown and red,
And Solomon's-seal with drooping head,—
And Liffey's ooze meanders rank,
For all her touch, 'twixt bank and bank.

Heaven is peace. The key is found
In sightless air, unheeded sound,
Or such like atrophy of sense
When consciousness is in suspense :
The climbing thoughts lulled to a sleep
Of grey forgetfulness, like sheep
Gathered to fold : when near is blent
With distant, and the skyey tent
Of clouds and trilling larks and sun
And earth and wind and God are one.
He's even wise, who props a wall,
And cares not if it stand or fall !

WILLIAM CANTON

Has written a "History of the British and Foreign Bible Society" and many other books, but is most widely known as author of "The Invisible Playmate" and "W. V., Her Book," which have a place apart in the literature of childhood. The poems that follow are from the second of Mr. Canton's books of miscellaneous poetry: "A Lost Epic and Other Poems" (1887); "Comrades: Poems Old and New" (1902).

The Latter Law

I

WHEN, schooled to resignation, I had ceased
 To yearn for my lost Eden; when I knew
 No loving Spirit brooded in the blue,
 And none should see His coming in the East,
 I looked for comfort in my creed; I sought
 To draw all nature nearer, to replace
 The sweet old myths, the tenderness, the grace
 Of God's dead world of faith and reverent thought

Oh, joy! I found the stern new Law reveal
 Romance more rare than poesy creates:
 Your blood, it said, is kindred with the sap
 Which throbs within the cedar, and mayhap
 In some dim wise the tree reciprocates,
 Even as a Dryad, all the love you feel!

II

You and the great glad Earth are kith and kin;
 There is one base, one scheme of life, one hope
 On that and this side of the microscope.
 All things, now wholes, have parts of many been
 And all shall be. A disk of Homer's blood
 May redden a daisy on an English lawn,
 And what was Chaucer glimmer in the dawn
 To-morrow o'er the plains where Ilion stood.

The Latter Law

No jot is lost, or scorned, or disallowed ;
One Law reigns over all. Take you no care,
For while all beings change one life endures,
And a new cycle waits for you and yours
To melt away, like streaks of morning cloud,
Into the infinite azure of things that were.

III

And soon the selfish clinging unto sense,
The longing that this ME should never fail,
Loosed quivering hands, for oh ! of what avail
Were such survival of intelligence,
If all the great and good of days gone by—
Plato, Hypatia, Shakespeare—had surceased,
Had mingled with the cloud, the plant, the beast,
And God were but a mythos of the sky ?

And when I thought, o'ershadowed with strange awe,
How Christ was dead—had ceased in utter woe,
With that great cry "Forsaken !" on the cross,
I felt at first a sense of bitter loss,
And then grew passive, saying, "Be it so !
'Tis one with Christ and Judas, 'Tis the law !"

IV

But when my child, my one girl-babe lay dead—
The blossom of me, my dream and my desire—
And unshed tears burned in my eyes like fire,
And when my wife subdued her sobs, and said :
"Oh ! husband, do not grieve, be comforted,
She is with Christ !" I laughed in my despair.
With Christ ! O God ! and where is Christ, and where
My poor dead babe ? And where the countless dead ?

Bliss Carman

The great glad Earth—my kin!—is glad as though
No child had ever died; the heaven of May
Leans like a laughing face above my grief.
Is *she* clean lost for ever? How shall I know?
O Christ! art Thou still Christ? And shall I pray
For unbelief or fulness of belief?

Heights and Depths

HE walked in glory on the hills;
We dalesmen envied from afar
The heights and rose-lit pinnacles
Which placed him nigh the evening star.

Upon the peaks they found him dead;
And now we wonder if he sighed
For our low grass beneath his head,
For our rude huts, before he died.

BLISS CARMAN

Describes himself as a journalist, but his name leads all the rest among past and present poets of Canada. "Low Tide on Grand Pré" (1893); "Ballads of Lost Haven" (1897); "Songs from Vagabondia," and "More Songs from Vagabondia" (with Richard Hovey—1894-6); "Last Songs from Vagabondia" (1900); "Pipes of Pan" (I, 1902; II, 1903); "Songs of the Sea Children" (1904); "Songs from a Northern Garden" (1905); "Earth Deities" (1914); "April Airs" (1916).

The Keeper's Silence

MY hillside garden half-way up
The mountains from the purple sea,

The Keeper's Silence

Beholds the pomp of days go by
In summer's gorgeous pageantry.

I watch the shadows of the clouds
Stream over Grand Pré in the sun,
And the white fog seethe up and spill
Over the rim of Blomidon.

For past the mountains to the North,
Like a great caldron of the tides,
Is Fundy, boiling round their base,
And ever fuming up their sides.

Yet here within my valley world
No breath of all that tumult stirs ;
The little orchards sleep in peace ;
Forever dream the dark blue firs.

And while far up the gorges sweep
The silver legion of the showers,
I have communion with the grass
And conversation with the flowers.

More wonderful than human speech
Their dialect of silence is,
The simple Dorian of the fields,
So full of homely subtleties.

When the dark pansies nod to say
Good morning to the marigolds,
Their velvet taciturnity
Reveals as much as it withholds.

Bliss Carman

I always half expect to hear
Some hint of what they mean to do ;
But never is their fine reserve
Betrayed beyond a smile or two.

Yet very well at times I seem
To understand their reticence,
And so, long since, I came to love
My little brothers by the fence.

Perhaps some August afternoon,
When earth is only half-aware,
They will unlock their hearts for once,—
How sad if I should not be there !

From " Songs of the Sea Children "

O WONDER of all wonders,
The winter time is done,
And to the low, bleak, bitter hills
Comes back the melting sun !

O wonder of all wonders,
The soft spring winds return,
And in the sweeping gusts of rain
The glowing tulips burn !

O wonder of all wonders,
That tenderness divine,
Bearing a woman's name should knock
At this poor door of mine !

In a Grand Pré Garden

IN a garden over Grand Pré, dewy in the morning
sun,
Here in earliest September with the summer nearly
done,
Musing on the lovely world and all its beauties, one by
one !

Bluets, marigolds, and asters, scarlet poppies, purple
phlox,—
Who knows where the key is hidden to those frail yet
perfect locks
In the tacit door of being where the soul stands still and
knocks ?

There is Blomidon's blue sea-wall, set to guard the turbid
straits
Where the racing tides have entry ; but who keeps for us
the gates
In the mighty range of silence where man's spirit calls
and waits ?

Where is Glooscaap ? There's a legend of that saviour
of the West,
The benign one, whose all-wisdom loved beasts well,
though men the best,
Whom the tribes of Minas leaned on, and their villages
had rest.

Once the lodges were defenceless, all the warriors being
gone
On a hunting or adventure. Like a panther on a
fawn,
On the helpless stole a war-band, ambushed to attack at
dawn.

Bliss Carman

But with night came Glooscaap. Sleeping he surprised
them ; waved his bow ;
Through the summer leaves descended a great frost, as
white as snow ;
Sealed their slumber to eternal peace and stillness long
ago.

Then a miracle. Among them, while still death undid
their thews,
Slept a captive with her children. Such the magic he
could use,
She arose unharmed with morning, and departing, told
the news.

He, too, when the mighty Beaver had the country for his
pond
All the way from the Pereaue here to Bass River and
beyond,
Stoned the rascal, drained the Basin ; routed out that
vagabond.

You can see yourself Five Islands Glooscaap flung at him
that day,
When from Blomidon to Sharp he tore the Beaver's dam
away,—
Cleared the channel, and the waters thundered out into
the bay.

*(Do we idle, little children ? Ah, well, there is hope, maybe,
In mere beauty which enraptures just such ne'er-do-wells
as we !*

I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be calling me !)

Here he left us—see the orchards, red and gold in every
tree !—
All the land from Gaspereau to Portapique and Cheverie,
All the garden lands of Minas and a passage out to sea.

In a Grand Pré Garden

You can watch the white-sailed vessels through the
meadows wind and creep,
All day long the pleasant sunshine, and at night the starry
sleep,
While the labouring tides that rest not have their business
with the deep !

So I get my myth and legend of a breaker-down of bars,
Putting gateways in the mountains with their thousand-
year-old scars,
That the daring and the dauntless might steer outward by
the stars.

So my demiurgic hero lays a frost on all our fears.
Dead the grisly superstition, dead the bigotry of years,
Dead the tales that frighten children, when the pure white
light appears.

Thus did Glooscaap of the mountains. What doth
Balder of the flowers,
Balder, the white lord of April, who comes back amid the
showers
And the sunshine to the Northland to revive this earth
of ours ?

First, how came my garden, where untimely not a leaf
may wilt ?
For a thousand years the currents trenched the rock and
wheeled the silt,
Dredged and filled and smoothed and levelled, toiling that
it might be built.

For the moon pulled and the sun pushed on the derrick of
the tide ;
And a great wind heaved and blustered,—swung the
weight round with a stride,
Mining tons of red detritus out of the old mountain-side,—

Bliss Carman

Bore them down and laid them even by the mouth of
stream and rill
For the quiet lowly doorstep, for cemented joist and sill
Of our Grand Pré, where the cattle lead their shadows or
lie still.

So my garden floor was founded by the labouring frugal
sea,
Deep and virginal as Eden, for the flowers that were to be,
All for my great drowsy poppies and my marigolds and me.

Who had guessed the unsubstantial end and outcome of
such toil,—
These, the children of a summer, whom a breath of frost
would foil,
I, almost as faint and fleeting as my brothers of the soil ?

Did those vague and drafty sea-tides, as they journeyed,
feel the surge
Of the prisoned life that filled them seven times from
verge to verge,
Mounting to some far achievement where its ardour
might emerge ?

Are they blinder of a purpose in their courses fixed and
sure,
Those sea arteries whose heavings throb through Nature's
vestiture,
Than my heart's frail valves and hinges which so perilously
endure ?

Do I say to it, " Give over ! "—Can I will, and will it
cease ?
Nay, it stops but with destruction ; knows no respite nor
release.
I, who did not start its pulses, cannot bid them be at
peace.

In a Grand Pré Garden

Thus the great deep, framed and fashioned to a thought
beyond its own,

Rocked by tides that race or sleep without its will from
zone to zone,

Setting door-stones for a people in a century unknown,

Sifted for me and my poppies the red earth we love so well.
Gently there, my fine logician, brooding in your lone grey
cell !

Was it all for our contentment such a miracle befell ?

No ; because my drowsy poppies and my marigolds and I
Have this human need in common, nodding as the wind
goes by,

There is that supreme within us no one life can satisfy.

With their innocent grave faces lifted up to meet my own,
They are but the stranger people, swarthy children of the
sun,

Gypsies tenting at our door to vanish ere the year is done.

*(How we idle, little children ! Still our best of tasks may be,
From distraction and from discord without baseness to get
free.*

I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be calling me !)

Humbly, then, most humbly ever, little brothers of the
grass,

With *Aloha* at your doorways I salute you as you pass,
I who wear the mortal vesture, as our custom ever was.

Known for kindred by the habit, by the tanned and crim-
son stain,

Earthlings in the garb ensanguined just so long as we
remain,

You for days and I for seasons mystics by the common
strain,

Bliss Carman

Till we tread the virgin threshold of a great moon red and
low,
Clean and joyous while we tarry, and uncraven when we
go
From the rooftree of the rain-wind and the broad eaves of
the snow.

And this thing called life, which frets us like a fever with-
out name,
Soul of man and seed of poppy no mortality can tame,
Smouldering at the core of beauty till it breaks in perfect
flame,—

What it is I know not ; only I know they and I are one,
By the lure that bids us linger in the great House of the
Sun,
By the fervour that sustains us at the door we cannot
shun.

From a little wider prospect, I survey their bright domain ;
On a rounder dim horizon, I behold the ploughman rain ;
All I have and hold so lightly, they will perish to attain!

Waking at the word of April with the South Wind at her
heels,
We await the revelation locked beneath the four great
seals,
Ice and snow and dark and silence, where the Northern
searchlight wheels.

Waiting till our Brother Balder walks the lovely earth
once more,
With the robin in the fir-top, with the rain-wind at the
door,
With the old unwearied gladness to revive us and restore,

In a Grand Pré Garden

We abide the raptured moment, with the patience of a stone,
Like ephemera our kindred, transmigrant from zone to
zone,
To that last fine stage of being where they live on joy alone.

O great Glooscaap and kind Balder, born of human
heart's desire,
When earth's need took shape and substance, and the
impulse to aspire
Passed among the new-made peoples, touching the red
clay with fire,

By the myth and might of beauty, lead us and allure us still,
Past the open door of wonder and oblivion's granite sill,
Past the curtains of the sunset in the portals of the hill,

To new provinces of wisdom, sailless latitudes of soul.
I for one must keep the splendid faith in good your lives
extol,
Well assured the love you lived by is my being's
source and goal.

Fearless when the will bids " Venture," or the sleepless
mind bids " Know,"
Here among my lowly neighbours blameless let me come
and go,
Till I, too, receive the summons to the silent Tents of
Snow.

In a garden over Grand Pré, bathed in the serenity
Of the early autumn sunlight, came these quiet thoughts
to me,
While the wind went down the orchard to the dikes and
out to sea.

*(Idling yet? My flowery children, only far too well I see
How this day will glow forever in my life that is to be!
I must go and pick my apples. There is Malyn calling me !)*

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

'There is enough poetry in the wit and humour and idealistic or grotesque fantasy of Mr. Chesterton's essays and novels to rank him as a poet even if he had written no verse. The wit and humour, fantasy, emotion, high seriousness that are in his one play, " Magic," are characteristic of all his work, including his poems. " The Wild Knight " (1900); " The Ballad of the White Horse " (1913); " Poems " (1915); " The Ballad of St. Barbara " (1923).

The Donkey

WHEN fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And cars like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will ;
Starve, scourge, deride me : I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools ! For I also had my hour ;
One far fierce hour and sweet ;
There was a shout about my cars,
And palms before my feet.

The Praise of Dust

“WHAT of vile dust?” the preacher said.

Methought the whole world woke,
The dead stone lived beneath my foot,
And my whole body spoke.

“You, that play tyrant to the dust,
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space,

“Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon’s end
Stand blazing silently.

“Rich white and blood-red blossom stones,
Lichens like fire encrust,
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The vision of the dust.

“Pass them all by: till, as you come
Where, at a city’s edge,
Under a tree—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

“The sunshine falls on one brown head.
You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
The trumpets of that day

“When God to all his paladins
By His own splendour swore
To make a fairer face than heaven,
Of dust and nothing more.”

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

“ The Little City ” (1911) ; “ The Escaped Princess ” (1916) ;
“ The Hills of Morning ” (1921) ; “ The Gothic Rose ”
(1922) ; “ The Garland of Armour ” (1923).

Vespers

THE light is going away from the dear world :
It is all vanished with the sunken sun ;
Into long lines of rest the clouds are curled,
And slumber—all but one.

That, hung up-piled, shines over all its height
With loveliest gold and rose of softened fire,
Borrowing from the west unearthlier light,
As it mounts slowly higher.

Quietly like a dream the evening
Droops with its dim veils on the silent wood :
A few brown birds make deeper as they sing
The heavenly solitude.

Ah, blessèd dream ! surely I seem to see
How in Her place of light where no wind blows,
Shines in Her glorious virginity
The White and Mystic Rose.

Alas ! the darkness falls upon my vision,
And on the woods it falls, and on the lands ;
Yet, though the cities hold it in derision,
The City of Heaven stands.

RICHARD CHURCH

“The Flood of Life and Other Poems” (1917); “Philip and Other Poems” (1923).

The Nightingale

THE day has sunk exhausted with his strife,
And even yet the western sky is stained
With lightless glooms of blood. The ebbing life
Flames fitfully; and, noiseless, unrestrained,
The midnight fantasy of summer fire
Reveals the murmuring forest, and is gone
Before the startled leap of my desire
Can tell my heart what it has gazed upon.
Desire! The hour is rich with sudden hopes;
The night is odorous with life and love.
Desire! What is that throbbing from the slopes
Of the dark hill, deep in the silent grove?
The sullen night is troubled with thy fire,
Oh tragic voice of all the world's desire.

ETHEL CLIFFORD

“Songs of Dreams” (1903); “Love's Journey” (1905).

Had Sappho Lived

NAY, take the gold I offer, I am old
And blind, but I have looked upon Love's face
And trod the secret ways you wander in.
You think because my fires are dead and cold
That I have never known the altar-place,
Nor seen the hidden sanctuary within.

Ethel Clifford

Yet once I ran as happy maidens run,
And climbed the windy hill, and searched the lea
For garlands, till Love burned away my heart.
And then I sang no more, nor sought the sun,
Nor listened to the ever-singing sea,
But sat by grey-leaved willows all apart.

Till, through the willows whispering in the rain,
There came a voice that cried : " Is all Life told
And counted naught because Love shuts one door ? "
Then reached I for my harp and sang again,
And gathered all my sorrows into gold,
And of my grief made gladness for the poor

The watching shepherds sing my words at night ;
Rich merchants send me many and great gifts
'To make them songs. Now am I old and blind,
Yet still my spirit strains towards the light,
Like to a new-fledged lark that soars and lifts,
But knows not what's to seek or what's to find

So take my gift, and round your slender throat
Set jewelled chains, and call your lover near.
His eyes shall find your fairness grown more fair ;
His hands shall find the jewels that denote
Your beauty's worth ; his heart shall find both dear,
Nor ever know which holds him closer there.

Love goes about the earth in many a guise :
Ask not too closely of the name he bears
When he shall pause beside your open gate.
Stretch forth your hands and question not his eyes.
The way is long for whoso lonely fares,
And bare the singly woven web of Fate.

The Song in the Valley

The poor refuse not bread, the thirsty wine ;
What hunger and what thirst like that of Love ?
I that had nothing am now rich for you.
Buy with my gold the thing you count divine :
Earth often gives what is refused above,
And mortals pay the debt from heaven due.

The Song in the Valley

HOW softly comes the night. The thousand fires
The new-waked stars have lit beyond the sky
Shine dim and distant as war-beacons show
To one too old to hear the rallying-cry.

A slow contentment in the valley broods,
Far from the swift unrest of higher airs.
Does Fate grow kinder at the journey's end,
Or is it we grow wiser in our prayers ?

Yet sometimes, through the sleepy valley's peace,
I hear, from deep within my heart, the song
We heard when, morning-young upon the hill,
We yearned towards the battle, being strong.

We thought together we should hold the stars ;
We took the sun in heaven for a sign
We should together win the earth, and sit
In Honour's hall and drink the heroes' wine.

And now the journey ends, and we have won
No kingdom ; yet not quite uncrowned we go :
For Love was ours and all the songs Love sings,
The dreams that those who love not cannot know

Helena Coleman

Since everything must pass and we must pass—

We have seen the world and played in it our parts—
Give me your hand and draw me through the porch
Of sleep, the sanctuary of pilgrim hearts.

HELENA COLEMAN

Canadian poet. "Marching Men : War Verses" (1917).

The Fields are Green in Canada

(Written in Wartime)

THE fields are green in Canada,
And bloom is on the bough,
The orchards by the farmhouse
Are just a glory now ;
The thorn-trees by the fences,
The lilacs by the door,
Seem more intent on blooming than
They ever did before.

*But there are eyes in Canada
That cannot see for tears,
And there are hearts in Canada
Grown weary with their fears,
The nesting-birds of Canada,
They pipe to deafened ears.*

The April woods of Canada
Harbour the sweetest things—
A flash of lilting rapture
Mere recollection brings ;
Hepaticas and violets
And all the fairy train
Run out in rosy pathways to
Subdue the world again.

A Cradle Song

*But who is there in Canada
Has any mind to-day
To roam the woods of Canada
Or count the flowers of May,
When Sorrow walks in Canada
And Grief has mind to stay?*

Yet is there bloom in Canada
With scent of other life
Plucked from the fields of burning,
Snatched from the hands of strife ;
And they who won it, silenced
Just at the turn of dawn,
Their names shall long remembered be
When ours are dimmed and gone—

*They made a song for Canada
Shall ring the world around,
Though hearts may grieve, yet Canada
Forever more is crowned,
And these green fields of Canada
Henceforth are sacred ground.*

PADRIAC COLUM

Irish poet and dramatist. "Wild Earth" (1901).

A Cradle Song

O, MEN from the fields !
Come gently within.
Tread softly, softly,
O ! men coming in.

Padriac Colum

Mayourneen is going
From me and from you,
Where Mary will fold him
With mantle of blue !

From reek of the smoke
And cold of the floor,
And the peering of things
Across the half-door.

O, men from the fields !
Soft, softly come thro',
Mary puts round him
Her mantle of blue.

The Plougher

SUNSET and silence ! A man : around him earth
savage, earth broken ;
Beside him two horses—a plough !

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man
there in the sunset,
And the Plough that is twin to the Sword, that is founder
of cities !

“ Brute-tamer, plough-maker, earth-breaker ! Can'st
hear ? There are ages between us.

“ Is it praying you are as you stand there alone in the sunset ?

“ Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you, earth
child and earth master ?

“ Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana ?

“ Yet, why give thought to the gods ? Has Pan led
your brutes where they stumble ?

“ Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan
put hands to your plough ?

Fate

“What matter your foolish reply! O, man, standing
lone and bowed earthward,
“Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the
night-giving God.”

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with
the savage ;
The brute tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth
only above them.

A head's breadth? Ay, but therein is hell's depth, and
the height up to heaven,
And the thrones of the gods and their halls, their chariots,
purples, and splendours.

WILLIAM LEONARD COURTNEY

Editor of the *Fortnightly*, and for many years literary
editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, author of divers works in
philosophy and literary criticism, of “Kit Marlowe,” a
drama, “Undine,” etc.

Fate

HIGH in the spaces of sky
Reigns inaccessible Fate :
Yields she to prayer or to cry ?
Answers she early or late ?

Change and re-birth and decay,
Dawning and darkness and light—
Creatures they are of a day,
Lost in a pitiless night.

William Leonard Courtney

Men are like children who play
Unknown by an unknown sea :
Centuries vanish away—
She waits—the eternal She.

Nay, but the gods are afraid
Of the hoary Mother's nod ;
They are of things that are made,
She the original God.

They have seen dynasties fall
In ruin of what has been :
Her no upheavals appal—
Silent, unmoved and serene.

Silent, unmoved and serene,
Reigns in a world uncreate,
Eldest of Gods and their Queen,
Featureless, passionless Fate.

Death

GRIEF, and the ache of things that pass and fade,
The stately pomp, the pall, the open grave,
These and the solemn thoughts which cannot save
Our eyes from tears, nor make us less afraid
Of that dread mystery which God has made :—
How many thousand thousand men who wave
Speechless farewells, with hearts forlornly brave,
Know well the mockery of Death's parade ?

This cannot help us to transgress the bounds,
Nor give us wings to overpass the steep
Ramparts of Heaven which God's angels keep :
Wide is the "great gulf fixed" : for us the mounds
Of fresh-turned earth ; above, sweet peace surrounds
The painless patience of eternal sleep.

Hereafter

οὐλος ὄρα, οὐλος δὲ νοεῖ οὐλος δὲ τ' ἀκούει.

—XENOPHANES.

“There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.”—ECCLESIASTES ix. 10.

I WAIT for thee, belovèd : and my heart,
Merged in the ocean of infinitude
Wherein all thoughts and hopes and passions brood
In dreamful slumber mid a world apart,
Dreams of that mortal sphere, where still thou art ;
There rings no human speech, no human mood
Stirs, where the All in frozen solitude
Plays on a boundless stage his awful part.

Yet if thou camest where the unmoving main
Breaks with no sound upon its ice-girt shore,
I think thy love, changing the changeless scene,
Might spread in widening circles, more and more,
Might waken passion's cry for what had been,
And fire the ancient pulse of joy and pain.

ZORA CROSS

Australian poet. “Songs of Love and Life” ; “The City of Riddle-Me-Ree” ; “The Lilt of Life” (1918).

Love Sonnet—XXXV

I CANNOT find a fault in you ; and yet
I think you are not perfect in many ways.
I have seen lips more meet for maiden praise
And eyes less shadowed with a grey regret.

Zora Cross

But pure perfection of your love has let
The tenant mirrors of my mind such rays,
All other men reflect a smoky haze
And in the murk their virtues I forget.

He knows not perfect who has found the best,
Nor worth who would deny unworthiness.
But meanest flowers are fair as any rose
When blowing fragrant to our least behest.
So you are perfect in my heart no less
For that unworthiness my poor mind knows.

The Birthday of the Dead

WHERE'ER I turn to-night, I see a child
With brown, unribboned hair ;
Smiling soft-eyed at me, as once I smiled ;
And fair, as I was fair.

Her little hands are plaiting flowers and ferns,
Her tiny feet are crossed.
Sometimes she sings, and through her carol burns
The youth that I have lost.

I know her grave is green upon the hill—
She died in infancy—
And yet how pensive, and how very still,
She sits and smiles at me.

I'll say, this time next year : " She'd have been nine
Had earth not been her bed."
Her little years increase and bloom with mine—
Ah ! how can she be dead ?

GERALD H. CROW

“ Chosen Poems ” (1915) ; “ The Island ” (1919).

The Cloister

WE will put off the world's dishonoured weeds
And all her tattered motley, we who strove
And are tired out ; with quiet footsteps move
To where His body is broken and yearns and pleads,
Where God is not an argument for creeds
To bandy in mutual scorn but a great love,
And we are sure because we cannot prove
Save by the solacing of many needs :
And where for us with our last office said,
Our prayers and fastings over, shall be found
A nameless peaceful resting where the sound
Cometh but faintly to their tranquil head,
Through the mid-quiet of the cloister-ground,
Of sacrifices for the blessed dead.

“ *When We Are Old* ”

WHEN we are old, so old that our own youth
Shews like a play we saw, shall we be glad
We served their custom or their fear like truth,
And failed the proper wisdom our hearts had !
Bethink you now the lily dies, the rose
Falls and forgets ; and how shall we keep love
More than a lily-while, when we must lose
Our beauty and all the wonderment thereof ?
Sufficient day by day till love goes over
Is this our perishable desert bread.
Love unenjoyed is lost, O perfect lover.
Not stored ; and how shall we be comforted ?
For whoso treasure up dead roses weep
Over the dead loves that they could not keep.

GERALD CUMBERLAND

Novelist, dramatist and dramatic and musical critic, who, in "Set Down in Malice," and "Written in Friendship," freely criticized contemporary authors, composers, and others.
"Rosalys and Other Poems" (1919).

Undying Wonder

FOR me life has no joys but these :
To search for new discoveries,

To burn my flesh at life's great fire,
To quench my soul of its desire,

To rise upon ambition's wings
To risk my life for gorgeous things.

But new discoveries soon blend
With stale regret, and then they end.

And the fire of life that once was hot
Soon fades and fails, and then is not.

And the soul soon wearies of desire,
And all ambition must expire.

But Thou art fire that never dies,
Thou art desire that bounds the skies.

Thou art ambition's tireless wings,
Thou art the soul that always sings.

So, though the whole world fades and dies,
I still find wonder in Thine eyes.

CHARLES DALMON

“ A Poor Man’s Riches : A Bundle of Lyrics ” (1922).

The Ancient Faith

O NEVER say that Pan is dead,
And every nymph and satyr fled,
Though, in these days of faithless pride,
Men seldom seek the countryside
On simple pilgrimage to find
The magic that Pan leaves behind !

I saw a cherry tree in flower,
All radiant from a passing shower ;
Against the deep blue sky it shone,
Most beautiful to look upon :
And from the midst of that fair tree
A dryad leaned and smiled to me.

No mortal maid was ever seen
So lovely as that cherry queen !
Hers was the face that sometimes looks
From pages of enchanted books
Where loving workmanship portrays
The beautiful of bygone days.

And if you doubt all ancient lore,
And say that satyrs are no more,
There’s many a Sussex croft will show
The marks that, even children know,
Are made upon the grassy ground
By faeries dancing round and round.

O never say that Pan is dead !
But listen for his pipes instead ;
And listen, listen till you hear
His merry music ; sweet and clear
It comes to all the faithful who
Still listen as men used to do.

WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES

Has told the story of his nomadic life in "The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp," and found in the hardships and careless freedom of his town and country wanderings inspiration for some of the most starkly realistic and exquisitely flower-like lyrics and ballads in the language. His songs sing themselves and have the beautiful simplicity of unpremeditated art. "The Soul's Destroyer" (1907); "New Poems" (1907); "Farewell to Poesy" (1910); "Songs of Joy" (1911); "Foliage" (1913); "Collected Poems" (1910-23).

April's Charms

WHEN April scatters coins of primrose gold
Among the copper leaves in thickets old,
And singing skylarks from the meadows rise,
To twinkle like black stars in sunny skies ;

When I can hear the small woodpecker ring
Time on a tree for all the birds that sing ;
And hear the pleasant cuckoo, loud and long—
The simple bird that thinks two notes a song ;

When I can hear the woodland brook, that could
Not drown a babe, with all his threatening mood ;
Upon whose bank the violets make their home,
And let a few small strawberry blossoms come :

When I go forth on such a pleasant day,
One breath outdoors takes all my care away ;
It goes like heavy smoke, when flames take hold
Of wood that's green and fill a grate with gold.

The Kingfisher

IT was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues ;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such lovely hues,
Live with proud peacocks in green parks ;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
Let every feather show its mark ;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind ;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

Sweet Stay-at-Home

SWEET' Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent :
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep ;
Thou hast not sailed in Indian seas,
Where scent comes forth in every breeze.
Thou hast not seen the rich grape grow
For miles, as far as eyes can go ;
Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light ;
Nor the North Sea in spring send out
Bright hues that like birds flit about
In solid cages of white ice—

William Henry Davies

Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Love-one-place.
Thou hast not seen black fingers pick
White cotton when the bloom is thick,
Nor heard black throats in harmony ;
Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise
To hide proud kings from common eyes,
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom
Where green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like fairy flowers—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, all these long hours.
Sweet Well-content, sweet Love-one-place,
Sweet simple maid, bless thy dear face ;
For thou hast made more homely stuff
Nurture thy gentle self enough ;
I love thee for a heart that's kind—
Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

The Likeness

WHEN I came forth this morn I saw
Quite twenty cloudlets in the air ;
And then I saw a flock of sheep,
Which told me how those clouds came there.

'That flock of sheep, on the green grass,
Well might it lie so still and proud,
Its likeness had been drawn in heaven,
On a blue sky, in silvery cloud.

I gazed me up, I gazed me down,
And swore, though good the likeness was,
'Twas a long way from justice done
To such white wool, such sparkling grass.

EDWARD DAVISON

“ Poems by Four Authors ” (1923).

Between Heaven and Charing Cross

WHEN the silence guards thy breath
And a darkness hides thy head,
Doubt, a paler shape than Death,
Draws me dreaming from thy bed.

Softly do I seek the street
Where the unhappy shadows move,
Pacing on intent to meet
The spirit that I still might love.

I dream of calm that has not been,
And never can be till I find
The long withheld, the still unseen,
The spiritual mistress mind.

Thou sleepest through oblivion
Where no lost step could echo in,
While thy pale sisters one by one
Tread the footworn moonlight thin.

Their bright shoes glimmer as they pass
Their writhen shadows ebb and flow
From lamp to lamp as in a glass
Upon the shining flags below.

Sadly I scan each fading face
With a brief and steady glance,
Their dark dispiteous looks abase
My hope and turn my eyes askance.

Mrs. C. A. Dawson-Scott

They pass away in gradual waves
Down to the mine of darkness soon ;
The houses stand like stones on graves,
The streets are empty in the moon.

Beyond an atmospheric wall
Thy dim and fearful lights decline,
And I come wondering after all
If that calm spirit can be thine.

MRS. C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT

Author of "Anna Beames," "They Green Stones," and other novels remarkable for their literary quality and realistic power, and of four volumes of poems, "Sappho," "Idyls of Womanhood," "Beyond," and "Bitter Herbs" (1923), which contains perhaps her most characteristic work in poetry.

Walls

I

SUNSHINE

Beating on shattered nurseries, on steps
Immaculately white, breaking
Into this crypt.

Thick walls, and lined with cofined thought,
Portraits of the forgotten, samplers stitched
By fingers dust an hundred years.

He to his office in the busy town, while I,
With those dark chambers overhead, must sweep and sew
Through the interminable days,
The narrowing years—

Walls

Is it a thrush
Or gipsy fluting in the lane ?

II

Walls
About a hearth, to fend
From faltering flesh the javelins of the rain,
Ay—and the stabbing whisper.

For satin shoes the paved familiar path
Between the lilies, in the trim
Dutch garden, where the dial cuts
Time into hours.

Will no one hush
That wild sweet piping in the lane ?

III

A prison of thick walls
Holding a little stagnant air, a heart
In durance ;
While the road
In bite and burn of weather,
The desperate adventure of the road,
Beckons.

At eve the fire of sticks beside the way
And love's gift pressed
To the full bosom.

IV

From the pale swathe of tents beside the beck
A gipsy, calling. . . .

WALTER DE LA MARE

In his novels and stories, no less than in his poems and in his delightful verse for children, Mr. de la Mare is usually at home in a familiar world of men and women which is not so much haunted by the spirit world, with its fays and elves and gnomes and ghostly peoples, as a natural part of it. He is sometimes as eerie and bizarre as Poe ; sometimes as quaintly fantastic as Lamb ; and often blends the divers qualities of both. "Songs of Childhood" (1902) ; "Poems" (1916) ; "The Listeners" (1912) ; "Peacock Pie" (1913) ; "Collected Poems" (1920) ; "The Veil and Other Poems" (1921).

England

NO lovelier hills than thine have laid
My tired thoughts to rest ;
No peace of lovelier valleys made
Like peace within my breast.

Thine are the woods whereto my soul ,
Out of the noontide beam,
Flees for a refuge green and cool
And tranquil as a dream.

Thy breaking seas like trumpets peal ;
Thy clouds—how oft have I
Watched their bright towers of silence steal
Into Infinity !

My heart within me faints to roam
In thought even far from thee :
Thine be the grave whereto I come,
And thine my darkness be.

The Sleeper

AS Ann came in one summer's day,
She felt that she must creep,
So silent was the clear cool house,
It seemed a house of sleep.
And sure, when she pushed open the door,
Rapt in the stillness there,
Her mother sat with stooping head,
Asleep upon a chair ;
Fast—fast asleep ; her two hands laid
Loose-folded on her knee,
So that her small unconscious face
Looked half unreal to be :
So calmly lit with sleep's pale light
Each feature was ; so fair
Her forehead—every trouble was
Smoothed out beneath her hair.
But though her mind in dream now moved
Still seemed her gaze to rest—
From out beneath her fast-sealed lids,
Above her moving breast—
On Ann ; as quite, quite still she stood ;
Yet slumber lay so deep,
Even her hand upon her lap
Seemed saturate with sleep.
And as Ann peeped, a cloudlike dread
Stole over her, and then,
On stealthy, mouselike feet she trod
And tiptoed out again.

The Song of Shadows

SWEEP thy faint strings, Musician,
With thy long lean hand ;
Downward the starry tapers burn
Sinks soft the waning sand ;

Walter De La Mare

The old hound whimpers couched in sleep,
The embers smoulder low ;
Across the walls the shadows
Come and go.

Sweep softly thy strings, Musician,
The minutes mount to hours ;
Frost on the windless casement weaves
A labyrinth of flowers ;
Ghosts linger on the darkening air,
Hearken at the open door ;
Music hath called them, dreaming,
Home once more.

Winter Dusk

DARK frost was in the air without,
The dusk was still with cold and gloom,
When less than even a shadow came
And stood within the room.

But of the three around the fire,
None turned a questioning head to look,
Still read a clear voice, on and on,
Still stooped they o'er their book.

The children watched their mother's eyes
Moving on softly line to line ;
It seemed to listen too—that shade,
Yet made no outward sign.

The fire-flames crooned a tiny song,
No cold wind stirred the wintry tree ;
The children both in Faërie dreamed
Beside their Mother's knee.

My Son

And nearer yet that spirit drew
Above that heedless one, intent
Only on what the simple words
Of her small story meant.

No voiceless sorrow grieved her mind,
No memory her bosom stirred,
Nor dreamed she as she read to two
'Twas surely three who heard.

Yet when, the story done, she smiled
From face to face, serene and clear,
A love, half dead, sprang up, as she
Leaned close and drew them near.

C. J. DENNIS

Few Australian poets have been more popular in their own country or in ours. Writes in the vernacular, with a vein of true poetry running through the racy humour of his verse. "Back Block Ballads" (1913); "The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke" (1915); "Digger Smith" (1919).

My Son

MY son! . . . Them words, jist like a blessed song,
Is singin' in me 'eart the ole day long ;
Over an' over ; while I'm scared I'll wake
Out of a dream, to find it all a fake.

My son ! Two little words, that, yesterdee,
Wus jist two simple, senseless words to me ;
An' now—no man, not since the world begun,
Made any better pray'r than that. . . . My son !

C. J. Dennis

My son an bloomin' 'eir . . . Ours ! . . . 'Ers an'
mine !

The finest kid in—Aw, the sun don't shine—
Ther' ain't no joy for me beneath the blue
Unless I'm gazin' lovin' at them two.

A little while ago it was jist " me "—
A lonely, longin' streak o' misery.
An' then 'twas " 'er an' me "—Doreen, my wife
An' now it's " 'im an' us " an'—sich is life.

But 'struth ! 'e is king-pin ! The 'ead serang !
I mustn't tramp about, or talk no slang ;
I mustn't pinch 'is nose, or make a face,
I mustn't—Strike ! 'E seems to own the place !

Cunnin' ? Yeh'd think to look into 'is eyes,
'E knoo the game clean thro' ; 'e seems that wise.
Wiv 'er an' nurse 'e is the leadin' man,
An' poor ole dad's amongst the " also ran."

" Goog, goo," 'e sez, an' curls 'is cunnin' toes.
Yeh'd be su'prised the 'caps o' things 'e knows.
I'll swear 'e tumbles I'm 'is father, too ;
The way 'e squints at me, an' sez, " Goog, goo."

Why ! 'smornin', 'ere 'is lordship gets a grip
Fair on my finger—give it quite a nip !
An' when I tugs 'e won't let go 'is hold !
'Angs on like that ! An' 'im not three weeks old !

" Goog, goo," 'e sez. I'll swear yeh never did
In all yer natcheril, see sich a kid.
The cunnin' ways 'e's got ; the knowin' stare—
Ther' ain't a youngster like 'im *anywhere* !

My Son

An', when 'e gets a little pain inside,
'Is dead straight griffin ain't to be denied.
I'm sent to talk sweet nuffin's to the fowls ;
While nurse turns 'and-springs ev'ry time 'e 'owls.

But say, I tell yeh straight . . . I been thro' 'ell !
The things I thort I wouldn't dare to tell
Lest, in the tellin', I might feel again
One little part of all that fear an' pain.

It come so sudden that I lorst me block.
First, it was, 'Ell-fer-leather to the doc.,
'Oo took it all so calm 'e made me curse—
An' then I sprints like mad to get the nurse.

By gum ; that woman ! But she beat me flat !
A man's jist putty in a game like that.
She owned me 'appy 'ome almost before
She'd fairly got 'er nose inside the door.

Sweatin' I was ; but cold wiv fear inside—
An' then, to think a man could be denied
'Is wife an' 'ome an' told to fade away
By jist one fat old nurse 'oo's in 'is pay !

I was too weak wiv funk to start an' rouse.
'Struth ! Ain't a man the boss in 'is own 'ouse ?
“ You go an' chase yerself ! ” she tips me straight.
“ Ther's nothin' now fer you to do but—wait.”

Wait ? . . . Gawd ! . . . I never knoo what waitin'
meant
In all me life, till that day I was sent
To loaf around, while there inside—Aw, strike !
I couldn't tell yeh wot that hour was like !

C. J. Dennis

Three times I comes to listen at the door ;
Three times I drags meself away once more ;
'Arf dead wiv fear ; 'arf filled wiv tremblin' joy . . .
An' then she beckons me, an' sez—" A boy ! "

" A boy ! " she sez. " An' bofe is doin' well ! "
I drops into a chair, an' jist sez—" 'Ell ! "
It was a pray'r. I feels bofe crook an' glad . . .
An' that's the strength of bein' made a dad.

I thinks of church, when in that room I goes,
'Oldin' me brea'f an' walkin' on me toes.
Fer 'arf a mo' I feared me nerve 'ud fail
To see 'er lyin' there so still an' pale.

She looks so frail, at first, I dursn't stir.
An' then, I leans acrost an' kisses 'er ;
An' all the room gets sorter blurred an' dim . . .
She smiles, an' moves 'er 'ead. " Dear lad ! Kiss
'im."

Near smothered in a ton of snowy clothes,
First thing, I sees a bunch o' stubby toes,
Bald 'ead, termater face, an' two big eyes.
" Look, Kid," she smiles at me. " Ain't 'e a size ? "

'E didn't seem no sorter size to me ;
But yet, I speak no lie when I agree ;
" 'E is," I sez, an' smiles back at Doreen.
" The biggest nipper fer 'is age I've seen."

She turns away ; 'er eyes is brimmin' wet.
" Our little son ! " she sez. " Our precious pet ! "
An' then, I scen a great big drop roll down
An' fall—kersploh !—fair on 'is nibs's crown.

My Son

An' still she smiles. "A lucky sign," she said.
"Somewhere, in some ole book, one time I read,
'The child will sure be blest all thro' the years
Who's christened wiv 'is mother's 'appy tears.'"

"Kiss 'im," she sez. I was afraid to take
Too big a mouthful of 'im, fear 'e'd break.
An' when 'e gits a fair look at me phiz
'E puckers up 'is nose, an' then—Geewhizz!

'Ow *did* 'e 'owl! In 'arf a second more
Nurse 'ad me 'ustled clean outside the door.
Scarce knowin' 'ow, I gits out in the yard,
An' leans agen the fence an' thinks reel 'ard.

A long, long time I looks at my two 'ands.
"They're all I got," I thinks, "they're all that stands
'Twixt this 'ard world an' them I calls me own.
An' fer their sakes I'll work 'em to the bone."

Them vows an' things sounds like a lot o' guff.
Maybe, it's foolish thinkin' all this stuff—
Maybe, it's childish-like to scheme an' plan ;
But—I dunno—it's that way wiv a man.

I only know that kid belongs to me!
We ain't decided yet wot 'e's to be.
Doreen, she sez 'e's got a poit's eyes ;
But I ain't got much use fer them soft guys.

I think we ought to make 'im something great—
A bookie, or a champeen 'eavy-weight :
Some callin' that'll give 'im room to spread.
A fool could see 'e's got a clever 'cad.

I knows 'e's good an' honest ; for 'is eyes
Is jist like 'ers ; so big an' lovin'-wise ;

May Doney

They carries peace an' trust where'er they goes.
An', say, the nurse she sez 'e's got my nose !

Dead ring fer me ole conk, she sez it is.
More like a blob of putty on 'is phiz,
I think. But 'e's a fair 'ard case, all right.
I'll swear I thort 'e wunk at me last night !

My wife an' fam'ly ! Don't it sound all right !
That's wot I whispers to meself at night.
Some day, I s'pose, I'll learn to say it loud
An' careless ; kiddin' that I don't feel proud.

My son ! . . . If ther's a Gawd 'Oo's leanin' near
To watch our dilly little lives down 'ere,
'E smiles, I guess, if 'E's a lovin' one—
Smiles, friendly-like, to 'ear them words—My son ,

MAY DONEY

“ Songs of the Real ” (1905) ; “ The Way of Wonder ” (1917).

Ascension

LOVE me, Dear Heart ! but love me not so well
As on the gift to lavish all your gold ;
Hand me not all my treasure yet to hold,
Nor pour me all my wine to drink, nor tell
Your utmost vows, nor let my heaven be
Revealed at once to me.

But by slow steps of gladness draw my feet
Up ever mounting ways toward far-peaked bliss ;
Behind each kiss store me a fonder kiss,

Night Vision

Behind each smile another still more sweet,
Behind each glance a soul-flash yet more true
And eloquent of you.

Love me so purely that I grow more pure
Because I peep at paradise from earth,
So dearly that I take a richer worth,
So truly that I know my crown is sure ;
But so imperfectly that every day
You woo and win in some more godlike way.

CHARLES MONTAGU DOUGHTY

Mr. Doughty's first book was written in prose—one of the greatest of all travel books, "Travels in Arabia Deserta" (1888). He had turned sixty before he made his first appearance as a poet ; had devoted twenty years to a study of the English of the golden age of Elizabeth and, in his works, has made that English his own. The archaic form and phrasing of his verse presents difficulties to the average reader, but has won enthusiastic admirers among the chief of contemporary critics and poets. "The Dawn in Britain" (1906) ; "Adam Cast Forth" (1908) ; "The Cliffs" (1909) ; "The Clouds" (1912) ; "Mansoul, or the Riddle of the World" (1920).

Night Vision

(From "The Cliffs")

AWN (*an elf piper*), ROBIN, HOWT, and other ELVES.

AWN. O, who of you has here,
A bugle-horn to call our great elf-choir.

ROBIN. I can flute like an owl, *whoo-hoo-huh* ! with the
best.

I can blow I a loud bugle note in my fist.

Charles Montagu Doughty

(ROBIN *sounds as it were an horn, in his knit hands ; and blows then the owls note.*)

HOWT. 'Tis dewfall, 'tis dewfall ; run through the
green wood.
Hie, little goodfellows, leap over the clod.
And ye which loiter in
The smooth-cropt meadows sheen ;
Where feed ruckling the ewes, and couch chawing fat
kine ;
Foot it, skip, leap it, over the beasts' chines :
Spring elves and tumble over each others backs !
Run through myrtle bog, and rushy mire,
Round cobwebbed thorn ; about the scragged briar ;

Over bank, over dyke,
Over the hollow brook,
Leap hither, leap hither !
And ye hill-elves, afar ;
Come running down, adown from your dune brinks !
Heed ! elfen how ye tread,
On any rattling leaf,
Lest ye waken the snake ;
Which fell enemy is,
To elf-kind.

ELVES' DISTANT VOICES. We are coming presently ! . . .

AWN. Look elves, how now I quaintly cast my foot !
When next I pipe, I'll teach you the new set ;
How with bent kneebows, to trace a light morrice.

HOWT. But elf sires of mine age, whose lustless feet
And old dry joints are, like to mine, unfit,
To trip, in looking of elf-maidens sweet ;
Can on these purple toad-stools, sprung to-night,
Here round me sit : sit by me and look on,
But all the while sit mum.

Night Vision

AWN. Up now, young elves, dance to new merry note,
Of my pipe's throat : tread it forth, tread it forth !
Piff !

(Enter more ELVES running.)

HOWT. Whence come ye foot hot ?

ONE OF THE NEW-COME ELVES. O Awn, O Howt !
Not past a league from hence, lies close-cropped plot,
Where purple millworts blow, which conies haunt,
Amidst the windy heath. We saw gnomes dance
There ; that not bigger been than harvest mice.
Some of their heads were deckt, as seemed to us,
With moonbeams bright : and those to-night hold feast ;
Though in them there none utterance is of speech.

AWN. Be those our mothers' cousins, dainty of grace :
But sold now, in a moonlight, are they seen.
They live not longer than do humble been.

ELVES. We saw of living herb, intressed with moss,
Their small wrought cabins open on the grass.

AWN. Other, in gossamer bowers, wonne underclod.

ELVES. And each gnome held in hand a looking glass ;
Wherein he keeked, and kissed oft the Moons face.

AWN. Are they a faery offspring, without sex,
Of the stars' rays.

ELVES. They'd wings on their flit feet ;
That seemed, in their oft shining, glancing drops
Of rain, which beat on bosom of the grass :
Wherein be some congealed as adamant.

We stooped to gaze (a neighbour tussock hid us),
On sight so fair : their beauty being such,
That seemed us it all living thought did pass.
Yet were we spied ! for looked down full upon us,
Disclosing then murk skies, Moons clear still face.

In that they shrunk back, and clapped to their doors.
(And some in chaps and gapes sunk, of the ground ;)
One roves at me, with glancing eye !
Whereof I bleed and strangle inwardly.

Charles Montagu Doughty

(*He holds his heart.*)

Heart-hurt ; and every hour am like to die.

HOWT. Die foolish elf ; there n' is no remedy !

AWN. Tread round now elves, in light-foot companies,
To my pipes measure.
And when you've had enough,
Ye shall cry me *Puff* !

(*He pipes, and ELVES dance apace.*)

ELVES. We cry you *Puff* ! We've all, we've all lost
breath.

(*AWN ceases ; and ELVES stand holding their
panting sides.*)

HOWT. Clap hands now merrily all, above your
heads,
Whilst sleep your feet, to help this labouring moon ;
Whose cheerful lamp murk scudding wrack hath blotted.

(*They stand and all clap hands.*)

AWN. I swear by my fay
'Twill all too soon be day.

ROBIN. The night lightens, heaven brightens !

WOOD-ELVES. We'll run to watch for sunblinks in the
wood,
And cry ; when shoot the first athwart green sprays !
ELVES ALL. Gather sweet woodbines, whilst ye may !

(*Exeunt WOOD-ELVES.*)

HOWT. Run other, to the end of yond green hill :
To spy, if yet He cometh up ; to put out
The Moon.

AWN. Now almost our fair night is done. . . .

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

The creator of Sherlock Holmes, whose great historical novels, "The White Company," "The Refugees," "Sir Nigel," "Micha Clarke," will probably receive full recognition when Sherlock Holmes loses a little of his popularity, has written three volumes of stirring and vigorous verse: "Songs of Action" (1898); "Songs of the Road" (1911); "The Guards Came Through" (1920); "Collected Poems" (1922).

A Ballad of the Ranks

WHO carries the gun?
A lad from over the Tweed.
Then let him go, for well we know
He comes of a soldier breed.
So drink together to rock and heather,
Out where the red deer run,
And stand aside for Scotland's pride—
The man that carries the gun!
For the Colonel rides before,
The Major's on the flank,
The Captains and the Adjutant
Are in the foremost rank.
But when it's "Action front!"
And fighting's to be done,
Come one, come all, you stand or fall
By the man who holds the gun.

Who carries the gun?
A lad from a Yorkshire dale.
Then let him go, for well we know
The heart that never will fail.
Here's to the fire of Lancashire,
And here's to her soldier son!
For the hard-bit north has sent him forth—
The lad that carries the gun.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from a Midland shire.
Then let him go, for well we know
He comes of an English sire.
Here's a glass to a Midland lass,
And each can choose the one,
But east and west we claim the best
For the man that carries the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from the hills of Wales.
Then let him go, for well we know
That Taffy is hard as nails.
There are several ll's in the place where he dwells,
And of w's more than one,
With a " Llan " and a " pen," but it breeds good men,
And it's they who carry the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from the windy west.
Then let him go, for well we know
That he is one of the best.
There's Bristol rough, and Gloucester tough,
And Devon yields to none.
Or you may get in Somerset
Your lad to carry the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from London town.
Then let him go, for well we know
The stuff that never backs down.
He has learnt to joke at the powder smoke,
For he is the fog-smoke's son,
And his heart is light and his pluck is right—
The man who carries the gun.

Who carries the gun ?

A lad from the Emerald Isle.

A Prayer

Then let him go, for well we know
We've tried him many a while.
We've tried him east, we've tried him west,
We've tried him sea and land,
But the man to beat old Erin's best
Has never yet been planned.

Who carries the gun ?
It's you, and you, and you ;
So let us go, and we won't say no
If they give us a job to do.
Here we stand with a cross-linked hand,
Comrades every one ;
So one last cup, and drink it up
To the man who carries the gun !
For the Colonel rides before,
The Major's on the flank,
The Captains and the Adjutant
Are in the foremost rank.
And when its " Action front !"
And there's fighting to be done,
Come one, come all, you stand or fall
By the man who holds the gun.

JOHN DRINKWATER

Has done more as dramatist and critic than as poet ; his finest and most enduring work is perhaps in his prose dramas, " Cromwell," and " Robert E. Lee," and in his three or four slim volumes of verse. " Poems " (1908-14) ; " Swords and Ploughshares " (1916) ; " Olton Pools " (1916) ; " Tides " (1917) ; " Seeds of Time " (1921) ; " Preludes " (1922).

A Prayer

LORD, not for light in darkness do we pray,
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,

John Drinkwater

Not that the slow ascension of our day
Be otherwise.

Not for a clearer vision of the things
Whereof the fashioning shall make us great,
Not for remission of the peril and stings
Of time and fate.

Not for a fuller knowledge of the end
Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid,
Not that the little healing that we lend
Shall be repaid.

Not these, O Lord. We would not break the bars
Thy wisdom sets about us : we shall climb
Unfettered to the secrets of the stars
In Thy good time.

We do not crave the high perception swift
When to refrain were well, and when fulfil,
Nor yet the understanding strong to sift
The good from ill.

Not these, O Lord. For these Thou hast revealed,
We know the golden season when to reap
The heavy-fruited treasure of the field,
The hour to sleep.

Not these. We know the hemlock from the rose,
The pure from stained, the noble from the base,
The tranquil holy light of truth that glows
On Pity's face.

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,
Across our hearts are written thy decrees,
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
With more than these.

Last Confessional

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labour as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
 To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need,
Give us to build above the deep intent
 The deed, the deed.

Immortality

WHEN other beauty governs other lips,
 And snowdrops come to strange and happy springs,
When seas renewed bear yet unbuilted ships,
 And alien hearts know all familiar things,
When frosty nights bring comrades to enjoy
 Sweet hours at hearths where we no longer sit,
When Liverpool is one with dusty Troy,
 And London famed as Attica for wit . . .
How shall it be with you, and you, and you,
 How with us all who have gone greatly here
In friendship, making some delight, some true
 Song in the dark, some story against fear?
Shall song still walk with love, and life be brave,
And we, who were all these, be but the grave?

Last Confessional

FOR all ill words that I have spoken,
For all clear moods that I have broken,
 For all despite and hasty breath,
 Forgive me, Love, forgive me, Death.

Death, master of the great assize
Love, falling now to memories,

Helen Parry Eden

You two alone I need to prove,
Forgive me, Death, forgive me, Love.

For every tenderness undone,
For pride when holiness was none
But only easy charity,
O Death, be pardoners to me.

For stubborn thought that would not make
Measure of love's thought for love's sake,
But kept a sullen difference,
'Take, Love, this laggard penitence.

For cloudy words too vainly spent
To prosper but in argument,
When truth stood lonely at the gate,
On your compassion, Death, I wait.

For all the beauty that escaped
This foolish brain, unsung, unshaped,
For wonder that was slow to move,
Forgive me, Death, forgive me, Love.

For love that kept a secret cruse,
For life defeated of its dues,
This latest word of all my breath—
Forgive me, Love, forgive me, Death.

HELEN PARRY EDEN

Daughter of Judge Parry ; wife of an artist (Denis Eden), an artist herself, a critic as well as a poet, and one of the comparatively few women included among contributors to *Punch*.

The Petals

“ Bread and Circuses ” (1914); “ Coal and Candlelight ”
(1918); “ The Rhyme of the Servants of Mary ” (1919);
“ A String of Sapphires ” (1921).

The Petals

YOURSELF in bed
(My lovely Drowsy-head)
Your garments lie like petals shed

Upon the floor
Whose carpet is strewn o'er
With little things that late you wore.

For the morrow's wear
I fold them neat and fair
And lay them on the nursery chair ;

And round them lie
Airs of the hours that die
With all their stored-up fragrancy.

As a flower might
Give out to the cool night
The warmth it drank in day-long light

So wool and lawn
From your soft skin withdrawn
(Whereon they were assumed at dawn)

Breathe the spent mood,
Lost act and attitude,
Of the small sweetness they endued.

Ere all turn cold
No garment that I hold
But shakes a vision from its fold

Vivian Locke Ellis

Of little feet
That vainly would be fleet,
Tangled about with meadow-sweet,

And of bent knees
When Betsey kneeling sees,
In the parched hedgerow, strawberries.

Such things I see
Folding your clothes, which be
Weeds of the dead day's comedy.

The while I pray
Your part may be alway
So simple and so good to play,

And do desire
Your life may still respire
Such sweetness as your cast attire.

VIVIAN LOCKE ELLIS

“The Revolt of Woman” (1910); “The Venturers” (1913).

After

WHEN death has sentinelled my door
Go thou, and visit there no more ;
Go quickly thence, and nothing take
And nothing leave for memory's sake.

And when they bring me to my bier
Come not in thought or presence near,
And when they take me to my grave
Do thou that little journey save.

The Wayfarer

And when they leave me to my sleep
Do thou no piteous vigil keep.
But rather rest, that I may be
At one, dear heart, in dreams with thee.

And after, if thou think to bring
Of flowers some painless offering,
Come if thou wilt, and blossoms bear,
But leave them not to wither there.

Or if thou leave them, sweet, renew,
The gift, as the sweet seasons do ;
And if thou sorrow in this wise
Come not in sorrow's sombre dyes.

Ah, I would bid thee, if I dare,
On my sepulture spend no care ;
Yet little know I how the dead
May leave the living comforted.

So love me, love, in life as now,
And then, in death, renew the vow ;
Love's bounty spend, whate'er it is,
And, for love's sake, no more than this.

The Wayfarer

IS this the road into Elysium ?

O sunburnt stranger, you who seem to have
Leisure to speak with whomso'er may come,
Do me this courtesy ;

Make answer for yourself alone, I pray,
And then, if time bestead you, and your heart
Has the wayfarer's wisdom in it, say,
Is this road for me ?

Godfrey Elton

For look you, I am older, and have gone
More than a half-day's journey towards the night,
And mine is not the joy or heart of one
Willing to turn again ;

And look you, if your gentleness would send
Me this way too, seeing how fair it is,
Consider, I have neither scrip nor friend,
Nor cleansing from my stain,

And so what like are they that keep the gate,
Are they of your mild conscience, do they serve
Their own hearts, or do prudent laws of state
Make entry hazardous ;

And do they put deep questions, such as bring
Intolerable thoughts for witnesses
To such a long and baffling questioning
As might be hard for us ;

Answer me then, and then again of this ;
That I may hear you tell me to return,
With such kind counsel, as your manner is,
Such courtesies as are

A boon to those who on this journey be,
And some solace for those who take the road,
And to all doubting travellers, and to me,
Who have not trespassed far.

GODFREY ELTON

“ Schoolboys and Exiles ” (1919) ; “ Years of Peace ” (1925)

News

THEY came, you know, and told me you were dead,
Those little men who never dreamed of pain.

The Rarest Gift

“There’s not much racing news to-day,” I said.
I said, “I hope it will be fine again.”
And then, I think, I climbed a certain hill
And saw two plough-shares and a rusty bin,
And further on, beyond John Farmer’s mill,
A fence in which five rails had fallen in,
But sixty-two I counted upright still.
And all the time my feet were saying “dead,
Beating it slowly, beating through my head.

I saw it all. I saw the little room
In which, they said, they laid you; to and fro
I heard the creeper rustling, and the boom
Of some old hornet on the lawns below.
I saw “The Stag at Evening” by the door,
And, though I struggled hard, my eyes were drawn
On past those old red ink stains on the floor,
On past the table, and “the Wounded Fawn”
To that bright hair . . .

No, I was wrong before.

Look at those railings, there are sixty-three,
I missed the one beyond laburnum tree .

GEOFFREY FABER

“Interflow” (1915); “In the Valley of Vision” (1918).

The Rarest Gift

THE rarest gifts God can bestow
Do with the little children go.
Be these of body or of soul
They shine as never aureole
Shone round the head of fabled saint,

Geoffrey Faber

Untarnished yet nor yet grown faint.
What be these gifts? Who asks is blind.
Not hidden are they nor hard to find.
In every street in every city,
'Though much there be to quicken pity,
Who cannot see what is so plain,
'Tis certain he has eyes in vain.
Let him but be taught of me
To look upon them lingeringly,
He shall find that he is given
Such a key as opens Heaven,
Of his own heart the master key.
(If Heaven's not there, where can it be?)

“Come put these beauties to the proof!”
He obstinately holds aloof.
He will not look, he will not learn,
Aside his feet will never turn.
He goes upon the hard, white road.
His pride is in the heavy load,
The load he bears upon his back.
His eyes are fastened to the track.
He will not look, he will not hear,
Though angels whispered in his ear.

There are the children's voices. Hark!
Children are playing in the park.
Now surely that clear treble cry
Must catch him as he passes by.
'Tis like a lasso loosed and thrown
To tangle all who walk alone,
To bring them where the children play
The whole unending summer day.

And now the day is at its height.
Noon stills the chattering birds; the light
Blinds the poor traveller on the road.

The Rarest Gift

Full heavy is his heavy load.
Beneath the clustering oak 'tis sweet
To rest upon the carven seat ;
He sits him down, his fardel lays
Upon the turf ; his dull glance strays
Where little boys and girls are seen
On the gilded glowing green,
Chasing each other round and round,
Making such a merry sound,
That even the blackbird stops his trill.
The traveller smiles against his will !

Deepens the day ; at length are hushed
Their voices too. Weary and flushed
The children scatter to the trees,
And each stops short soon as he sees
There underneath the clustering oak
The Traveller in his travelling cloak.
Now, gloomy Traveller, thou art caught !
At no price can escape be bought.
Here comes with grave regarding eyes
Their general, and thee espies,
Full seven years old, and four feet high,
—Tremble thou mayest, thou canst not fly.

Brave men respect the brave. The foe
Has eyed him o'er from head to toe,
And given the word—his life is spared.
(Though what had happened had he dared,
In pride of old age, to rebel,
I have not wit enough to tell !)
And round the Traveller's either knee
Gathers the little company.

They made him tell a story, who
Adventureless had lived life through.

Eleanor Farjeon

But in his meanly furnished mind
Stories, alas ! were hard to find,
Till searching there he came at last
On a ballad from the olden past,
And told the tale of Robin Hood
And his gay life in the green wood.
Then did the children live again
The lives of Robin and his men.
And while he spoke and while they listened,
I saw that tears in his eyes glistened,
I knew that in his heart once more
Wide open stood the long shut door.
And there I left him, well content ;
For of all gifts to children lent,
That gift is prized more than gold
Which saves a soul from growing old.

ELEANOR FARJEON

‘ Dream Songs of the Beloved ’ (1911) ; ‘ Sonnets and Poems ’
(1918) ; ‘ Songs of a Penny Piper ’ (1922) ; ‘ All the Year
Round ’ (1923).

Sonnet

WILT thou put seals on love because men say
Love is a thing that certain time will steal ?
As well, since night is certain after day,
Might men their eyelids to the noontide seal.
Nay ! even though that worn-out tale were truth,
And love, dear love, were time’s assurèd dower,
What profit canst thou get of cheated youth
By paying usury before his hour ?

A Morning Dream

I will not hear the sorry tune of time,
That bitter quencher of young b'essedness,
Not to have proved young rapture is the crime,
Unproven it will be quenched no less, no less.
And thou wilt to the earth at last, time's scorn,
Relinquishing a crown thou hast not worn.

A Morning Dream

UNDERNEATH a skylight I
In my bed o' mornings lie,
Staring up through window-panes
Made dim by unremembered rains,
And always see above my face
A wavy tree in dingy space.

Beyond the greeny branch up there
Flows the deep and clear blue air,
So that I almost seem to be
Drowned at the bottom of the sea
Within the cabin of a ship
Wrecked on a long-forgotten trip.

And I who lie so still abed
Might be some mariner long-dead,
While green and blue above me flow,
And living weeds wave to and fro,
And withered leaves like fishes skim
The streams of air where sparrows swim

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

A lyrical and narrative poet who has shown himself also, in his studies of "Tennyson" and "Donne," a brilliant and

John Ferguson

subtly analytical critic of poetry. "The Spirit of Love" (1921); "The Condemned" (1922); "Before the Dawn" (1924).

NOW while the breath of heaven is in our eyes,
On this proud peak, the summit of each sense,
Down glancing on Thought's valley, where it lies
Crouching beneath love's lofty eminence,
Let us swear deathless faith to all things fair,
To flower and fern-decked rock and streams that fall,
And white roads winding and long uplands bare,
And all sweet sounds that in a forest call.

Yea, let us kneel and gather in from space
The cloud's bright comradeship, the joys that drive
The sun through shadows drear with radiant face,
The trusty ardour of the winds that strive.
Then surely laughing in the face of time
We may from earth's last peak to heaven climb.

JOHN FERGUSON

Has, so far, published only one book, a collection of sonnets which has been justly praised by the critics, and in 1924 was re-issued in an eleventh and enlarged edition. "Thyrea and Other Sonnets" (1912).

In Hospital

THE everlasting sameness of the days,
The never-ending sadness of the nights,
The rising hope that hopelessness o'erblights,
The fevered restlessness that slowly slays—
How heavy is my heart! O Thou Whose ways

The Circus Clown

Are in the sounding deeps and starry heights
Illume my faith, that in Thine Arm which smites
I may behold the Arm that shall upraise.

Calm and subdue this peevish spirit of mine,
Bid me be noble for her sake, whose cry—
“ Christ on the Cross, I would not have him die ! ”
Like evening incense rises to Thy Shrine.
Dear God ! let me be noble for her sake,
Lest, disappointed, her brave heart should break.

“ LET me be noble ”—God forgive the prayer ;
Yet each man prays of this abandoned throng,
And I prayed also ; but I did you wrong,
Peculiar brothers of my own despair.
I would retract my words with scrupulous care,
And to the altar bring a gift of song ;
The pleas for pity unto you belong,
Who hopeless scan Life’s rayless thoroughfare.

A little longer in this dolesome place,
Companioned by this death-o’ershadowed crew,
Only a little longer ! Is it true
Not mine the wasted frame, the desperate case ?
The pleas for pity, brothers, are for you—
And yet I prayed for pity, God of grace.

The Circus Clown

WITH whitened scalp and nose bedaubed with red,
He bounds into the ring and cracks his wheeze ;
Bursting with wit, he mounts a high trapeze,
Then falls into the net dispirited :
He mimics feats pyramidal, and dread

A. Hugh Fisher

Contortions of some "Modern Hercules,"
While at his shins they throw a wooden cheese,
Or a soft turnip hits him on the head.

When tenting days are done, and nevermore
He smells the sawdust, sees the laughing eyes,
I somehow think that on a daisied floor
He'll turn a somersault in Paradise
To give some angel-child a glad surprise
Who never saw a circus clown before.

A. HUGH FISHER

"The Ruined Barn and Other Poems" (1921).

The Outcasts

YOU live in rooms, and so do I,
Friends may frequent where we are banned :
Convention with forbidding hand
Drives love beneath the sky.

Two homeless wanderers night by night,
Past many and many a home we tramp,
While others rest by hearth and lamp,
We learn the open air's delight.

We pass and leave the homes of men,
We tread cool turf beneath bright stars,
We hear the churring of night-jars,
We hear the bittern in the fen.

We know the silence of the woods,
We know the secret of the hills,
We know wide lakes and little rills,
And sky's innumerable moods.

Once in Autumn

We know wild places dew impearled,
We know deep dells and mossy dells,
We know the scent of heather bells,
We know the beauty of the world—

Perhaps it was, that pondering this
The sweetness of His ways untrod,
Convention, too, was made by God,
To give us more than common bliss.

F. S. FLINT

One of the pioneers of what has come to be vaguely known as the "new" poetry, with all the virtues and none of the extravagances of this school. "In the Net of the Stars" (1909); "Cadences" (1915); "Otherworld" (1920).

Both Sides the Mirror

I SPOKE to myself in the mirror, and said, "It is you."
And nothing the mirror answered. Both our breaths
passed away.

"It is you—strange—you, in the mirror, and I—am
who?

Reflexion of you and of me?—Ah, who can say?"

I spoke to myself in the mirror, and he spoke too;
But a wall of silence lay dead between him and me;
And neither could hear what the other said, and neither
knew

Whether he was reflexion, or I, or both, or what were
we.

Once in Autumn

DO you recall one calm, sad autumn eve's
Bitterness, when we walked along the street

Robin Flower

And all the while were rustling at our feet
The shrivelled spoils of summer, and "Dead leaves,"
I said, "our hopes—look, not a wind relieves
Our memory of them"? You crept closer, sweet.
I looked into your eyes. Tears sprang to greet
Me, stealing all their lustre, like dim thieves.
Some wind has blown new life into our veins
Since then. Perhaps our bitterness was killed
By its own strength, and driving winds and rains
Have swept and washed away dead hopes that chilled
And galled our hearts, leaving Life free to build
The one dear hope that with us still remains.

ROBIN FLOWER

"Eric and Other Poems" (1910); "Hymenæa" (1918).

In the Train

WHEN they got in
I saw they did not care to have me there,
But just as I had marked the precious pair
I felt the train begin
Its two-hour journey. There we were, we three,
That awkward pair and me!
They sat down in the corner very prim,
A foot or two of seat 'twixt her and him,
And she looked out at the window, while he stared
At me, who dared
By some malignant scheme
To come between a lover and his dream.
She was a pretty little thing
As such things go, snub-nosed and quick of eye,
Bright-cheeked as though as yet Time's fugitive wing
Had touched her very lightly passing by,

In the Train

But for the rest a slight enough affair
Made of the clay that serves for common ware.
And he—no finer earth
Had suffered in the furnace for his birth.
You might have picked the two
At any moment from the casual crew
That in a city goes
Along the street, and why none cares or knows.

Of course in such a case
One can't help feeling out of place,
Even looks are crimes,
And so I hid myself behind the *Times*
And let the idyll run out to its end.
One never does intend
To eavesdrop in these matters, yet somehow,
Faced by the instant here and now
One listens—Those can blame
Who've never done the same—
Well, reading blindly at the Births and Deaths,
I felt their hands touch, knew their separate breaths
Were drawing each to other.
And in them yearning knew the mighty mother
Weaving the spells that she has woven of old
Since first the palm tree shone with dusty gold,
Since earth first felt in earth
Move a twin rapture and re-echoing mirth.
This is her cunning who eternally
Must live in things that die,
Who is the wine in vessels basely moulded
And in scrawled notes the song delirious folded,
Who labours without end
And none knows whither all her labours tend.
It may be that to her
The very thrust and stir,
The pulse and eagerness of love
Crowns all the centuries she strove

S. Gertrude Ford

In fume and darkness till she moulded man
And the ascent began,
Life after life till life should bring to birth
A rapture not of earth,
A song of which the words are living men,
And as a poet's pen
Traces the crabbèd words that are
More musical than any singing star,
So she in these
Poor things of earth aims at such harmonies
As, to our ears not given,
Are all the music of the gods in Heaven.

S. GERTRUDE FORD

"Lyric Leaves" (1912); "A Fight to a Finish" (1914);
"Poems of War and Peace" (1915).

The Star That Set

"*Too quick despaire!*"

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

HAD that star waited! Night had hemmed it in
So long, and still its trust was in the day;
Sure, through all darkness, of a light to win;
Steadfast in hope, whatever fear might say.
Cloud upon cloud belied it; yet it stood
Holding its torch aloft, and prophesied,
Cleaving to faith in doubt's dim neighbourhood,
Till the torch flickered; till the last hope died,
Till the moon set; and then "Night wins," it said,
Before it too went down into the dark.
And yet, not one hour after, Night was dead,
And each cloud turned a rose and hailed a lark,
How should it dream of hope, where hope was none?
Yet, had it waited, it had seen the sun.

GILBERT FRANKAU

Before he began his career as a popular novelist, woke to find himself famous for his Byronically witty and satirical "One of Us" (1912), and returned successfully to the same vein in "One of Them" (1919). Meanwhile, he had touched a more deeply human, grimly realistic note in his war poems, written while he was in the firing-line in France. "The Guns" (1916); "The City of Fear" (1917); "Collected Poems" (1923).

Reprinted from "The Poetical Works of Gilbert Frankau," by kind permission of his publishers, Messrs. Chatto & Windus, London.

How Rifleman Brown Came to Valhalla

TO the lower hall of Valhalla, to the heroes of no renown,
Relieved from his spell at the listening-post, came Rifleman Joseph Brown.

With never a rent in his khaki nor smear of blood on his face,
He flung his pack from his shoulders, and made for an empty place.

The Killer-men of Valhalla looked up from the banquet-board
At the unfouled breech of his rifle, at the unfleshed point of his sword ;
And the unsung dead of the trenches, the kings who have never a crown,
Demanded his pass to Valhalla from Rifleman Joseph Brown.

" *Who comes, unhit, to the party ?* " A one-legged Corporal spoke,
And the gashed heads nodded approval through the rings of the Endless Smoke :
" *Who comes for the beer and the Woodbines of the never-closed Canteen,*
With the barrack-shine on his bayonet and a full-charged magazine ? "

Gilbert Frankau

Then Rifleman Brown looked round him at the nameless
men of the line—
At the wounds of the shell and the bullet, at the burns of
the bomb and the mine ;
At the tunics, virgin of medals but crimson-clotted with
blood ;
At the ankle-boots and the puttees, caked stiff with the
Flanders mud ;
At the myriad short Lee-Enfields that crowded the rifle-
rack,
Each with its blade to the sword-boss brown, and its
muzzle powder-black :

And Rifleman Brown said never a word ; yet he felt in
the soul of his soul
His right to the beer of the lower Hall, though he came
to drink of it, whole ;
His right to the fags of the free Canteen, to a seat at the
banquet-board,
Though he came to the men who had killed their man,
with never a man to his sword.

*“ Who speaks for the stranger Rifleman, O boys of the free
Canteen ?*

*Who passes the chap with the unmaimed limbs and the kit
that is far too clean ? ”*

The gashed heads eyed him above their beers, the gashed
lips sucked at their smoke :
There were three at the board of his own platoon, but not
a man of them spoke.

His mouth was mad for the tankard froth and the biting
whiff of a fag,
But he knew that he might not speak for himself to the
dead men who do not brag.

How Rifleman Brown Came to Valhalla

A gun-butt crashed on the gateway, a man came staggering in ;
His head was cleft with a great red wound from the temple-bone to the chin,
His blade was dyed to the bayonet-boss with the clots that were scarcely dry ;
And he cried to the men who had killed their man :
 “ Who passes the Rifleman ? I !
By the four I slew, by the shell I stopped, if my feet be not too late,
I speak the word for Rifleman Brown that a chap may speak for his mate.”

The dead of lower Valhalla, the heroes of dumb renown,
They pricked their ears to a tale of the earth as they set their tankards down.
“ My mate was on sentry this evening when the General happened along,
And asked what he'd do in a gas-attack. Joe told him :
‘ Beat on the gong.’
‘ What else ? ’ ‘ Open fire, sir,’ Joe answered. ‘ Good God, man,’ our General said,
‘ By the time you'd beaten that bloodstained gong the chances are you'd be dead.
Just think, lad.’ ‘ Gas helmet, of course, sir.’ ‘ Yes, damn it, and *gas helmet first.*’
So Joe stood dumb to attention, and wondered why he'd been cursed.”

The gashed heads turned to the Rifleman, and now it seemed that they knew
Why the face that had never a smear of blood was stained to the jawbones, blue.

Gilbert Frankau

“ He was posted again at midnight.” The scarred heads
craned to the voice,

As the man with the blood-red bayonet spoke up for the
mate of his choice.

“ You know what it’s like in a listening-post, the Very
candles aflame,

Their bullets smacking the sand-bags, our Vickers comb-
ing your hair,

How your ears and eyes get jumpy, till each known tuft
that you scan

Moves and crawls in the shadows till you’d almost swear
it was man ;

You know how you peer and snuff at the night when the
North-East gas-winds blow.”

“ *By the one who made us and maimed us,*” quoth lower
Valhalla, “ *we know !* ”

“ Sudden, out of the blackness, sudden as Hell, there
came

Roar and rattle of rifles, spurts of machine-gun flame ;
And Joe stood up in the forward sap to try to fathom the
game.

Sudden, their shells come screaming ; sudden, his nos-
trils sniff .

The sickening reek of the rotten pears, the death that kills
with a whiff.

Death ! and he knows it certain, as he bangs on his cart-
ridge-case,

With the gas-cloud’s claws at his windpipe and the gas-
cloud’s wings on his face. . . .

We heard his gong in our dug-out, he only whacked on it
twice,

We whipped our gas-bags over our heads, and manned
the step in a trice—

For the cloud would have caught us as sure as Fate if he’d
taken the Staff’s advice.”

How Rifleman Brown Came to Valhalla

His head was cleft with a great red wound from the chin
to the temple-bone,
But his voice was as clear as a sounding gong, " I'll be
damned if I'll drink alone,
Not even in lower Valhalla ! Is he free of your free Can-
teen,
My mate who comes with the unfleshed point and the
full-charged magazine ? "

The gashed heads rose at the Rifleman o'er the rings of
the Endless Smoke,
And loud as the roar of a thousand guns Valhalla's answer
broke,
And loud as the crash of a thousand shells their tankards
clashed on the board :
*" He is free of the mess of the Killer-men, your mate of the
unfleshed sword ;
For we know the worth of his deed on earth ; as we know
the speed of the death
Which catches its man by the back of the throat and gives
him water for breath ;
As we know how the hand at the helmet-cloth may tarry
seconds too long,
When the very life of the front-line trench is staked on the
beat of a gong.
By the four you slew, by the case he smote, by the grey gas-
cloud and the green,
We pass your mate for the Endless Smoke and the beer of
the free Canteen."*

In the lower hall of Valhalla, with the heroes of no renown,
With our nameless dead of the Marne and the Aisne, of
Mons, and of Wipers town,
With the men who killed ere they died for us, sits Rifleman
Joseph Brown.

JOHN FREEMAN

A brilliant critic and essayist ("English Portraits," etc.); and a poet whose lyrics and descriptive verse have charm of fancy and grace of utterance, and the exquisitely sensitive feeling for natural beauty that is common in a born Londoner. "Presage of Victory" (1916); "Stone Trees" (1916); "Memories of Childhood" (1918-19); "Poems New and Old" (1920); "Music" (1921); "The Grove and Other Poems" (1925); "Absalom" (1925).

Absence

DISTANCE no grace can lend you, but for me
Distance yet magnifies your mystery.
With you, and soon content, I ask how should
In your two eyes be hid my heaven of good?
How should your own mere voice the strange words
 speak
That tease me with the sense of what's to seek
In all the world beside? How your brown hair,
That simply and neglectfully you wear,
Bind my wild thoughts in its abundant snare?
With you, I wonder how you're stranger than
Another woman to another man;
But parted—and you're as a ship unknown
That to poor castaways at dawn is shown
As strange as dawn, so strange they fear a trick
Of eyes long-vexed and hope with falseness sick.
Parted, and like the riddle of a dream,
Dark with rich promise, does your beauty seem.
I wonder at your patience, stirless peace,
Your subtle pride, mute pity's quick release.
Then you are strange to me and sweet as light
Or dew; as strange and dark as starless night.
Then let this restless parting be forgiven:
I go from you to find in you strange heaven.

The Wish

THAT you might happier be than all the rest,
Than I who have been happy loving you,
Of all the innocent even the happiest—
This I beseeched for you.

Until I thought of those unending skies—
Of stagnant cloud, or fleckless dull blue air,
Of days and nights delightless, no surprise,
No threat, no sting, no fear ;

And of the stirless waters of the mind,
Waveless, unfurrowed, of no living hue,
With dead leaves dropping slowly in no wind,
And nothing flowering new.

And then I no more wished you happiness,
But that whatever fell of joy or woe
I would not dare, O Sweet, to wish it less,
Or wish you less than you.

Childhood Calls

COME over, come over the deepening river,
Come over again the dark torrent of years,
Come over, come back where the green leaves quiver,
And lilac still blooms and the grey sky clears.

Come, come back to the everlasting garden,
To that green heaven, and the blue heaven above.
Come back to the time when time brought no burden
And love was unconscious, knowing not love.

In Those Old Days

IN those old days you were called beautiful,
But I have worn the beauty from your face ;
The flowerlike bloom has withered on your cheek
With the harsh years, and the fire in your eyes

Cecil French

Burns darker now and deeper, feeding on
Beauty and the remembrance of things gone.
Even your voice is altered when you speak,
Or is grown mute with old anxiety
For me.

Even as a fire leaps into flame and burns
Leaping and laughing in its lovely flight,
And then under the flame a glowing dome
Deepens slowly into blood-like light :—
So did you flame and in flame take delight,
So are you hollow'd now with aching fire.
But still I warm me and make there my home,
Still beauty and youth burn there invisibly
For me.

Now my lips falling on your silver'd skull,
My fingers in the valleys of your cheeks,
Or my hands in your thin strong hands fast caught,
Your body clutched to mine, mine bent to yours :
Now love undying feeds on love beautiful,
Now, now I am but thought kissing your thought . . .
—And can it be in your heart's music speaks
A deeper rhythm hearing mine : can it be
Indeed for me ?

CECIL FRENCH

“ Between Sun and Moon ” (1922).

Hidden Sorrow

°
HIDDEN within your heart you bore
The silent wrongs of many years ;
Your silent courage moved me more
Than any tears.

The Road

You were so gay, none guessed how deep
Your sorrow dwelt ; I only knew.
It was because you did not weep
I wept for you.

The Offering

I THOUGHT it but a little thing
To tell your worth aright ;
Yet though I laboured long, I bring
No gift for your delight.

For—in default of skill laid low—
Seeing every word is fled,
I were most happy could you know
Half I have left unsaid.

I have made songs for others ; let
Them rest, my friend, and take
What Time nor Change have touched as yet—
My failure for your sake.

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER

Novelist (“ Mainspring,” “ The Colour of Life ”), and in 1919
published “ A Friendship and Other Poems.”

The Road

WE shall not travel by the road we make ;
Ere day by day the sound of many feet
Is heard upon the stones that now we break,
We shall be come to where the cross roads meet.

For us the heat by day, the cold by night,
The inch-slow progress and the heavy load,
And death at last to close the long, grim fight
With man and beast and stone : for them the road.

V. H. Friedlaender

For them the shade of trees that now we plant,
The safe, smooth journey and the certain goal—
Yea, birthright in the land of covenant :
For us day-labour, travail of the soul.

And yet the road is ours as never theirs ;
Is not one gift on us alone bestowed ?
For us the joy of joys, O pioneers :
We shall not travel, but we make the road !

The Price

UPON the plain where ebb'd the tide
Of blood the human flotsam lay ;
And as the night came down there died
More than those bodies, more than they.

Above the trenches, by the cross
That marked each rough and nameless mound,
Rose like a mist the form of loss,
Filling the world from bound to bound.

And these the words that Shadow said,
And this the grief wherewith she grieved :
“ I am the spirit of these dead,
And I the soul of the breaved.

“ I am a thousand songs unsung,
A thousand thousand roads unmade ;
Legion my name : I am the young,
The swift, the strong, the unafraid.

“ I am a myriad precious things
That perished ere they came to birth,
And I all fair imaginings
That shall not now make glad the earth.

White Magic

“ Hear you my voice ?—a dreamlike cry
That beats from far and dies forlorn ?
I am lost love, and I, oh, I
The children never to be born.”

ROSE FYLEMAN

Her poems have a charming fantasy and humour and for many years past she has been a regular contributor to *Punch*. “Fairies and Chimneys” (1918); “The Fairy Green” (1919); “The Fairy Flute” (1921); “The Rainbow Cat” (1922); “A Small Cruise” (1923).

White Magic

BLIND folk see the fairies,
Oh, better far than we,
Who miss the shining of their wings
Because our eyes are filled with things
We do not wish to see.
They need not seek enchantment
From solemn, printed books,
For all about them as they go
The fairies flutter to and fro
With smiling, friendly looks.

Deaf folk hear the fairies
However soft their song ;
’Tis we who lose the honey sound
Amid the clamour all around
That beats the whole day long.
But they with gentle faces
Sit quietly apart ;
What room have they for sorrowing
While fairy minstrels sit and sing
Close to their listening heart ?

NORMAN GALE

A pastoral poet whose songs of love and the country life have something of the charm and simplicity of Herrick. "A Country Muse" (1892); "Orchard Songs" (1893); "Cricket Songs" (1894); "Songs for Little People" (1896); "More Cricket Songs" (1905); "Song in September" (1912); "Collected Poems" (1914); "A Merry-go-Round of Song" (1919); "A Book of Quatrains" (1925).

To the Sweetwilliam

I SEARCH the poet's honied lines
And not in vain, for columbines,
And not in vain for other flowers
That sanctify the many bowers
Unsanctified by human souls.
See where the larkspur lifts among
The thousand blossoms finely sung,
Still blossoming in the fragrant scrolls!
Charity, eglantine and rue
And love-in-a-mist are all in view,
With coloured cousins; but where are you,
Sweetwilliam?

The lily and the rose have books
Devoted to their lovely looks,
And wit has fallen in vital showers
Through England's most miraculous hours
To keep them fresh a thousand years.
The immortal library can show
The violet's well-thumbed folio
Stained tenderly by girls in tears.
The shelf where Genius stands in view
Has briar and daffodil and rue
And love-lies-bleeding; but not you,
Sweetwilliam.

To the Sweetwilliam

Thus, if I seek the classic line
For marybuds, 'tis, Shakespeare, thine !
And ever is the primrose born
'Neath Goldsmith's overhanging thorn.
In Herrick's breastknot I can see
The appleblossom, fresh and fair
As when he plucked and put it there,
Heedless of Time's anthology.

So flower by flower comes into view,
Kept fadeless by the Olympian dew
For startled eyes ; and yet not you,
Sweetwilliam.

Too seldom named ! And never so
As makes the astonished heart to go
With deer-like leapings ! Horace found
A name unsuited to the bound
His gleaming satires had to bear :
Even so, methinks a want of grace
In country calling lost a place
In poesy for one so fair.

How chancily a blossom slips
From ballad sunshine to eclipse,
Being short of honey for the lips,
Sweetwilliam !

Though gods of song have let you be,
Bloom in my little book for me.
Unwont to stoop, or lean, you show
An undefeated heart, and grow
As pluckily as cedars. Heat
And cold, and winds, that make
Tumbledown sallies, cannot shake
Your resolution to be sweet.

Then take this song, be it born to die
Ere yet the unwedded butterfly
Has glimpsed a darling in the sky,
Sweetwilliam.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

The irony, high idealism and brooding philosophy of life that characterize his work as a novelist are the distinctive qualities of Mr. Galsworthy's one book of poems, " Moods, Songs and Doggerels " (1911).

The Prayer

IF on a Spring night I went by
And God were standing there,
What is the prayer that I would cry
To Him ! This is the prayer :
O Lord of Courage grave,
O Master of this night of Spring !
Make firm in me a heart too brave
To ask Thee anything !

Errantry

COME ! let us lay a crazy lance in rest,
And tilt at windmills under a wild sky !
For who would live so petty and unblest
'That dare not tilt at something ere he die,
Rather than, screened by safe majority,
Preserve his little life to little ends,
And never raise a rebel battle-cry !

Ah ! for the weapon wistful and sublime,
Whose lifted point recks naught of woe or weal,
Since Fate demands it shivered every time !
When in the wildness of our charge we reel
Men laugh indeed—the sweeter heavens smile,
For all the world of fat prosperity
Has not the value of that broken steel !

Lemnos Harbour

Ah ! for the summons of a challenge cry
Which sets to swinging fast the bell that tolls
The high and leaping chimes of sympathy
Within that true cathedral of our souls
Set in our bodies' jeering market-place—
So crystal-clear, the shepherd's wayward pipe
From feasts his cynical soft sheep cajoles.

God save the pennon, ragged to the dawn,
That signs to moon to stand, and sun to fly ;
And flutters when the weak is overborne
To stem the tide of fate and certainty,
That knows not reason, and that seeks no fame—
But has engraved around its stubborn wood
The words : “ Knight-Errant, till Eternity ! ”

So ! Undismayed beneath the serried clouds,
Raise up the banner of forlorn defence—
A jest to the complacency of crowds—
Bright-haloed with the one diviner sense :
To hold itself as nothing to itself ;
And in the quest of its imagined star
To lose all thought of after-recompense !

LEON GELLERT

Was on active service with the Australian forces during the War, and has written some of the most poignant and grimly realistic of war poems in his “ Songs of a Campaign ” (1918).

Lemnos Harbour

THE island sleeps—but it has no delight
For me, to whom that sleep has been unkind.
My thoughts are long of what seems long ago,
And long, too, are my dreams. I do not know

Leon Gellert

These trailing glories of the star-strewn night
Or the slow sough of the wind.

I hear the rattle of the moving car ;
The children crying in the lighted street.
I walk along the same old asphalt way.
I see the church,—I hear the organ play
I see the hills I wandered on afar,
And spots of rain at my feet.

I see the dust-strewn hedge,—the latch'd gate ;
The gravelled path with roses either side ;
The cedar tree,—the lawn where I have lain ;
The pots of fern,—my mother's window pane.
I see the place where I sat long and late
By the trellis deep and wide.

The red Virginia crumbles at the wall.
The bed is bare where winter's snow-drops grew
I feel my dog come licking at my hand.
I pause awhile beside the door. I stand
And hear the well-known footsteps softly fall
And the voices that I knew.

I slowly creep and peep beneath the blind.
—My father reads his book within his chair.
Some children play their game of dominoes.
My mother sits beside the fire and sews ;
Her head is bowed. I know her eyes are kind
By the grey lines in her hair.

I tap the pane to see those tears unshed.
I see them turn, and watch them sadly stirred
By the sound, and peer to see my face without.
They see, and smile. I hear no welcome shout
They sit and gaze as they that see the dead,
But no one says a word.

Holiday

The island sleeps. May sleep come soon to me,
And lull these dreams within my shaken mind ;
—These dreams that tell me I have seen the last
Of those I left so,—loved so in the past.

.

I hear the murmur of the moving sea,
And the murmur of the wind.

March, 1915.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

Began as a romantic ; has written some charming lyrics ; and developed into one of the most truthfully and sternly realistic of modern poets. His best work is in his dramatic and narrative poems of the lives of the poor who live and work in the slum, the mine, the factory, the field ; he writes of these, and the tragedy of these, with pity, bitterness and grim imaginative power. "Urlyn the Harper" (1900) ; "The Queen's Vigil" (1902) ; "Stonefolds" (1907) ; "Daily Bread" (1910) ; "Fires" (1912) ; "Thoroughfares" (1914) ; "Borderlands" (1914) ; "Battle" (1915) ; "Friends" (1916) ; "Livelihood" (1917) ; "Whin" (1918) ; "Home" (1920) ; "Neighbours" (1920) ; "Krindelsyke" (1922) ; "I Heard a Sailor Singing" (1925).

Holiday

A room in tenements, on the evening of Whit-Monday. EVA SPARKES, a widow, sits on the bed in which her daughter, NELLY, lies unconscious, with her eyes open, and her hands moving in a regular succession of mechanical motions. Her second daughter, POLLY, stands near the window, looking out into the dismal court.

EVA. Her hands are never quiet for a moment.
POLLY. She's tending the machine ; and slipping in

Wilfred Wilson Gibson

The brush-backs, as we do the live-long day,
Day after day, and every blessed day,
Year in, year out, year in, year out, except
On Sundays and Bank Holidays. 'T'o think
'To-day's Whit-Monday and Bank Holiday—
And what a holiday for her, poor lass !

EVA. She cannot rest : her hands keep working,
working.

It must be weary work, at best : but now . . .

POLLY. And yet, we're always at it, all day long,
Year in, year out, until it drives us dizzy ;
And, likely, we slip in a hand, as she did
The other day, poor lass. Six holes it drills—
And then they call it carelessness.

EVA. 'T'was that
Began the trouble—her poor broken hand :
It gives me quite a turn to think of it :
She's never been herself since then. It's hard
She cannot rest at all.

POLLY. 'To think to-day's
Bank Holiday !—and last year she was dancing.

EVA. She's ever been a dancer from a bairn,
Has Nelly : even as a babe-in-arms,
I couldn't keep her quiet, if she heard
An organ playing half a street away :
She'd jig and jig, till it took me all my time
To hold the jumping jenny on my lap.
Such nimble toes she had : 'twas in her blood :
I danced before I married ; though afterwards
I'd little list for it : but, in my day,
While I'd the heart, I danced among the best :
When first your father saw me, I was dancing.

POLLY. Only last year, she danced the live-long day
She danced us all out easily, although
The sun was blazing ; and we were fit to drop.
I think she would have danced herself to death,
But Daniel stopped the music : even he

Holiday

Was done, deadbeat, though he's not easily puffed.

EVA. He'd scarcely go to-day at all ; he said,
He couldn't go without her, couldn't bear
To leave her, and not knowing . . . But I told him
'Twas worse than useless for him to sit watching . . .
I think he only went away, at last,
Because he couldn't bear to see her hands.
It's bad enough for me, and almost more
Than I can stand : I couldn't have him, too,
Watching her hands. I cannot help but watch
Her poor, poor hands : they're never still a moment.
All night I watched . . .

POLLY. And last year she was dancing
The live-long day—was dancing in the sun :
And there was no one who could dance with her :
I don't know where she picked up half the steps ;
There seemed to be no end to them, as though
She made them up as she went on : they seemed
To come to her as easily as walking.
She danced and danced.

EVA. Ay, she'd a dancing heart.

POLLY. And, as she danced, you scarcely saw her feet
move,
Because they went so quickly ; and it dazzled,
'The sunlight sparkling on her dancing buckles
That twinkled in and out beneath her flounces :
And as she danced, she waved a branch of hawthorn
Daniel had plucked for her.

EVA. When she came home
That night, her arms were laden ; and the house
Was white with bloom for days : she'd scarcely left
A pot or pan for me to cook a meal in ;
And yet I dared not toss it out. The scent
Was nigh too much for me : a hawthorn grew
Beside the door at home ; and in the rain
It used to smell so fresh and sweet. 'Twill still
Be there, still blowing fresh and sweet, though I . . .

Holiday

Happen, he knew, somehow: it isn't words
Tell us the most: we oftener learn the truth
Without them. And the lad was loth to go;
Yet couldn't bear to see . . . I cannot bear
To watch them: yet I cannot keep my eyes off:
They're always working, working, poor broken hands—
And once they'd beat to music on my breast,
When she was a laughing baby on my lap,
Would God that time had never passed.

POLLY. To think
They'll all be dancing, while she lies like this!

EVA. Dan went: but he was loth enough to go:
And there'll be little dancing for him to-day,
And many days to come. He'll not bide late:
I looked for him by now: he'll not have heart . . .

POLLY. And we are only "hands"! And in the
end . . .

I wonder if I'll lie like that one day,
With fingers working uselessly? God spare me!
But I think there's little chance: I never worked
Or danced, as she did. She would dance . . .

EVA. I smell
Hawthorn as strongly now as we could smell it
After a shower.

POLLY. There's some one on the stairs:
I think it's Daniel.

*(The door opens, and DANIEL WEBSTER enters quietly,
carrying a bunch of hawthorn.)*

DANIEL. How is Nelly now?
I've brought some bloom for her: I thought she
might . . .
Last year she liked the bloom . . . a year to-day
She danced beneath the hawthorn on the heath.
I couldn't stay to see them jigging—and yet,
I cannot bear to watch . . .

Wilfred Wilson Gibson

EVA (*turning suddenly towards the bed*). Her hands have stopped.

She's quiet now. Ah, God, she's getting up!
She'll fall!

(*They all move towards NELLY, as she rises from the bed; but something in her eyes stays them half-way; and they stand spellbound, as she steps to the ground, and stumbles towards DANIEL, stretching out her hand for the hawthorn, which he gives her, without a word. Holding the branch over her head, she begins to dance, slowly, her feet gradually moving more quickly.*)

NELLY. Faster . . . faster . . . faster . . .
Who's stopped the music? Oh!

(*She pauses, stands for a moment, swaying; then drops to the floor in a heap.*)

EVA (*bending over her*).
Nelly! Ah, God, she's done . . . she doesn't breathe . . .

(*DANIEL stoops, and picks the dropt branch from the floor.*)

DANIEL. It's fallen now, the bloom . . . I thought she might . . .
Last year she danced . . . and now . . . I brought the bloom . . .

EVA. Her hands stopped working when she smelt the blossom:
It set her dancing, dancing to her death.

DANIEL. O Christ, what have I done—what have I done?

Nelly, I brought the bloom . . .

POLLY. She's had her wish.

The Fowler

A WILD bird filled the morning air
With dewy-hearted song ;
I took it in a golden snare
Of meshes close and strong .

But where is now the song I heard ?
For all my cunning art,
I who would house a singing bird
Have caged a broken heart.

MARY GILMORE

Has done admirable work in Australian journalism, and is one of the most distinguished of Australia's women poets. "Marri'd and Other Poems" (1910); "The Passionate Heart" (1918).

The Wife's Song

I SIT beside my sewing-wheel
And croon my little song,
Content to bide a wife at home
The sweet day long.

The supper waits beside the hob,
The kettle steams away,
For him who comes so swift of foot
At close of day.

The gravel grinds beneath his step ;
I fly to ope the door.
Compared wi' me, the gilded Queen
Upon her throne is poor.

Mary Gilmore

I trim the lamp, I stir the fire,
I set his place and mine :
'Tis fine to see the linen white,
The silver shine.

And whiles I sit beside my wheel
Humming my song,
And dream of curly heads a-row,
Hearts stout and strong.

I feel them nestle to my breast
And lie upon my lap :
My boys or girls, or girls and boys,
As it may hap.

I see their father watch with pride
Full-hearted at their ways :
I turn me to my sewing-wheel,
And give God praise.

I mend their clothes, I tie their shoes—
These laces never done—
I kiss them out of doors to school,
And speed them one by one.

I watch them grow so father-like,
And ask the world in fee ;
But go or stay, or man or child,
They all come back to me.

Ah, who could dream a dream like this
And let such dreamings go,
For all the harsh and noisy world
Could give them, high or low ?

Ah, who could leave a dream like this
For any pride or place
Beyond the simple door of home
With all its kindly grace ?

Three Songs

Give me for aye to dream my dream
Beside my sewing-wheel !
Give me to keep my singing heart
That knows to love and feel !

Give me my arm for man and child
While life shall last !
You can have all the pride and place :
I put them past.

Three Songs

I

WHY can I never sing
The things that move me most ?
The wonder of an eagle's wing,
The stillness of white frost ;

The clarity of stars
Through the long night ;
Water on sandy bars,
And dragon-flies in flight ;

Girl-love and boy-love, spun
Gossamer and flame !
Life at its morning sun
Whispering a name . . .

II

All day I lay on a brink
Where an eagle, high
Sailed serene in flight
Over earth and sky ;

And it seemed as though I heard,
As the silent moments ran,
God out of heaven
Speaking again to man.

Hibbart Gilson

III

Thunder is not His voice ;
Nor winds, nor sound of sea :
But the voices of simple things—
The bird and the bee.

The lightning knoweth Him not,
Nor the storms that pass ;
But the flower that drinks of the dew ;
And the grass.

HIBBART GILSON

“ Uninspired Verse ” (1917) ; “ Sunshine ” (1918) ; “ The
Hidden Splendour ” (1920) ; “ In and Out of Heaven ” (1921) ;
“ Songs of the Sylvan Way ” (1922).

The Convent Marriage Bell

*I WATCHED beside a nun, when she was dead,
And heard her Spirit speak . . . these words she said :—*

Out in the green meadow, you hear a linnet singing ;
And in the convent hid by trees, a bell is ringing,
Ringing, ringing for me !
And never again shall a sweeter note be heard
Than the carol which flows from yonder bird,
And each echoing clang of the bell ringing,
Ringing, ringing for me !

Yet the passers-by may raise their hats and drop a tear,
As mournful seems to them the belfry notes they hear
Ringing, ringing for me !
How little they know that every echoing knell
Seems the sweetest of sounds to me . . . The bell,
Since my Lord has taken His bride, is ringing,
Ringing, ringing for me !

LOUIS GOLDING

“ Sorrow of War ” (1919) ; “ Shepherds Singing Ragtime ”
(1921).

Ploughman at the Plough

HE behind the straight plough stands
Stalwart, firm shafts in firm hands.

Naught he cares for wars and naught
For the fierce disease of thought.

Only for the winds, the sheer
Naked impulse of the year,

Only for the soil which stares
Clean into God's face he cares.

In the stark might of his deed
There is more than art or creed ;

In his wrist more strength is hid
Than in the monstrous Pyramid ;

Stauncher than stern Everest
Be the muscles of his breast ;

Not the Atlantic sweeps a flood
Potent as the ploughman's blood.

He, his horse, his ploughshare, these
Are the only verities.

Dawn to dusk with God he stands,
The Earth poised on his broad hands.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING

Novelist and poet. "A Country Boy" (1910); "In the Town" (1916); "The Streets and Other Poems" (1921).

Juillac-le-Coq

IT'S to Juillac-le-coq, where the vines stretch o'er the plain,
And the little streams are running eau-de-vie and the sweet champagne,
That I'd take my pipe and smoke it, sitting on some garden wall,
And kick my heels and dream my dreams, and never work at all.

*For the sun's bright, and the moon's bright, and all the women's eyes
Are bright there; and joy's there, and love that fools despise.*

It's a little dusty village, full of laughing men and girls;
At the thought of it my breath comes short, my tired brain spins and whirls.

I must tramp along and find it, choose my sunny white-washed wall,
And sing my songs, and dream my dreams, and never work at all.

There are vines there, and wines there, and straight, long dazzling ways

That shine white, on a fine night, when high the full moon sways.

Little Houses (*Hill Street, Knightsbridge*)

LITTLE houses, though prim, have often a secret glance
That can speak to a heart outside—as one speaks to me—

And even their close-drawn curtains seem to enhance
The charm of their sly reserve, of their mystery. . . .

Sonnet

I like to walk through the Square to your quiet street,
And look at your windows—with just a suspicion of
pride—
For I may go in, when I dare, and sit at your feet,
But the people who pass can't guess what it's like
inside.

They haven't a notion—but I see your small arm-chair
And your dog, by the fire, and your novel thrown on
the floor ;
And I know there will always be flowers when you are
there,
And always a smile for me, when I open your door.

EVA GORE-BOOTH

Lyrical and dramatic poet, whose poems have the mysticism, the deep love of Ireland, the wistful, haunting cadences that are characteristic of the Celtic spirit. "Poems" (1898); "Unseen Kings" (1904); "The One and the Many" (1904); "The Three Resurrections" (1905); "The Sorrowful Princess" (1907); "The Agate Lamp" (1912); "The Perilous Light" (1915); "Broken Glory" (1918).

Sonnet

STRONG spirit, striving upward to the light,
Soul of the world, half smothered in its dust
Breath of the battle, life's despairing trust,
In progress and hope's golden wingèd flight !
Where art thou, spirit? Vainly through the night
We call. Thy sword is eaten up with rust—
We know that thou art strong as thou art just,

Eva Gore-Booth

Why hast thou wholly vanished from our sight ?
The Spirit works in darkness, secretly,
 Among the hidden depths and roots of things,
 Down in those caverns where no skylark sings,
But germs of power and buried forces lie.
Have patience, when all flags of hope are furled,
Still there is courage in the under world !

Weariness

AMID the glare of light and song
 And talk that knows not when to cease,
The sullen voices of the throng,
 My weary soul cries out for peace,
Peace and the quietness of death ;
 The wash of waters deep and cool,
The wind too faint for any breath
 To stir oblivion's silent pool,
When all who swim against the stream,
 And they that laugh, and they that weep,
Shall change like flowers in a dream
 That wither on the brows of sleep.

For silence is the song sublime,
 And every voice at last must cease,
And all the world at evening time
 Floats downward through the gates of peace,
Beyond the gloom of shadowy caves
 Where water washes on the stones,
And breaks with quiet foamless waves
 The nights' persistent monotonies ;
The stars are what the flowers seem,
 And where the sea of thought is deep
The moonlight glitters like a dream,
 On weary waters gone to sleep.

The Little Waves of Breffny

THE grand road from the mountain goes shining to the
sea,
And there is traffic in it and many a horse and cart,
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me,
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through
my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it and terror on the wind,
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their
way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal,
But the Little Waves of Breffny have drenched my heart
in spray,
And the Little Waves of Breffny go stumbling through
my soul.

SIR EDMUND GOSSE

One of the most scholarly of modern critics, author of that brilliant study in realistic autobiography, "Father and Son," of the Life of Swinburne, and other biographies and volumes of miscellaneous essays and criticism, Sir Edmund Gosse was first known as a poet with "On Viol and Flute" (1873); "New Poems" (1879); "Firdausi in Exile" (1885), "In Russet and Silver" (1894), etc., but seems to have given himself entirely to prose since he published his "Collected Poems" in 1911.

The Voice of D. G. R.

FROM this carved chair wherein I sit to-night,
The dead man read in accents deep and strong,
Through lips that were like Chaucer's, his great song

Sir Edmund Gosse

About the beryl and its virgin light ;
And still that music lives in death's despite,
 And though my pilgrimage on earth be long,
 Time cannot do my memory so much wrong
As e'er to make that gracious voice take flight.
I sit here with closed eyes ; the sound comes back,
With youth, and hope, and glory on its track,
 A solemn organ-music of the mind ;
So, when the oracular moon brings back the tide,
After long drought, the sandy channel wide
 Murmurs with waves, and sings beneath the wind.
April, 1882.

With a Copy of Herrick

FRESH with all airs of woodland brooks
And scents of showers,
Take to your haunt of holy books
 This saint of flowers.

When meadows burn with budding May,
And heaven is blue,
Before his shrine our prayers we say,—
 Saint Robin true.

Love crowned with thorns is on his staff,—
 Thorns of sweet-briar ;
His benediction is a laugh,
 Birds are his choir.

His sacred robe of white and red
 Unction distils ;
He hath a nimbus round his head
 Of daffodils.

Euthanasia

WHEN age comes by and lays his frosty hands
So lightly on mine eyes, that, scarce aware
Of what an endless weight of gloom they bear,
I pause, unstirred, and wait for his commands ;
When time has bound these limbs of mine with bands,
And hushed mine ears, and silvered all my hair,
May sorrow come not, nor a vain despair
Trouble my soul that meekly girded stands.

As silent rivers into silent lakes,
Through hush of reeds that not a murmur breaks,
Wind, mindful of the poppies whence they came,
So may my life, and calmly burn away,
As ceases in a lamp at break of day
The fragrant remnant of memorial flame.

Blake

THEY win who never near the goal ;
They run who halt on wounded feet ;
Art hath its martyrs like the soul,
Its victors in defeat.

This seer's ambition soar'd too far ;
He sank, on pinions backward blown ;
But, though he touched nor sun nor star,
He made a world his own.

GERALD GOULD

Essayist, critic, lecturer, and a journalist who for certain years wrote leaders for and edited a militant daily newspaper, Mr. Gerald Gould is a poet who, except perhaps in lighter

Gerald Gould

moods, has never allowed the journalist in him to influence his verse. "Lyrics" (1906); "Poems" (1911); "Monogamy" (1918); "The Happy Tree" (1919); "The Journey: Odes and Sonnets" (1920).

The Earth-Child

OUT of the veins of the world comes the blood of me ;
The heart that beats in my side is the heart of the sea ;
The hills have known me of old, and they do not forget ;
Long ago I was friends with the wind ; I am friends with
it yet.

The hills are grey, they are strange ; they breed desire
Of a tune that the feet may march to and not tire ;
For always up in the distance the thin roads wind,
And passing out of sight, they pass not out of mind.

I am glad when morning and evening alter the skies ;
There speaks no voice of the stars but my voice replies ;
When wave on wave all night cries out in its need,
I listen, I understand ; my heart takes heed.

Out of the red-brown earth, out of the grey-brown
streams,
Came this perilous body, cage of perilous dreams ;
To the ends of all waters and lands they are tossed, they
are whirled,
For my dreams are one with my body—yea, one with the
world.

Wander-Thirst

BEYOND the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let me
be ;

Father O'Flynn

It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-
bye ;
For the seas call and the stars call, and oh ! the call of the
sky !

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue
hills are,
But a man can have the sun for his friend, and for his
guide a star ;
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is
heard,
For the rivers call and the roads call, and oh ! the call of
a bird !

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail
away ;
And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the
white road and the sky.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

Author of the phenomenally popular " *Father O'Flynn*," and
of lyrics that are more charming but less famous ; has collected
and edited books of Irish folk-songs, anthologies of Irish
poetry ; played a leading part in the Irish literary and musical
renaissance ; and was for many years, like Matthew Arnold,
an Inspector of Schools. " *Songs of Killarney*" (1872) ; " *Irish
Songs and Ballads* " (1879) ; " *Father O'Flynn and Other
Irish Lyrics* " (1889).

Father O'Flynn

OF priests we can offer a charmin' variety,
Far renowned for larnin' and piety ;

Alfred Perceval Graves

Still, I'd advance you, widout impropriety,
Father O'Flynn as the flower of them all.

*Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slainté, and slainté, and slainté agin ;
Powerfullest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.*

Don't talk of your Provost and Fellows of Trinity,
Famous for ever at Greek and Latinity,
Dad and the divels and all at Divinity,
Father O'Flynn 'd make hares of them all.
Come, I venture to give you my word,
Never the likes of his logic was heard,
Down from Mythology
Into Thayology,
Troth, and Conchology, if he'd the call.

*Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slainté, and slainté, and slainté agin ;
Powerfullest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.*

Och ! Father O'Flynn, you've the wonderful way wid
you,
All the ould sinners are wishful to pray wid you,
All the young childer are wild for to play wid you,
You've such a way wid you, Father avick !
Still, for all you've so gentle a soul,
Gad, you've your flock in the grandest conthroul ;
Checking the crazy ones,
Coaxin' onaisy ones,
Lifitin' the lazy ones on wid the stick.

Crethis

*Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slainté, and slainté, and slainté agin ;
Powerfullest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.*

And though quite avoidin' all foolish frivolity,
Still at all seasons of innocent jollity,
Where was the play-boy could claim an equality
At comicality, Father, wid you ?

Once the Bishop looked grave at your jest,
Till this remark set him off wid the rest :

“ Is it lave gaiety

All to the laity ?

Cannot the clargy be Irishmen too ? ”

*Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slainté, and slainté, and slainté agin ;
Powerfullest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.*

CRETHIS AND MIRANDA

Crethis

(after Meleager)

“ WHITHER is our Crethis gone ? ”

Still sighs on the Samian maid :

“ Who one half such tales can tell

Half so well within the shade ?

Who such pretty pastimes knows

Now as those our Crethis taught,

Sweetest playmate when we played,

Sweetest workmate when we wrought ?

Dearest chatterbox that e'er

Lightened care—is Crethis dumb—

Into black oblivion passed,

Where at last we all must come ? ”

Alfred Perceval Graves

“ Into black oblivion passed ? ”
Meleager, nay, not so,
Since that maid so sorely missed
You have kissed long years ago.

Yet when your compelling art
So touched my heart that I was fain
Within a measure of the Erse
Your loveliest verse at once to enchain—

Meleager, little could I think,
We, too, should drink, forlorn and lone,
As dark a cup of sorrow up
For a Crethis of our own.

Miranda and Her Mother

“ WHERE is our Miranda gone ? ”
With sorrow wan, I asked in vain,
A long, aching year ago,
And now the snow falls again.

But as it whitens all the road,
My heart's load at last uplifts,
For Miranda seems to glide
At my side among the drifts ;

While the voice I loved so well,
Like a bell sweet and clear,
Through the falling of the flakes
Again takes and takes my ear ;

“ Mother, when your grief was wild
For your child and you rebelled,
When God willed that I should die,
From your cry I was withheld.

Miranda and Her Mother

“ But since to comfort other grief
For relief from yours you go,
Very near you I have been,
Though unseen I am sent below.

“ Now to the children take my kiss,
And tell them this and father, too,
That I often watch at night
With angels bright over you.

“ And gently whisper in your ears,
My four Dears, thoughts that grow
To dreams of days when with linked hands
Through summer lands we used to go.

“ And those young aunts and uncles dear
Who were so near in age to me,
Brothers and sisters they'd become
In their Welsh home above the Sea.

“ Where long lovely walks we'd take,
To mountain lake or far-off strands,
Or bathe together in the bay
Or catch-ball play along the sands.

“ Oh, ask them when again they climb
With song and rhyme our favourite hill
To unlock their arms that I may glide
Their steps beside and hear them still.

“ And when home from Harlech town,
Quite weighed down by her load,
Grandmother comes, tell her that I
Still try to help her down the road.

Robert Graves

“ And tell Grandfather with my love,
That here above we study still,
The Classics we read side by side
At Easter-tide on Harlech hill.

“ For all our heavenly citizens
Have work like earthly men’s to do ;
Nor, as some think, pour praise and song
The whole night long, the whole day through.

“ But Christ, the Ennobler of their needs,
Himself His Children upward leads
Where Science and Art with stone and gem
Build up His new Jerusalem.”

ROBERT GRAVES

“ Over the Brazier ” (1916); “ Fairies and Fusiliers ” (1917);
“ Country Sentiment ” (1920); “ The Pier Glass ” (1921).

Marigold

WITH a fork drive Nature out,
She will ever yet return ;
Hedge the flower bed all about,
Pull or stab or cut or burn,
She will ever yet return.

Look : the constant marigold
Springs again from hidden roots.
Baffled gardener, you behold
New beginnings and new shoots
Spring again from hidden roots.
Pull or stab or cut or burn,
They will ever yet return.

A Pinch of Salt

Gardener, cursing at the weed,
Ere you curse it further, say :
Who but you planted the seed
In my fertile heart, one day ?
Ere you curse me further, say !
New beginnings and new shoots
Spring again from hidden roots.
Pull or stab or cut or burn,
Love must ever yet return.

A Pinch of Salt

WHEN a dream is born in you
With a sudden clamorous pain,
When you know the dream is true
And lovely, with no flaw nor stain,
O then, be careful, or with sudden clutch
You'll hurt the delicate thing you prize so much.

Dreams are like a bird that mocks,
Flirting the feathers of his tail.
When you seize at the salt-box
Over the hedge you'll see him sail.
Old birds are neither caught with salt nor chaff :
They watch you from the apple bough and laugh.

Poet, never chase the dream.
Laugh yourself and turn away.
Mask your hunger, let it seem
Small matter if he come or stay ;
But when he nestles in your hand at last,
Close up your fingers tight and hold him fast.

Robert Graves

Babylon

THE child alone a poet is :
Spring and Fairyland are his.
Truth and Reason show but dim,
And all's poetry with him.
Rhyme and music flow in plenty
For the lad of one-and-twenty,
But Spring for him is no more now
Than daisies to a munching cow ;
Just a cheery, pleasant season,
Daisy buds to live at ease on.
He's forgotten how he smiled
And shrieked at snowdrops when a child,
Or wept one evening secretly
For April's glorious misery.
Wisdom made him old and wary
Banishing the Lords of Faery.
Wisdom made a breach and battered
Babylon to bits ; she scattered
To the hedges and the ditches
All our nursery gnomes and witches.
Lob and Puck, poor frantic elves,
Drag their treasures from the shelves
Jack the Giant-Killer's gone,
Mother Goose and Oberon,
Bluebeard and King Solomon.
Robin, and Red Riding Hood
'Take together to the wood,
And Sir Galahad lies hid
In a cave with Captain Kidd.
None of all the magic hosts,
None remain but a few ghosts
Of timorous heart, to linger on
Weeping for lost Babylon.

ROSALEEN GRAVES

“ Night Sounds ” (1923).

Choice

HOW am I most myself ?
Not in froth of laces,
Sighing hush of silk,
Ruffles of frilled foam ;
In dainty filminesses
I feel less at home
Than in hay-scented homespun,
Fit for rainy places.

Where am I most myself ?
Not in shops or churches,
Nor on glittered floors,
Patterned by dancing feet,
But striding up cloudy hills
That are redolent of peat,
Or watching the sun light up
The crimson lamps of the larches,

When am I most myself ?
What do I most enjoy ?
Talking clothes and scandal ?
Flirting ? Being polite ?
Or, when stars prick faintly,
Turning home at night
With songs, and a cool wind,
And the keen talk of a boy ?

JOAN GUTHRIE-SMITH

“ Adventure Square ” (1922).

From the Beguinage

IN the shadow of the cloister, oh, the grass is green and
deep,
And the convent cows the sleekest and their munching
slow and loud ;
We hear it through our many bells mid lime-flowers full
of sleep,
Or lilac in a purple cloud.

Sweet time to deck our Lady in the bloom and blush of
May,
The rose scent and the incense and the lily moon on high ;
Oh feet that cannot wander, oh heart that may not stray
With the bee and the butterfly !

The mossy gates may crumble, but the soul will never
leave
The grass, the gleaming buttercups, the carven saints
above ;
More joy in velvet petal, endless prayer and quiet eve
Than words of war and love.

There's a dewdrop all a-glisten on the honeysuckle sheaf,
Or a blood-red poppy nodding in a crevice of the wall,
And a chanted anthem swelling with a beauty past belief ;
And I scarce regret at all.

There may be paths for roaming, but for me the prayer
and dole
Afar from smoke-plumed chimney and the city swart
and loud ;
For here are bell and candle and the calm that heals the soul,
And lilac in a purple cloud.

STEPHEN GWYNN

Political, topographical and miscellaneous writer ; journalist, novelist, poet ; was for twelve years an Irish Nationalist M.P., and served in the war as captain of Irish Division.

“ Collected Poems ” (1923).

In the Churchyard

THE plumed black horses pacing go
In formal hideous pomp of woe.
Lo, this man's mother there ;
So must my mother fare.

Rough hireling hands, that have not known
Her living, lift the coffin down,
And ranged on either hand,
Strangers and kin, we stand.

They there, we here, and she between,
So near me, I could almost lean
And touch her bed ; yet thus
Remote how far from us !

All changed, all passing—save her hair :
Death sets no sign of lordship there.
Years frosted it before,
Now it shall change no more.

Why not have given her to kind earth
That from her daisies might have birth,
That she into the grass
After her kind might pass ?

That cold, unsightly, pitiless box
Never again unseals, unlocks.
How close clamped edges fit !
Vain to press lips on it.

Stephen Gwynn

Hark ! the first clay in handfuls thrown,
And then the reader's monotone ;
 Out under the heaven here
 It scarce arrests the ear.

It stops. With dreadful instant speed
Men fall to work, as if indeed
 There were a life to save
 By filling up a grave.

O set grey eyes of men she bore,
Watching the trench fill more and more !
 Set eyes—no tear is shed ;
 A strong race she has bred.

Still shovelling, shovelling on the dead ;
And then, one stroke with back of spade
 To show that all is done,
 Wage earned and resting won.

Kind hands range flowers on the loose clay,
Poor pretty hothouse blossoms they,
 Tarnished already ; Death
 Has touched them with his breath.

Is there no more, no more to do ?
No more, no more ; she has her due.
 Leave her, come home again,
 'Tis cold here in the rain.

Leave her to Nature ; so 'tis best,
In that blind bosom lost, to rest.
 Her separate life is done,
 With Nature she is one.

The First Christmas

Where Nature strikes, the scar will close,
And soon the sod together grows.

Her balm is Lethe ; yet
We for remembrance fret,

And, as each breath men dying draw
Rebels against the falling law,
And with a kind of rage
Heaves up its bony cage,

So strive we, when on Death we think,
Not into nothingness to sink.

Ah, if none soothe us, still
Nature is kind : Death will.

KATHERINE HALE

Canadian poet. "Grey Knitting" (1914) ; "The White Comrade" (1916).

The First Christmas

AS that Judean land which long ago
Waited through centuries to find a face
Where human and divine met first in grace
And proved high love incarnate here below :—
A little world that worshipped pomp and show
Yet lay, as many a strange, imperial race,
Whom haunting dreams for evermore encase,
Calling a vision that the soul must know—

So through the ways I could not understand,
Through light that dawned to disappear again,
And pale mirage upon the distance cast,
I waited even as that lonely land,
And no dark night has ever been in vain,
Since heaven shines through thee to me at last.

THOMAS HARDY

Mr. Hardy was a poet long before he was a novelist, and in his twenties, as he has told us, "practised the writing of poetry" very assiduously; but abandoned that art when he began his career as a novelist and, with characteristic wholeheartedness, devoted himself to the writing of those great novels that made him famous. When he found that his two last, "Tess" and "Jude the Obscure," were prudishly misunderstood or misinterpreted, he resolved to write no more fiction and, turning back to his earlier art, has since become almost equally famous as one of the chief of living poets. "Wessex Poems" (1898); "Poems of the Past and Present" (1901); "The Dynasts" (1903-6-8); "Time's Laughing Stocks" (1909); "Satires of Circumstance" (1914); "Moments of Vision" (1917); "Complete Poetical Works" (1919); "Late Lyrics" (1922).

The Ghost of the Past

WE two kept house, the Past and I,
The Past and I;
Through all my tasks it hovered nigh,
Leaving me never alone.
It was a spectral housekeeping
Where fell no jarring tone,
As strange, as still a housekeeping
As ever has been known.

As daily I went up the stair
And down the stair,
I did not mind the Bygone there—
The Present once to me;
Its moving meek companionship
I wished might ever be,
There was in that companionship
Something of ecstasy.

The Night of Trafalgar

It dwelt with me just as it was,
Just as it was
When first its prospects gave me pause
In wayward wanderings,
Before the years had torn old troths
As they tear all sweet things,
Before gaunt griefs had wrecked old troths
And dulled old rapturings.

And then its form began to fade,
Began to fade,
Its gentle echoes faintlier played
At eves upon my ear
Than when the autumn's look embrowned
The lonely chambers here,
The autumn's settling shades embrowned
Nooks that it haunted near.

And so with time my vision less,
Yea, less and less
Makes of that past my housemistress,
It dwindles in my eye ;
It looms a far-off skeleton
And not a comrade nigh,
A fitting, fitful skeleton
Dimming as days draw by.

The Night of Trafalgar

(Boatman's Song)

IN the wild October night-time, when the wind raved
round the land,
And the Back-sea met the Front-sea, and our doors were
blocked with sand,

Thomas Hardy

And we heard the drub of Dead-man's Bay, where bones
of thousands are,
We knew not what the day had done for us at Trafalgar.
 Had done,
 Had done,
For us at Trafalgar !

“ Pull hard, and make the Nothe, or down we go ! ” one
says, says he.
We pulled ; and bedtime brought the storm ; but snug
at home slept we.
Yet all the while our gallants after fighting through the
day,
Were beating up and down the dark, sou'west of Cadiz Bay.
 The dark,
 The dark,
Sou'west of Cadiz Bay !

The victors and the vanquished then the storm it tossed
and tore,
As hard they strove, those worn-out men, upon that
surly shore ;
Dead Nelson and his half-dead crew, his foes from near
and far,
Were rolled together on the deep that night at Trafalgar.
 The deep,
 The deep,
That night at Trafalgar !

At an Inn

WHEN we as strangers sought
 Their catering care,
Veiled smiles bespoke their thought
 Of what we were.
They warmed as they opined
 Us more than friends—

At an Inn

That we had all resigned
For love's dear ends.

And that swift sympathy
With living love
Which quicks the world—maybe
The spheres above,
Made them our ministers,
Moved them to say,
“ Ah, God, that bliss like theirs
Would flush our day ! ”

And we were left alone
As Love's own pair ;
Yet never the love-light shone
Between us there,
But that which chilled the breath
Of afternoon,
And palsied unto death
The pane-fly's tune.

The kiss their zeal foretold,
And now deemed come,
Came not : within his hold
Love lingered numb.
Why cast he on our port
A bloom not ours ?
Why shaped us for his sport
In after-hours ?

As we seemed we were not
That day afar,
And now we seem not what
We aching are.
O severing sea and land,
O laws of men,
Ere death, once let us stand
As we stood then !

ALFRED HAYES

“The Death of St. Louis” (1885); “The Last Crusade” (1886); “David Western” (1887); “The March of Man” (1891); “The Vale of Arden” (1895); “The Cup of Quietness” (1911); “Simon de Montfort” (1921).

One Thing Wanting

NOT for the gift of strength that cannot tire,
Not for a fuller, nobler, sphere of strife,
Nor purer draughts of joy, do I desire
 An after life.

Here 'tis no paltry warfare; if death ends
The fight, then death is rest, and rest is gain;
And life had moments that made large amends
 For all its pain.

Nor do I greatly long to see unfurled
The scroll of fate, the clouds dispelled from earth;
The shadow and the mystery of the world
 Are half its worth.

One boon alone I covet, here denied,—
Commune of soul with soul, skill to remove
The veils that keep our lives apart and hide
 The truth of love;

To feel from heart to heart emotion pass,
The deep content of spiritual embrace;
To see no longer darkly through a glass
 But face to face.

Love is a hunger never here appeased,
A question never answered; vainly speech
Pursueth; long ere love's intent be seized,
 'Tis out of reach.

Time, You old Gipsy Man

I fear no disenchantment ; I would prove
That here things seem less precious than they are ;
My faith is, that the hearts of those I love
Are greater far

Than thought can comprehend, or tongue express ;
If death reveal love's truth, then I rejoice
To die ; meanwhile a silent wistfulness
Is love's best voice.

RALPH HODGSON

Few poets have won more fame with less work ; but his two books, especially the second and smaller of them, contain a handful of lyrics that are as great as if they were ten times as many. "The Last Blackbird" (1907) ; "Poems" (1917).

Time, You old Gipsy Man

TIME, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day ?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may,
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away ?

Ralph Hodgson

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush,
Under Paul's dome ;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again ;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day.

The Gipsy Girl

“ COME, try your skill, kind gentlemen,
A penny for three tries ! ”
Some threw and lost, some threw and won
A ten-a-penny prize.

She was a tawny gipsy girl,
A girl of twenty years,
I liked her for the lumps of gold
That jingled from her ears.

I liked the flaring yellow scarf
Bound loose about her throat,
I liked her showy purple gown
And flashy velvet coat.

The Down by Moonlight

A man came up, too loose of tongue,
And said no good to her ;
She did not blush as Saxons do,
Or turn upon the cur ;

She fawned and whined " Sweet gentleman,
A penny for three tries ! "
—But oh, the den of wild things in
The darkness of her eyes !

The Down by Moonlight

THE down looks new whose lonely slopes I climb,
Yet is he old despite the dress he wears :
Old as the dark and concrete with Time,

Waste with the affliction of uncounted years.
A weary head he stretches to the pale
Of Heaven ; one bended arm of him uprears

A shaggy fist, as if to turn the hail
And fire of tempest fraught with new distress
For his old brow ; and one arm seems to trail

Its atrophied and bony nakedness
Down to the streams that bless the living land,
As if, to mitigate the loneliness,

He too would reach, as we, another's hand.
So quiet this hour is grown, a whisper's fall
Were sacrilege ; within me as I stand

Shy wonder, waking, seems a common brawl,
And even thought itself is over loud ;
Desire alone is dumb ; no plovers call ;

Norah M. Holland

And if owls fly, their flight is unavowed
For cry I hear of theirs : peace here and far,
And save the moon's loved presence one lit cloud
Is sole 'twixt me and night's first listening star.

NORAH M. HOLLAND

Canadian poet. "Spun Yarn and Spindrift" (1918).

The Little Dog-Angel

HIGH up in the courts of Heaven to-day
A little dog-angel waits,
With the other angels he will not play,
But he sits alone at the gates ;
" For I know that my master will come," says he :
" And when he comes, he will call for me."

He sees the spirits that pass him by
As they hasten towards the throne,
And he watches them with a wistful eye
As he sits at the gates alone ;
" But I know if I just wait patiently
That some day my master will come," says he.

And his master, far on the earth below,
As he sits in his easy chair,
Forgets sometimes, and he whistles low
For the dog that is not there ;
And the little dog-angel cocks his ears,
And dreams that his master's call he hears.

And I know, when at length his master waits
Outside in the dark and cold

The Master of Shadows

For the hand of Death to open the gates
That lead to those courts of gold,
The little dog-angel's eager bark
Will comfort his soul in the shivering dark.

The Master of Shadows

INTO the western waters
Slow sinks the sunset light,
And the voice of the Wind of Shadows
Calls to my heart to-night—

Calls from the magic countries,
The lost and the lovely lands
Where stands the Master of Shadows,
Holding the dreams in his hands.

All the dreams of the ages
Gather around him there,
Visions of things forgotten
And things that never were.

Birds in the swaying woodlands,
Creatures furry and small,
Turn to the Master of Shadows
And he gives of his dreams to all.

Lo! I am worn and weary,
Sick of the garish light;
Blow, thou Wind of the Shadows,
Into my heart to-night.

Out of the magic countries,
The lost and the lovely lands,
Where he, the Master of Shadows,
Waits, with the dreams in his hands.

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

Has been called " an English Omar Khayyam," and his ironical, stoical philosophy is somewhat Omarian, but he is essentially English ; his verses steeped in the colour, life and atmosphere of rural England as " 'The Rubáiyát ' " in the warmer light and subtler imagery of the Orient. " A Shropshire Lad " (1896) ;
" Last Poems " (1922).

Sinner's Rue

I WALKED alone and thinking,
And faint the nightwind blew
And stirred on mounds at crossways
The flower of sinner's rue.

Where the roads part they bury
Him that his own hand slays,
And so the weed of sorrow
Springs at the four cross ways

By night I plucked it hueless,
When morning broke 'twas blue :
Blue at my breast I fastened
The flower of sinner's rue.

It seemed a herb of healing,
A balsam and a sign,
Flower of a heart whose trouble
Must have been worse than mine.

Dead clay that did me kindness,
I can do none to you,
But only wear for breast-knot
The flower of sinner's rue.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

Is draughtsman, novelist, dramatist, critic, as well as poet ; and as draughtsman and poet is in the Pre-Raphaelite line of descent. In his poetry, much of a mediæval mystic, but so modern that he took an active part in the woman's suffrage movement. "Green Arras" (1896) ; "Spikenard" (1898) ; "Rue" (1899) ; "Mendicant Rhymes" (1906) ; "Selected Poems" (1909) ; "The Heart of Peace" (1919) ; etc.

In a Garden

IN the twilight carols a bird. It is March here still ;
The bough hangs bare, and the earth and the air are
chill.

And—had I my will—have I any song to be heard,
And voice to make others rejoice—not a word ? Not a
word !

His heart out of gladness within, pours gladness with-
out.

No nook in this garden that hears him—no alley or
glade—

But sounds like the arbours of Eden while he is about :
His voice in the garden is God's, and has made me
afraid.

Where are you ? Where are you ? he cries. I am here !
I am here !

Comes a voice out of cover responding :—alas, but not
mine !

I have eaten the bread of the wise, I am drunken with
care ;

I know I am mortal. But he, that knows not, is divine.

Laurence Housman

The Settlers

HOW green the earth, how blue the sky,
How pleasant all the days that pass,
Here where the British settlers lie
Beneath their cloaks of grass !

Here ancient peace resumes her round,
And rich from toil stand hill and plain ;
Men reap and store ; but they sleep sound,
The men who sowed the grain.

Hard to the plough their hands they put,
And wheresoe'er the soil had need
The furrow drove, and underfoot
They sowed themselves for seed.

Ah ! not like him whose hand made yield
The brazen kine with fiery breath,
And over all the Colchian field
Strewed far the seeds of death ;

Till, as day sank, awoke to war
The seedlings of the dragon's teeth,
And death ran multiplied once more
Across the hideous heath.

But rich in flocks be all these farms,
And fruitful be the fields which hide
Brave eyes that love the light, and arms
That never clasped a bride !

O willing hearts turned quick to clay,
Glad lovers holding death in scorn,
Out of the lives ye cast away
The coming race is born.

Bonds

AS a stream that runs to sea
Ever by its banks is led,
And by windings shepherded ;
So in bonds though bound I be,
I through limits reach to Thee.

These dear bonds wherein I chafe,
Wishing, " Would that I were free ! "
These it is which hold me safe,
Bringing me at last to Thee,
As the stream is brought to sea.

Penning it from side to side,
Shepherding its little streams,
Every bank a barrier seems :
Yet the stream would soon be dried
If the channel were too wide.

Here fast bound by bank and fence,
Where I have not space to spread,
Still my body, chafed by sense,
Feels a spirit cross its bed,
As a stream goes current-led.

Human minds so move about,
Only if fenced round with doubt ;
Only if denied their grasp
Gain the everlasting clasp.
Only streams which fettered be
Fret their way at last to sea.

So, with limits for my guide,
Safe, I shall not wander wide ;
But, where we are meant to meet,
Find in Thee the Life denied :
Falling low shall kiss Thy Feet,
Reaching far shall touch Thy Side.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

As brilliantly imaginative in the romance and bizarre realism of his verse as in the prose fiction that has made him popular. "The Burning Wheel" (1916); "The Defeat of Youth and Other Poems" (1918); "Leda" (1920).

Italy

THERE is a country in my mind,
Lovelier than a poet blind
Could dream of, who had never known
This world of drought and dust and stone
In all its ugliness : a place
Full of an all but human grace ;
Whose dells retain the printed form
Of heavenly sleep, and seem yet warm
From some pure body newly risen ;
Where matter is no more a prison,
But freedom for the soul to know
Its native beauty. For things glow
There with an inward truth and are
All fire and colour like a star.
And in that land are domes and towers
That hang as light and bright as flowers
Upon the sky, and seem a birth
Rather of air than solid earth.

Sometimes I dream that walking there
In the green shade, all unaware
At a new turn of the golden glade,
I shall see her, and as though afraid
Shall halt a moment and almost fall
For passing faintness, like a man
Who feels the sudden spirit of Pan
Brimming his narrow soul with all

The Canal

The illimitable world. And she,
Turning her head, will let me see
The first sharp dawn of her surprise
Turning to welcome in her eyes.
And I shall come and take my lover,
And looking on her re-discover
All her beauty :—her dark hair
And little ears beneath it, where
Roses of lucid shadow sleep ;
Her brooding mouth, and in the deep
Wells of her eyes reflected stars. . . .

Oh, the imperishable things
That hands and lips as well as words
Shall speak ! Oh movements of white wings,
Oh wheeling galaxies of birds . . . !

The Canal

NO dip and dart of swallow wakes the black
Slumber of the canal :—a mirror dead
For lack of loveliness remembered
From ancient azures and green trees, for lack
Of some white beauty given and flung back,
Secret, to her that gave ; no sun has bled
To wake an echo here of answering red ;
The surface stirs to no leaf's wind-blown track.

Between unseeing walls the waters rest,
Lifeless and hushed, till suddenly a swan
Glides from some broader river blue as day,
And with the mirrored magic of his breast
Creates within that barren water-way
New life, new loveliness, and passes on.

VIOLET JACOB

“Verses” (1905); “Songs of Angus” (1915); “More Songs of Angus” (1918).

At a Brookside

A RUNNING melody is in the noon
Of grass-bound rivulet and tangled showers,
Of sunlight, glancing through the cuckoo-flowers
To mingle golden ripples with the tune;
In the wide light my senses seem to swoon,
Drugged by the monotone of rhythmic hours
And voice of spring-fed watercourse that dowers
This winding meadow-land with music's boon.

Caught in a shimmering net of sight and sound,
And drawn, I know not whither, yet aware
Am I of some soft touch, and, blown around.
My face, the plentitude of waving hair—
Nay, let me lie and dream this wondrous thing;
My hand, one moment, held the hand of Spring!

Armed

GIVE me to-night to hide me in the shade,
That neither moon nor star
May see the secret place where I am laid,
Nor watch me from afar.

Let not the dark its prying ghosts employ
To peer on my retreat,
And see the fragments of my broken toy
Lie scattered at my feet.

I fashioned it, that idol of my own,
Of metal strange and bright;
I made my toy a god—I raised a throne
To honour my delight.

My Love is in a Light Attire

This haunted byway of the grove was lit
With lamps my hand had trimmed,
Before the altar in the midst of it
I kept their flame undimmed.

My steps turned ever to the hidden shrine ;
Aware or unaware,
My soul dwelt only in that spot divine,
And now a wreck lies there.

Give me to-night to weep—when dawn is spread
Beyond the heavy trees,
And in the east the day is heralded
By cloud-wrought companies.

I shall have gathered up my heart's desire,
Broken, destroyed, adored,
And from its splinters, in a deathless fire,
I shall have forged a sword.

JAMES JOYCE

In the storm of controversy that rages round his "Ulysses" one is apt to overlook the quiet charm of some of the things in Mr. Joyce's one early book of verse, "Chamber Music" (1907).

MY love is in a light attire
Among the apple-trees,
Where the gay winds do most desire
To run in companies.

There, where the gay winds stay to woo
The young leaves as they pass,
My love goes slowly, bending to
Her shadow on the grass ;

Sheila Kaye-Smith

And where the sky's a pale blue cup
Overing the laughing land,
My love goes lightly, holding up
Her dress with dainty hand.

THE twilight turns from amethyst
To deep and deeper blue,
The lamp fills with a pale green glow
The trees of the avenue.

The old piano plays an air,
Sedate and slow and gay ;
She bends upon the yellow keys,
Her head inclines this way.

Shy thoughts and grave wide eyes and hands
That wander as they list—
The twilight turns to darker blue
With lights of amethyst.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH

The best of her poems are as imaginatively realistic as her novels, and the nature and human nature of Sussex enter almost as largely into many of them. "Willow's Forge and Other Poems" (1914); "Saints in Sussex" (1923).

To My Body—A Thanksgiving

THOUGH thou hast set me many a snare,
And cost me many a groan,
And causèd feet to slip that were
Far dearer than my own—
Though thou hast been both sword and gin
To others and to me,
Yet I recall what thou didst win
Once for my soul, and I give thanks to thee.

To My Body—A Thanksgiving

For once, when all my heavens fell
And each hour that went by
Brought nearer to the pit of hell
The Dayspring which is I—
When all unheard the highest cried,
When lost were course and goal,
When hope had fled and faith had died—
Thou, even thou, didst then redeem my soul.

Thou broughtest me unto the snow,
And thou didst force through me
The pumping blood, that I might know
How fierce my flesh could be ;
My flesh—till then half love, half dread—
Became an armoured tower,
To which my wounded spirit fled
And found a refuge in its bitter hour.

Thou didst deny the healing sleep
Unless I strove all day
With thews and muscles, fierce to keep
The wolves of thought at bay ;
And thou didst crown thyself with strength,
And lift thyself on high,
And free salvation win at length
For the poor soul that thought it was to die.

Redemption thou didst work for me,
And forth into the light
Crept my healed spirit, saved by thee
From all the hells of night—
And this I never shall forget,
And so I can forgive
Thy treacheries, and thank thee yet,
For 'tis through thee I have found grace to live.

Sheila Kaye-Smith

And more, for I know that some day
A greater wonder thou
Shalt work for me, when thou shalt slay
What thou hast quickened now.
As once thy life did make me whole,
So once thy death shall reap
Both for thyself and for my soul
The last redemption of a long, long sleep.

The Ascension Day

SO Thou hast left us and our meadows,
Lord, Who has blessed us and our meadows—
Lord of the sorrel-hearted hay,
Lord of the pollened flowers of May.
From our fields Thou hast ascended,
Passing into the anthered light
Beyond the sun, by the winds attended—
And the Sussex fields are white
With daisies, and the diadem
Of the hawthorn crowns the hedge.
And at the blue pond's reedy edge,
Like a brodered, silken hem
The yellow irises are blown.
Lord, Thou art gone, and gone alone.

Dost Thou think of us and our meadows,
Lord, Who hast left us and our meadows?
In shining pastures of the sky
Thou walkest, Lord, ascended high.
The stars are flowers about thy feet,
And looking up to Thee we see
The River flowing silently—
The Milky River, broad and sweet
As Rother River here below,
While planets the dim marshes strow,

The Ascension Day

And constellations flower and fade.
O Lord, Thou hast Thy country there,
The fields and meadows of the sky,
The fields and meadows ever fair,
The dear, divine, undying glade.
At night we too walk in Thy meadows.
At midnight I may hear Thy call,
And ride to Thee on the moon's light—
To where the living waters fall,
And the unfading fields are bright,
The stars are flowers about our feet,
And at my side Thou art the sweet
Perfumed, eternal Breath of May. . . .

With a sob the pale-eyed day
Wakens at the Rother's mouth,
And back to earthly fields I go,
And back to earthly toil, and slow
Hot days of the slow, drawling South,
Toiling to keep the fields alive.
For our poor meadows cannot thrive
On just the memory of Thy feet,
Which trod them once and found them sweet.
Our tears, our sweat, must give them life,
For Thou, our Lord, hast gone on high
To golden countries of the sky,
To golden fields of golden stars
Beyond the echo of our strife. . . .
Yet there, upon the shining hill,
Thou dreamest of our meadows still,
And Lord, we have Thy promise plain
That Thou wilt walk in them again.

RUDYARD KIPLING

Commonly described as "the poet of Imperialism," but so much more than that, he would remain one of the greatest figures in contemporary poetry if all his Imperialistic verse were cancelled. Like Shakespeare, never the idol of a little clan, he wrote for the crowd, but not like one of it. He has wrought miracles with colloquial speech, but his finer prose and verse is in the simple, glowingly imaginative language of great literature. "Departmental Ditties" (1886); "Barrack-Room Ballads" (1892); "The Seven Seas" (1896); "The Five Nations" (1903); "Collected Verse" (1912); "Songs from Books" (1913); "The Years Between" (1918).

The Children's Song

LAND of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be ;
When we are grown and take our place,
As men and women with our race.

Father in Heaven who lovest all,
Oh help Thy children when they call ;
That they may build from age to age,
An undefilèd heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth ;
That, in our time, Thy Grace may give
The Truth whereby the Nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves always,
Controlled and cleanly night and day ;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Teach us to look in all our ends,
On thee for judge, and not our friends ;
That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed
By fear or favour of the crowd.

The Explorer

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
By deed or thought, to hurt the weak ;
That, under Thee, we may possess
Man's strength to comfort man's distress

Teach us Delight in simple things
And Mirth that has no bitter springs ;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And Love to all men 'neath the sun !

Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died ;
O Motherland, we pledge to thee,
Head, heart, and hand through the years to be !

The Explorer

“THERE'S no sense in going further—it's the edge of
cultivation,”
So they said, and I believed it—broke my land and sowed
my crop—
Built my barns and strung my fences in the little border
station
Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run out
and stop.

Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable
changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated—
so :
“Something hidden, Go and find it. Go and look
behind the Ranges—
Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting
for you. Go !”

Rudyard Kipling

So I went, worn out of patience ; never told my nearest
neighbours—
Stole away with pack and ponies—left 'em drinking in
the town ;
And the faith that moveth mountains didn't seem to
help my labours
As I faced the sheer main-ranges, whipping up and lead-
ing down.

March by march I puzzled through 'em, turning flanks
and dodging shoulders,
Hurried on in hope of water, headed back for lack of
grass ;
Till I camped above the tree-line—drifted snow and
naked boulders—
Felt free air astir to windward—knew I'd stumbled on
the Pass ;

Thought to name it for the finder ; but that night the
Norther found me—
Froze and killed the plains-bred ponies, so I called the
camp Despair
(It's the Railway Gap to-day, though). Then my
Whisper waked to hound me :—
“ Something lost behind the Ranges. Over yonder.
Go you there ! ”

Then I knew, the while I doubted—knew His Hand was
certain o'er me.
Still it might be self-delusion—scores of better men had
died—
I could reach the township living, but . . . He knows
what terrors tore me . . .
But I didn't . . . but I didn't. I went down the other
side.

The Explorer

Till the snow ran out in flowers, and the flowers turned
to aloes,
And the aloes sprung to thickets and a brimming stream
ran by ;
But the thickets dwined to thorn-scrub, and the water
drained to shallows—
And I dropped again on desert, blasted earth, and blast-
ing sky . . .

I remember lighting fires ; I remember sitting by
them ;
I remember seeing faces, hearing voices through the
smoke ;
I remember they were fancy—for I threw a stone to try
them.
“ Something lost behind the Ranges ” was the only
word they spoke.

I remember going crazy : I remember that I knew it
When I heard myself hallooing to the funny folk I
saw.
Very full of dreams that desert ; but my two legs took
me through it. . . .
And I used to watch 'em moving with the toes all black
and raw.

But at last the country altered—White man's country
past disputing—
Rolling grass and open timber, with a hint of hills
behind—
There I found me food and water, and I lay a week
recruiting,
Got my strength and lost my nightmares. Then I
entered on my find.

Rudyard Kipling

Thence I ran my first rough survey—chose my trees and
blazed and ringed 'em—
Week by week I pried and sampled—week by week my
findings grew.
David went to look for donkeys, and by God he found a
kingdom !
But by God, who sent His Whisper, I had struck the
worth of two !

Up along the hostile mountains, where the hair-poised
snow-slide shivers—
Down and through the big fat marshes that the virgin
ore-bed stains,
Till I heard the mile-wide mutterings of unimagined
rivers,
And beyond the nameless timber saw illimitable plains !

Plotted sites of future cities, traced the easy grades
between 'em ;
Watched unharnessed rapids wasting fifty thousand head
an hour ;
Counted leagues of water-frontage through the axe-ripe
woods that screen 'em—
Saw the plant to feed a people—up and waiting for the
power !

Well I know who'll take the credit—all the clever chaps
that followed—
Came, a dozen men together—never knew my desert fears ;
Tracked me by the camps I'd quitted, used the water
holes I'd hollowed.
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be called
the Pioneers.

The Explorer

They will find my sites of townships—not the cities that
I set there.

They will rediscover rivers—not my rivers heard at night.
By my own old marks and bearings they will show me
how to get there

By the lonely cairns I builded they will guide my feet
aright.

Have I named one single river? Have I claimed one
single acre?

Have I kept one single nugget—(barring samples?) No,
not I.

Because my price was paid me ten times over by my
Maker.

But you wouldn't understand it. You go up and occupy.

Ores you'll find there; wood and cattle, water transit
sure and steady

(That should keep the railway rates down), coal and iron
at your doors.

God took care to hide that country till He judged His
people ready.

Then He chose me for his Whisper, and I've found it,
and it's yours.

Yes, your "Never-never country"—Yes, your "edge
of cultivation"

And "no sense in going further"—till I crossed the
range to see.

God forgive me! No, I didn't. It's God's present to
our nation.

Anybody might have found it but—His Whisper came
to me!

Rudyard Kipling

Sussex

GOD gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Belovèd over all ;
That as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.

So one shall Baltic pines content,
As one some Surrey glade,
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament
Before Levuka's trade.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea !

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs
But gnarled and writhen thorn—
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,
And through the gaps revealed
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim
Blue goodness of the Weald

Clean of officious fence or hedge,
Half-wild and wholly tame,
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge
As when the Romans came.
What sign of those that fought and died
At shift of sword and sword ?
The barrow and the camp abide,
The sunlight and the sward.

Sussex

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
All heavy-winged with brine,
Here lies above the folded crest
The Channel's leaden line ;
And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
And here, each warning each,
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
Along the hidden beach.

We have no waters to delight
Our broad and brookless vales—
Only the dewpond on the height
Unfed, that never fails,
Whereby no tattered herbage tells
Which way the season flies—
Only our close-bit thyme that smells
Like dawn in Paradise.

Here through the strong unhampered days
The tinkling silence thrills ;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
The Lord who made the hills :
But here the old Gods guard their round,
And, in her secret heart,
The heathen kingdom Wilfred found
Dreams as she dwells apart

Though all the rest were all my share
With equal soul I'd see
Her nine and thirty sisters fair,
Yet none more fair than she.
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
Black Down and Beachy Head.

Rudyard Kipling

I will go out against the sun
Where the rolled scarp retires,
And the Long Man of Wilmington
Looks naked towards the shires ;
And East till doubling Rother crawls
To find the fickle tide,
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,
Our ports of stranded pride

I will go North about the shaws
And the deep ghylls that breed
Huge oaks and old, the which we hold
No more than "Sussex weed" ;
Or South where windy Piddinghoe's
Beguiled dolphin veers,
And black beside wide-bankèd Ouse
Lie down our Sussex steers.

So to the land our hearts we give
Till the sure magic strike,
And Memory, Use, and Love make live
Us and our fields alike—
That deeper than our speech and thought,
Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
Yearns to its fellow-clay.

*God gives all men all earth to love,
But since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
Belovèd over all.*

*Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea.*

EDMUND GEORGE VALPY KNOX

“ Evoe,” of *Punch*. “ The Brazen Lyre ” (1911) ; “ A Little Loot ” (1919) ; “ Parodies Regained ” (1921).

Lost Innocence

THE hours of gold come back to me
That Time has pinched (he can't return 'em),
The well-remembered chestnut tree
 (Or was it, after all, laburnum ?),
 The rural rill,
The shriek of dying pigs—I hear them still.

'Tis out of no bucolic whim
I promulgate agrarian measures ;
But, now that London's lure is dim,
And stale to me her storied pleasures,
 I'd give a lot
To be like some of those to whom they're not.

I see them rubicund and hale,
Men whom the underground nonpluses,
Who cling convulsive to the rail
 Of apoplectic motor-'buses,
 On fire to view
The splendours of St. Stephen's and the Zoo.

From hamlets far away they wend,
They breathe the air of brake and coppice,
They know not which the southward end
 Of Regent Street, and which the top is ;
 They also cube
By devious jinks their journeys to the Tube

Edmund George Valpy Knox

Ah, would that I could feel the thrill,
As once I felt, of urban clamour,
Could lose my heart to Ludgate-Hill.
And re-experience the glamour
Of Oxford Street,
The magic and the mystery of the Fleet,

Could share the wild delirious sense
Of those who hie from havens stilly,
And, flotsam on its seas immense,
Could pause again in Piccadilly
To ask some bland
Policeman, " Officer, is this the Strand ? "

Heads and Hearts

LONG ago, my dear, when Science
Loaned from Fancy what she lacked,
Placing rather more reliance
On hypothesis than Fact,
People with perverted notions
Laid the body out in lots,
And located our emotions
In the most unlikely spots.

Thus, they prate about our " choler,"
Thus, they babble of our " spleen,"
Phrases which the finished scholar
Merely understands to mean
That a somewhat wild vagary
Made the old philosopher
Range around his " little Mary "
Passions far removed from her.

Heads and Hearts

We of course are not so foolish :
We to-day should scorn to see
Such a " never-went-to-schoolish "
Physical anatomy ;
Yet we keep one superstition :
Age to erring age imparts
One deplorable tradition :
'Tis the Shibboleth of Hearts.

So we find the shops again full
Of St. Valentine his Ghost ;
Hearts, devoted or disdainful,
Interchange, and by the post
Light-apparelled Loves await us
Piercing with pictorial darts
That hydraulic apparatus
Of the inter-costal parts.

Well, they're wrong, then, let me tell 'em
Since the seat where passions reign
Lies beyond the cerebellum,
Somewhere in the upper brain ;
Love's a kind of ideo-motor
Action that depends upon
Certain centres in the coat or
Rind of the encephalon

That is why I send no token
Of a cardiac distress ;
Hearts, my darling, are not broken
In the Stream of Consciousness ;
To denote the dizzy vortex
Where my love has lately swum,
I have diagrammed the cortex,
Dearest, of my cerebrum.

DAVID HERBERT LAWRENCE

Usually breaks away from the restraints of classical metres and, in his verse, as in his novels and stories, is an artist in revolt against artistic reticences. "Love Poems" (1913); "Amores" (1916); "Look! We Have Come Through" (1917); "New Poems" (1918).

Piano

SOFTLY, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me ;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the ting-
ling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who
smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter out-
side
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our
guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child
for the past.

NINA FRANCES LAYARD

"Selections from Poems" (1923).

A Rain Sonnet

AND all the dank hair of the hurrying rain,
Flung backward by the wind, did stream and fly
Across the anxious forehead of the sky,

The Secret of the Lily Pool

And rattling lashed my shaken window-pane
With sudden spotted sounds, that yet again
Sink to a lighter fingering, or die
Into a tinkling treble by-and-by,
Soft as the falling of wind-scattered grain,

So is my sorrow as the streaming drift,
That from the mighty shoulders of a cloud
Is shaken back and tangled in the blast ;
So is my dreadful sorrow, but I lift
A trembling hand to God and cry aloud
That He shall make it music at the last.

The Secret of the Lily Pool

THE lily leaves lay flat and green ;
They made a cover for the pool ;
And all beneath the tender screen
Was deep and dark and cool.

The lily bloom had gathered up
Her petal skirt of bridal silk ;
The blue fly lighted on her cup,
Her cup as white as milk.

And to the pool the trees let down
A drapery of tasselled grace ;
But, where they met the water brown,
They swept a dead man's face.

And every falling seed that lit
Must throw a circle from its place ;
The dimpled waters play with it
About that dead man's face.

Nina Frances Layard

A moorhen, darting from her nest,
Made sudden tracks from north to south ;
The moving ripples at his breast
Rose up and touched his mouth.

Beside the pool, where sedges grew
And heavy rush-heads bend and sink,
A fisher-bird of azure blue
Peered downward to the brink.

And, leaning from her reedy bower,
In that clear water-mirror scanned,
She seemed a wingèd lupin flower
Held in the dead man's hand.

And no man knew the deed was done ;
For no man ever passed that way,
And he was seen by only one—
A little child at play ;

For she had wandered through the wood.
And, oh ! she kept the secret well ;
Her infant signs none understood—
She had no words to tell.

Nor paled her check for pity then,
But, when she grew to woman's case
She said, " I know not where or when
I saw a dead man's face."

The mother turned her head away,
For sudden sorrow fills her eye,
And the maiden knows not to this day
None saw her father die.

And still the lily cups are seen,
And, from the rushes by the shore,
The fisher-birds of blue and green
Hang watching as before.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

There is fancy, imagination and a charm of style in "The Book Bills of Narcissus," "Prose Fancies," and the novels that helped to give Mr. Le Gallienne a large vogue in the 'nineties, but his finer work is in his poems of which a collected, and selected, edition is overdue. "English Poems" (1892); "Robert Louis Stevenson and Other Poems" (1895); "New Poems" (1910).

London Beautiful

LONDON, I heard one say, no more is fair,
London whose loveliness is everywhere,
London so beautiful at morning light
One half forgets how fair she is at night,
London as beautiful at set of sun
As though her beauty had but just begun ;
London, that mighty sob, that splendid tear,
That jewel hanging in the great world's ear.
Strange queen of all this grim romantic stone,
Paris, say some, shall push you from your throne,
And all the tumbled beauty of your dreams
Submit to map and measure, straight cold schemes
Which for the loveliness that comes by chance
Shall substitute the conscious streets of France,
A beauty made for beauty that has grown,
An alien beauty, London, for your own.

O wistful eyes so full of mist and tears,
Long be it ere your haunted vision clears,
Long ere the blood of your great heart shall flow
Through inexpressive avenue and row ;
Straight-stepping, prim, the once adventurous stream,
Its spirit gone, it loiters not to dream,
All straight and pretty, trees on either side,
For London's beauty London beautified.

Ah ! of your beauty change no single grace,
My London with your sad mysterious face.

Richard Le Gallienne

Christmas in Wartime

THIS is the year that has no Christmas Day,
Even the little children must be told
That something sad is happening far away—
Or, if you needs must play,
As children must,
Play softly, children, underneath your breath !
For over our hearts hangs low the shadow of death,
Those hearts to you mysteriously old,
Grim, grown-up hearts that ponder night and day
On the straight lists of broken-hearted dead,
Black narrow lists no tears can wash away,
Reading in which one cries out here and here
And falls into a dream upon a name.
Be happy softly, children, for a woe
Is on us, a great woe for little fame,—
Ah ! in the old woods leave the mistletoe,
And leave the holly for another year,
Its berries are too red.

And lovers, like to children, will not you
Cease for a little from your kissing mirth,
Thinking of other lovers that must go
Kissed back with fire into the bosom of earth,—
Ah ! in the old woods leave the mistletoe.
Be happy softly, lovers, for you too
Shall be as sad as they another year,
And then for you the holly be berries of blood,
And mistletoe strange berries of bitter tears.
Ah ! lovers, leave you your beatitude,
Give your sad eyes and ears
To the far griefs of neighbour and of friend,
To the great loves that find a little end,
Long loves that in a sudden puff of fire
With a wild thought expire.

And you, ye merchants, you that eat and cheat,
Gold-seeking hucksters in a noble land,

Christmas in Wartime

Think when you lift the wine up in your hand
Of a fierce vintage tragically red,
Red wine of the hearts of English soldiers dead,
Who ran to a wild death with laughing feet—
That we may sleep and drink and eat and cheat.
Ah! you brave few that fight for all the rest,
And die with smiling faces strangely blest,
Because you die for England—O to do
Something again for you,
In this great deed to have some little part ;
To send so great a message from the heart
Of England that one man shall be as ten,
Hearing how England loves her Englishmen
Ah! think you that a single gun is fired
We do not hear in England? Ah! we hear,
And mothers go with proud and happy eyes
That say: It is for England that he dies,
England that does the cruel work of God,
And gives her well-beloved to save the world
For this is death like to a woman desired,
For this the wine-press trod.
And, England, when forgot this passing woe,
Because of all your captains, strength on strength,
Think too, when the sure end has come at length,
Victory for England—for God means it so—
Be strong in kindness for the little dead,
The stubborn tribe that could not understand,
But, child-like, fought the purposes of Time ;
England, so strong to slay, be strong to spare
England, have courage even to forgive,
Give back the little nation leave to live,
To shear its sheep and grow its lazy corn,—
Children there are that must be whipped to grow,
And some small children must be whipped with fire.
And you in churches, praying this Christmas morn,
Pray as you never prayed that this may be
The little war that brought the great world peace ;

Richard Le Gallienne

Undazzled with its glorious infamy,
O pray with all your hearts that war may cease,
And who knows but that God may hear the prayer.
So it may come about next Christmas Day
That we shall hear the happy children play
Gladly aloud, unmindful of the dead,
And watch the lovers go
To the old woods to find the mistletoe.
But this year, children, if you needs must play,
Play very softly underneath your breath ;
Be happy softly, lovers, for great Death
Makes England holy with sorrow this Christmas Day,—
Yet! in the old woods leave the mistletoe,
And leave the holly for another year—
Its berries are too red.

Christmas, 1899.

What of the Darkness?

WHAT of the Darkness? Is it very fair?
Are there great calms and find ye silence there?
Like soft-shut lilies all your faces glow
With some strange peace our faces never know,
With some great faith our faces never dare.
Dwells it in Darkness? Do ye find it there?
Is it a Bosom where tired heads may lie?
Is it a Mouth to kiss our weeping dry?
Is it a Hand to still the pulse's leap?
Is it a Voice that holds the runcs of sleep?
Day shows us not such comfort anywhere.
Dwells it in Darkness? Do ye find it there?
Out of the Day's deceiving light we call,
Day that shows man so great and God so small,
That hides the stars and magnifies the grass;
O is the Darkness too a lying glass,
Or, undistracted, do ye find truth there?
What of the Darkness? Is it very fair?

RUDOLPH CHAMBERS LEHMANN

Has been for over thirty years on the staff of *Punch*, from whose pages most of his cleverest books in verse and prose have been reprinted. "Anni Fugaces" (1901); "Crumbs of Pity" (1903); "Light and Shade" (1909); "The Vagabond" (1918).

Crumbs of Pity

KEEN is the morning, keen and bright,
And all the lawn with frost is white ;
In every bush, in every tree,
The birds sit watching warily.
Now out, now in, they hop and peer,
And cock their cunning heads to hear
The chirping of a childish voice :
They know it well, and they rejoice
When resolutely stepping, comes
To scatter here her gift of crumbs,
Her round face topped with shining curls,
My little laughing girl of girls.
And, O ye soft and feathered things,
Redbreasts who flit on fearless wings,
Familiar, friendly, boldly shy,
Birds of the liquid, trustful eye ;
Ye sparrows, chattering o'er your food,
Linnets, and all the perky brood
Of finches, blackbirds yellow-billed,
And thrushes with your music stilled—
Since winter's icy breath makes mute
The swelling ripple of your flute ;
Ye, too, ye sable suited rooks,
Timid for all your threatening looks,
Who in solemnity survey
Your twittering colleagues at their play,

Rudolph Chambers Lehmann

When on the poplar's top you swing,
And desperately claw and cling ;
Then, when each bird has pecked its last,
And all the fluttering rout is past,
And all the chirping duly dumb,
Swoop down, but rarely find a crumb ;—
All ye, whose hungry bills are fed
By Helen's daily doles of bread,
Be not afraid, be not afraid
To gather round my rosy maid.
Oh, give a kindly thought to her,
Your little friend and minister ;
And, as you watch her, pass the word—
“ She's but a plump unfeathered bird.”
So when the day is done, and night
Sets all the twinkling stars alight,
You'll breathe a bird-wish as you sleep,
That One who guards the birds may keep
Cosy and safe from every ill,
From winds that bite and frosts that chill,
And through the night's long hours defend
The birds' unfeathered little friend.

Ye sportive mice that swiftly go
Behind the wainscot to and fro,
And sometimes to your outlets creep
And half pop out and take a peep,
Alert, but ready to retreat,
Into a world where cheese smells sweet—
Ye quivering, twisting specks of fur
With whisking tails and ears astir ;
We do not grudge you of our store ;
A little less, a little more,
It matters not, so nibble on
In peace, then like a flash begone.
I cannot bear to bar the house
To here and there a tiny mouse.

Crumbs of Pity

And Helen, if she marks at all
Your scamperings from wall to wall,
Will smile to hear you frisk and run :
“ It’s mousies, Daddy, having fun.”

So, Helen, ere at eve you steep
Your busy baby-brain in sleep,
Your mother takes you on her knee
And whispers to you tenderly.
You watch her lips, you clasp her hand,
And, though you may not understand
Each word she says or all that’s meant,
You listen and you purr assent.
And it may chance that on a day
Far hence, to this your thoughts will stray,
And in a dream you’ll seem to hear
The words with all their meaning clear :
Ah, then you’ll recollect and know
What the dear voice said long ago :
“ My sweet, be sure no gentle thought
That from God’s love a ray has caught,
No tender childish pity spent
On creatures meek and innocent,
No mercy for their lowly lot
Is ever wasted or forgot.
God, who gave children pity, heeds
Such loving thoughts, such gentle deeds :
He sets them, gold and clustering gems,
On angels’ brows as diadems,
And looks Himself in pity mild
On bird, and mouse, and little child.”

SHANE LESLIE

Editor of the *Dublin Review*, has done brilliant work as critic, novelist and biographer, and is a poet of charm and distinction. "Songs of Oriel" (1908); "Verses in Peace and War" (1915).

Monaghan

MONAGHAN, mother of a thousand
Little moulded hills :
Set about with little rivers
Chained to little mills.

Rich and many-pastured Monaghan :
Mild thy meadows lie,
Melting to the distant mountains
On the mirrored sky.

Lovely, lowly-lying Monaghan :
On thy little lakes
Float and tremble lordly lilies
Hoed by fairies' rakes.

Silvered o'er with sunshine, or by
Night with shimmering fog :
Where thy sloping cornland meets
Beauteous fields of bog.

Humbly hid with heath and lichen
Waits thy turf of old :
While the hasty bees come hiding
Honey thro' thy mould.

Thro' and thro' thy restless rushes
Run a thousand rills,
Lisping long-forgotten little
Songs of Ireland's ills.

In Service

For thy mingled chaplet, oak and
Beechwood thou dost bind:
Green in summer, and in winter
Musical with wind.

W. M. LETTS

“Songs from Leinster” (1913); “Hallow-e’en, and Other
Poems of the War” (1916).

In Service

LITTLE Nellie Cassidy has got a place in town,
She wears a fine white apron,
She wears a new black gown,
An’ the queerest little cap at all with straymers hanging
down.

I met her one fine evening stravagin’ down the street,
A feathered hat upon her head,
And boots upon her feet.
“Och, Mick,” she says, “may God be praised that you
and I should meet.

“It’s lonesome in the city with such a crowd,” says she;
“I’m lost without the bog-land,
I’m lost without the sea.
An’ the harbour an’ the fishing boats that sail out fine
and free.

“I’d give a golden guinea to stand upon the shore,
To see the big waves lapping,
To hear them splash and roar,
To smell the tar and the drying nets, I’d not be asking
more.

W. M. Letts

“ To see the small white houses, their faces to the sea.
The children in the doorway,
Or round my mother’s knee ;
For I’m strange and lonesome missing them, God keep
them all,” says she.

Little Nellie Cassidy earns fourteen pounds and more,
Waiting on the quality,
And answering the door—
But her heart is some place far away upon the Wexford
shore.

Blessings

IT’S what I thank God for each night,
A little cabin that’s mine by right,
The strength of a man for work or fight,
And food and light.

It’s what I thank God for each day—
A wife with never too much to say,
A wife, a dog, and a child for play,
For them I’d pray.

I thank God for the land I tread,
A pipe to smoke and an easy bed,
The thatch I made that’s over my head,
And daily bread.

I thank God for an Irish name,
And a son of mine to bear the same,
My own to love me and none to blame :
No more I’d claim.

SYLVIA LYND

“The Thrush and the Jay” (1916); “The Goldfinches”
(1920).

The Small Daughter

GOD does not fail in anything,
The ring-dove's neck, the beetle's wing,
The buds that turn from green to gold,
The sunny perfumes of the spring,
The coloured patchwork of the wold,
The blue dusk dropping fold on fold,
And all talk talked and stories told
In the long evenings by the fire,
And strength and laughter and desire.

Dear, when you come to me and say
Do this, do that, I must obey,
Swift to interpret, to devise
With all the gladness that I may,
So can I face the trust that lies
Within your wide exacting eyes
(Your beautiful exacting eyes);
Mending and fashioning, I know
If you will have, it must be so.

Do not be over harsh with me
When (empty of all subtlety,
Stupid and ignorant and shy)
You find my small reality.
When on a sudden grown as high
And how much cleverer than I!
You put your games and nonsense by
And find me also questioning
And empty of all counselling.

Sylvia Lynd

Ah, turn your puzzled glances then
From the unresting ways of men,
From tangled right and tangled wrong
To where the brooks are loud with rain,
To where the birds are glad with song,
And with the world know you are young,
And with the ageing world be strong,
And unto God as faithful be
As in these days you are to me.

The Whistling Boy

IT is not the whistling of blackbird or wren,
Nor yet the plump chaffinch that sings in the lane ;
But a little starved boy that is crooked and lame,
A little starved ruffian that hasn't a name.

He's always in want and he's always in woe,
A load on his back and an errand to go,
A devil to fight and he'll fight six to one,
Or poke out a half-smothered wasp's nest for fun.

In a lapful of sorrows his infancy lay,
The mother who bore him she soon ran away,
His grandmother reared him in poverty cold,
And the life of the young was the grief of the old.

Sure not from his father such happiness came,
And not from his mother who left him in shame,
The song of green fields, of the streams and the groves,
The song of sweet hopes and of confident loves.

Oh, what puts that spirit of spring in his breast,
Oh, what makes him pipe like a bird by its nest,
Oh, what makes him whistle like blackbird or wren,
The little lame ruffian rejected of men ?

The Return of the Goldfinches

WE are much honoured by your choice
O golden birds of silver voice,
That in our garden you should find
A pleasance to your mind—

The painted pear of all our trees,
The south slope towards the gooseberries
Where all day long the sun is warm—
Combining use with charm.

Did the pink tulips take your eye?
Or Breach's barn secure and high
To guard you from some chance mishap
Of gales through Shoreham gap?

First you were spied a fighting pair
Flashing and fluting here and there,
Until in stealth the nest was made
And graciously you stayed.

Now when I pause beneath your tree
An anxious head peeps down at me,
A crimson jewel in its crown,
I looking up, you down :—

I wonder if my stripey shawl
Seems pleasant to your eyes at all,
I can assure you that your wings
Are most delightful things.

Sweet birds, I pray, be not severe,
Do not deplore our presence here,
We cannot all be goldfinches
In such a world as this.

Sylvia Lynd

The shaded lawn, the bordered flowers,
We'll call them yours instead of ours,
The pinks and the acacia tree
Shall own your sovereignty.

And, if you let us, we will prove
Our lowly and obsequious love,
And when your little grey-pates hatch
We'll help you to keep watch.

No prowling stranger cats shall come
About your high celestial home,
With dangerous sounds we'll chase them hence
And ask no recompense.

And he, the Ethiopie of our house,
Slayer of beetle and of mouse,
Hugh, lazy, fond, whom we love well—
Peter shall wear a bell.

Believe me, birds, you need not fear,
No cages or limed twigs are here,
We only ask to live with you
In this green garden, too.

And when in other shining summers
Our place is taken by new-comers,
We'll leave them with the house and hill
The goldfinches' good will.

Your dainty flights, your painted coats,
The silver mist that is your notes
And all your sweet caressing ways
Shall decorate their days.

The Fountain-Springs

And never will the thought of spring
Visit our minds, but a gold wing
Will flash among the green and blue,
And we'll remember you.

SIDNEY ROYSE LYSAGHT

“Poems of the Unknown Way” (1901); “Horizons and
Landmarks” (1911).

The Fountain-Springs

WERE they not memories of things known before,
Not the strange vision of an unknown shore,
That met us when in childhood we began
To look upon our dwelling-place, and ran
Fearless to meet our fortune; when our eyes
Saw life with wonder, but without surprise;
When, though newcomers, no strange note we heard
In voice of wind or rain or song of bird;
And looking on the hills and trees and flowers
We loved, and without question made them ours;
And trusted the dumb creature and the hand
That guided us, nor sought to understand?
Were they not greetings of things old and dear,—
Not the strange voices of an alien sphere,—
That greeted us and linked us, with a bond
Of speech familiar, to some home beyond?
We were a part of all that we beheld
In those young days; it was our joy that welled
Into the sunshine with the mountain rill,
Our heart that in the rose's heart lay still,
Our wings that held the sea-bird o'er the foam,
Our feet that brought the wandering outcast home.
Earth had no secret that we could not share,
For everything we saw and loved we were.

Sidney Royse Lysaght

Not when defenceless on the earth we stood
In childhood doubted we that life was good
Not when we made our feast of everything
Could we distrust the hidden fountain-spring.
But when the years began to separate
From Life our lives, when all that once seemed great
In heaven and earth, all wonder and delight
Were narrowed to the measure of our sight ;
When knowledge of the suffering and wrong
That nature dealt the weak to serve the strong,
When records of man's greed and lust and pride
Defaced life's beauty and its hope belied,—
How had we then that mockery withstood,
Or trusted that the source of life was good,
Had not the memory of its old caress
Reproached our hearts in their unfaithfulness ;
Had we not once beheld a face so sweet
It could not but express a heart that beat
For us, and knew what waited us, the while
It viewed us from the darkness with its smile ;
Had we not known those vanished hours that wove
Of homely human bonds immortal love ;
Of flowers and stars and woods and mountain streams,
And things that die, imperishable dreams ?

A Psalm : Sit Nobis templum

OURS be the church not built with hands,
Whose corners are the seas and lands ;
Whose windows are the night and day,
The rose of dawn, the evening gray ;
Whose pillars soar through azure space
To shadowy heights, and interlace
In songs that, past the silver bars
Of moonlight, mingle with the stars.
The mountains shall our altars raise ;
Our cloisters hide in woodland ways ;

The Losers

And, in the rocks, each crystal rill
Our founts of Holy water fill.
Processions of the years and hours
Shall ever move beneath its towers ;
And down its echoing isles shall sweep
Eternal anthems of the deep.
But gleams shall evermore be shown
Through distant doors of paths unknown,
And round its walls shall evermore
Come whispers of an unknown shore.

Be it our ritual to read
In Life our Faith, in Truth our Creed.
Let fear its graven tablets break,
And Love our ten commandments make.
Let us, when heaven no light imparts,
Our gospel seek in human hearts :
Our hymn of praise on children's lips ;
In Beauty, our Apocalypse.
And let the burdens all must bear
In silence, be our common prayer ;
Let every flower that cleaves the sod
Become to us a word of God ;
And, lifting Heavenward Life's intent,
Love be, itself, our Sacrament.

ROSE MACAULAY

Had written several admirable novels, romantic or domestic, before she began to write the witty and satirical novels that have made her popular. Her poems are in "The Two Blind Countries" (1914) and "Three Days" (1919).

The Losers

THE soft dust on the by-roads
Is shaken and stirred

Rose Macaulay

By the shuffling feet of a listless folk,
But no sound is heard,
For they slouch along, a tired trail,
With never a song or word.

The days they walked the high road,
With its sun, dust, and sweat,
Its hope and its pride, are a dim dream
That they will soon forget.
All for the fields of slumber
Their feet are set.

But, as they slouch on drowsily,
They shall quiet joys find—
Boots without heels, jars without jam,
And gnawed cheese-rind,
And pilchard-tins, with one or two
Fish-tails left behind.

And glad they are to have left climbing
The difficult way—
Glad no more to sweat and strive,
No more obey ;
Yea, all but glad the goal was not
For such as they.

(Lost souls, they say, from Michael's gate
Turn back in suchwise.
Forgetful of the ecstasy
Of the strange, steep skies,
Down popped paths to the silent lands
They slope, with blind eyes.)

Peace waits to take them utterly
For a little space ;
They must go shambling down the hill
To the dim, still place,

Apologia

Where, stretched at ease, they shall forget
They have run and lost a race.

* * * * *

The gray dust on the by-roads
Is shuffled and blurred
By the dragging feet of beaten men,
And a quiet sound is heard—
A drawing of slow breath, as if
A thousand sleepers stirred.

RONALD CAMPBELL MACFIE

Doctor of medicine, and author of "The Romance of Medicine," "Science, Matter and Immortality," and kindred works; but began as a poet, and has returned to poetry in his later books. "Granite Dust" (1892); "New Poems" (1904); "War" (1918); "Odes and Other Poems" (1919).

Worship

WORK is devout, and service is divine.
Who stoops to scrub a floor
May worship more
Than he who kneels before a holy shrine;
Who crushes stubborn ore
More worthily adore
Than he who crushes sacramental wine.

Apologia

(To A. H. L.)

O FRIEND, and is my life unjust
Because I do not seek renown,
Nor love the hot arena-dust,
Nor toil to win an olive crown,

Ronald Campbell Macfie

But rather for a time would hide
Deep in a vale of Thessaly,
And watch the cool Penéus glide
Atween its laurels to the sea ?

My waiting is not wholly weak,
Nor is my idle dreaming wrong,
For lo ! the only crowns I seek
Are inspiration for my song,

And love, to garner and to give,
And joy, to harvest and to sow,
And health, that I may largely live,
Missing no boon the gods bestow.

And heat and haste will help me not,
Nor days of toil, and nights of care,
But idle dream, and vagrant thought,
And sunny sky, and fragrant air.

O brave, strong friend, who cannot rest,
Who dare not dream, who will not wait,
What man can know what life is best ?
The Best is the Predestinate—

The life we feel the gods desire,
The fate they urge us to fulfil :
Suffice it, if we both aspire
To work with the Almighty Will,

Whether it lead us forth to sing
In Tempe's vale a gentle note,
Or writhe in the arena-ring
With cruel thumbs upon our throat.

Whether by patience or by strife
Thus only can our spirits climb
From Death into Immortal Life,
From Now into Eternal Time.

Apologia

Thus only can we guard and save
Our soul's divine integrity,
Else are we broken like a wave
Torn by a tempest from the sea.

And even tho' we win success,
We lose all saving self-control,
Unable even to possess
A fickle, fragmentary soul.

Friend, though we differ here and there,
Yet have we bonds of brotherhood—
A common love of all things fair,
A common reverence for the Good.

And fain are we that Knowledge be
No daughter of the gods above,
But sister of sweet Sympathy,
And handmaid in the courts of Love.

Lo, to the gods I give my will,
And by my "dæmon" am I led.
Why should you rack and prune me still
To fit a hard Procrustes' bed?

Altho', perchance, I find delight
In other lesser joys than you,
Yet haply *both* our lives are right,
If we to our own selves are true.

Each man a separate life must lead,
Each soul a separate path must wend :
Content am I if I succeed
In sometimes meeting with a Friend.

ISABEL ECCLESTONE MACKAY

Canadian poet. "Between the Lights" (1904); "Fires of Driftwood" (1922).

Wet Weather

IT is the English in me that loves the soft, wet weather—
The cloud upon the mountain, the mist upon the
sea,
The sea-gull flying low and near with rain upon each
feather,
The scent of deep, green woodlands where the buds
are breaking free.

A world all hot with sunshine, with a hot, white sky
above it—
Oh then I feel an alien in a land I'd call my own ;
The rain is like a friend's caress, I lean to it and love
it,
'Tis like a finger on a nerve that thrills for it alone.

Is it the secret kinship which each new life is given
To link it by an age-long chain to those whose lives
are through,
That wheresoever he may go, by fate or fancy driven
The home-star rises in his heart to keep the compass
true ?

Ah, 'tis the English in me that loves the soft, grey
weather—
The little mists that trail along like bits of wind-flung
foam,
The primrose and the violet—all wet and sweet together,
And the sound of water calling, as it used to call at
home.

Inheritance

THERE lived a man who raised his hand and said,
“ I will be great,”
And through a long, long life he bravely knocked
At Fame’s closed gate.

A son he left who, like his sire, strove
High place to win ;—
Worn out he died, and dying left no trace
That he had been.

He also left a son, who, without care
Or planning how,
Bore the fair letters of a deathless fame
Upon his brow.

“ Behold a genius filled with fire divine ! ”
The people cried
Not knowing that to make him what he was
Two men had died.

For One Who Went in Spring

SHE did not go, as others do,
With backward look and beckoning ;
With no farewell for anything
She passed the open doorway through.

The little things she left behind
Lie where they fell from hands content—
Fame a forgotten incident
And life a season out of mind.

The spring will find her footstep gone,
But spring is kind to vanished things,
Camas and buttercups she brings
With green that tears have brightened on.

James A. Mackereth

And we, who walked with her last year
While April in the lilacs stirred,
Will turn with sudden look or word—
Forgetting that she is not here.

JAMES A. MACKERETH

“ In Grasmere Vale ” (1907) ; “ A Son of Cain ” (1910) ;
“ In the Wake of the Phœnix ” (1912) ; “ Iolaus ” (1913) ;
“ On the Face of a Star ” (1913) ; “ The Red, Red Dawn ”
(1917) ; “ The Death of Cleopatra ” (1920).

To a Blackbird on New Year's Day

HAIL, truant with song-troubled breast,—
Thou welcome and bewildering guest !
Blithe troubadour, whose laughing note
Brings spring into a poet's throat,—
Flute, feathered joy ! thy painted bill
Foretells the daffodil.

Enchanter, 'gainst the evening star
Singing to worlds where dreamers are,
That makes upon the leafless bough
A solitary vernal vow,—
Sing, lyric soul ! within thy song
The love that lures the rose along !

The snowdrop, hearing, in the dell
Doth tremble for its virgin bell ;
The crocus feels within its frame
The magic of its folded flame ;
And many a listening rapture lies
And pushes towards its paradise.

Moonrise at Grasmere Once More

Young love again on golden gales
Scents hawthorn blown down happy dales ;
The phantom cuckoo calls forlorn
From limits of the haunted morn ;—
Sing, elfin heart ! thy notes to me
Are bells that ring in Faëry !

Again the world is young, is young,
And silence takes a silver tongue ;
The echoes catch the jocund mood
Of laughing children in the wood ;
Blithe April trips in winter's way,
And nature, wondering, dreams of May.

Sing on, thou dusky fount of light !
God love thee for a merry sprite !
Sing on ! for though the sun be coy,
I sense with thee a budding joy,
And all my heart with ranging rhyme
Is poet for the prime !

Moonrise at Grasmere Once More

THE breath of the firwood comes faintly :
A melody trembles, and goes :
Dimly a dreaming cypress tree
Sways to a dreaming rose :
The mists steal into the garden, and the great moon grows.
A lattice clinks in the gloaming,
And shuts with a shudder of stars.
Lonesomely, drowsily roaming
The melody's drifting bars
Commingle with the hushings of the dusky deodars.
No step through the night cometh :
The lake water in sleep
Lips to its reeds ; and hummeth
A torrent's muffled leap
Far in the mountains lonely where the dark lies deep.

James A. Mackereth

Scents in the dew-moist meadows,
Starlight, and liliated shore,
Waters that far in the stillness
Croon of enchanted lore,
You whisper of joys that no moonrise will wake for me more.

You are steeped in the mystery of passion,
Are mild with the meaning of pain.
I have homed to this dream-haunted water
From years that were vain :
Oh ! poignant with raptures departed these wonders that
wane.

Loved loss, in soft melody sighing
With so ghostly, so magic a tone !
Ah, my youth !—in mooned meadows replying,
Where I linger alone,
Sweetly mute, with deep memories unspoken, as a moss-
fondled stone.

The lyric has died into silence.
Lone, dreaming, the larch-feathered hills
Lie glassed in the dream of the water.
Like shy thoughts creep the rills
Through the grave woods ; and, soothing to slumber,
comes the drone of the ghylls.

From the tower floats the murmur of midnight :
Enchanted on mountainous ground
Brambled coppices hanging in heaven
Entangle the sound,
And faint bells on the dream-hills of faery seem tolling
around.

An owl in the firwood is hooting ;
It breaks not the spell of repose :
A lost mountain echo is fluting :
Like a dream-voice it goes.
Misty shcen's on the mere and the meadow, and the
moon's on the rose.

RACHEL SWETE MACNAMARA

Novelist and poet. "The Little Book of Dew" (1919).

"Love Summer Sits at Her Wheel of June"

LOVE SUMMER sits at her wheel of June,
And spins her cloth of rose,
And the murmur of that turning wheel
For ever comes and goes,
Like hum of bees, and sigh of breeze,
And little leaves whisp'ring in the trees!

'Tis spun with threads of gossamer
White butterflies have brought,
With clematis and lavender
And wild-rose petals wrought,
And dragonflies, of curious dyes
And peacock's blue and emerald eyes.

Moon-daisies and forget-me-not
And little trembling-grass
And "books of dew" with rosy leaves
Into the fabric pass,
And mosses old, with cups of gold,
And poppies sleeping fold on fold.

Blossom of lime and honey-flower
Upon it shake their scent,
And May-lilies and mignonette
With meadow-sweet are blent:
'Tis thickly spread with petals shed
Of fair carnations, white and red.

But when Love Summer takes her robe
And wraps the world therein,
And to the outposts of the earth
Its thousand perfumes win,
Tho' breezes come, and bees still hum,
The spinning-wheel of June is dumb.

JOHN MASEFIELD

In an early poem, consecrated his gift to the quest for beauty, and claimed as his kingdom "the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth"; and is true to that quest in his realistic, sometimes squalidly realistic, narrative poems, as in his ballads and lyrics of the sea and the metaphysical philosophy of the "Lollingdon Downs" sonnet sequence. Came to poetry after he had been a sailor, tramp, bar-tender in America, and those experiences are writ large in his poems and stories. Except for "Nan," he has gone more to history and romance for his plays. "Salt Water Ballads," "The Everlasting Mercy," "The Widow in the Bye-Street," etc., are included in his "Collected Poems" (1924).

Sea-Fever

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 grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn
breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of the running
tide
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 blown spume, and the sea-
gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again, to the vagrant gipsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's
like a whetted knife ;
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.

Beauty

I HAVE seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hills
Coming in solemn beauty like slow old tunes of Spain :
I have seen the lady April bringing the daffodils,
Bringing the springing grass and the soft warm April rain.

I have heard the song of the blossoms and the old chant
of the sea,
And seen strange lands from under the arched white
sails of ships ;
But the loveliest things of beauty God ever has showed
to me,
Are her voice, and her hair, and eyes, and the dear red
curve of her lips.

From " Lollingdon Downs "

HERE in the self is all that man can know
Of Beauty, all the wonder, all the power,
All the unearthly colour, all the glow,
Here in the self which withers like a flower ;
Here in the self which fades as hours pass,
And droops and dies and rots and is forgotten
Sooner, by ages, than the mirroring glass
In which it sees its glory still unrotten.
Here in the flesh, within the flesh, behind,
Swift in the blood and throbbing on the bone,
Beauty herself, the universal mind,
Eternal April wandering alone ;
The God, the holy Ghost, the atoning Lord,
Here in the flesh, the never yet explored.

Flesh, I have knocked at many a dusty door,
Gone down full many a windy midnight lane,
Probed in old walls and felt along the floor,
Pressed in blind hope the lighted window-pane.

John Masefield

But useless all, though sometimes when the moon
Was full in heaven and the sea was full,
Along my body's alleys came a tune
Played in the tavern by the Beautiful.
Then for an instant I have felt at point
To find and seize her, whosoe'er she be,
Whether some saint whose glory doth anoint
Those whom she loves, or but a part of me,
Or something that the things not understood
Make for their uses out of flesh and blood.

But all has passed, the tune has died away,
The glamour gone, the glory ; is it chance ?
Is the unfeeling mud stabbed by a ray
Cast by an unseen splendour's great advance ?
Or does the glory gather crumb by crumb
Unseen, within, as coral islands rise,
Till suddenly the apparitions come
Above the surface, looking at the skies ?
Or does sweet Beauty dwell in lovely things
Scattering the holy hintings of her name
In women, in dear friends, in flowers, in springs,
In the brook's voice, for us to catch the same ?
Or is it we who are Beauty, we who ask ?
We by whose gleams the world fulfils its task.

From " The Widow in the Bye-Street "

SHE tottered home, back to the little room.
It was all over for her, but for life ;
She drew the blinds, and trembled in the gloom ;
" I sat here thus when I was wedded wife ;
Sorrow sometimes, and joy ; but always strife.
Struggle to live except just at the last,
O God, I thank Thee for the mercies past.

From "The Widow in the Bye-Street"

Harry, my man, when we were courting ; eh . .
The April morning up the Cony-gree.
How grand he looked upon our wedding day.
'I wish we'd had the bells,' he said to me ;
And we'd the moon that evening, I and he,
And dew come wet, oh, I remember how,
And we come home to where I'm sitting now.

And he lay dead here, and his son was born here ;
He never saw his son, his little Jim.
And now I'm all alone here, left to mourn here,
And there are all his clothes, but never him.
He's down under the prison in the dim,
With quicklime working on him to the bone,
The flesh I made with many and many a groan.

And then he ran so, he was strong at running,
Always a strong one, like his dad at that.
In summertimes I done my sewing sunning,
And he'd be sprawling, playing with the cat.
And neighbours brought their knitting out to chat
Till five o'clock ; he had his tea at five ;
How sweet life was when Jimmy was alive."

And sometimes she will walk the cindery mile,
Singing, as she and Jimmy used to do,
Singing "The parson's dog lep over a stile,"
Along the path where water lilies grew.
The stars are placid on the evening's blue,
Burning like eyes so calm, so unafraid.
On all that God has given and man has made.

Burning they watch, and mothlike owls come out,
The redbreast warbles shrilly once and stops ;
The homing cowman gives his dog a shout,
The lamps are lighted in the village shops.
Silence ; the last bird passes ; in the copse
The hazels cross the moon, a nightjar spins,
Dew wets the grass, the nightingale begins.

John Masefield

Singing her crazy song the mother goes,
Singing as though her heart were full of peace,
Moths knock the petals from the dropping rose,
Stars make the glimmering pool a golden fleece,
The moon droops west, but still she does not cease,
The little mice peep out to hear her sing,
Until the inn-man's cockerel shakes his wing.

And in the sunny dawns of hot Julys,
The labourers going to meadow see her there.
Rubbing the sleep out of their heavy eyes,
They lean upon the parapet to stare ;
They see her plaiting basil in her hair,
Basil, the dark red wound-wort, cops of clover,
The blue self-heal and golden Jacks of Dover.

Dully they watch her, then they turn to go
To that high Shropshire upland of late hay.
Her singing lingers with them as they mow,
And many times they try it, now grave, now gay,
Till, with full throat, over the hills away,
They lift it clear ; oh, very clear it towers
Mixed with the swish of many falling flowers.

