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**SELECTIONS FROM  
MODERN POETS**



SELECTIONS FROM  
MODERN POETS  
MADE BY J. C. SQUIRE

LONDON : MARTIN SECKER



## PREFATORY NOTE

No Poet represented in this book was over fifty when, in 1919, I began to compile it. The eldest of them all was born in 1870.

Many good and some great living poets are therefore missing from its pages. Nothing is here by Mr Hardy or Mr Bridges, by Mr A. E. Housman, Mr Yeats, Æ, Mr Binyon, Mr Hewlett, Mr Herbert Trench, Mr Gosse, Mr Austin Dobson, Mr Doughty, Mr Kipling, Sir Henry Newbolt, Mrs Meynell, Mrs Woods, Mr Wilfrid Blunt, and others whose names must appear in any comprehensive anthology from living poets. The date, 1870, was arbitrarily chosen: so would any other date have been. But some date I had to fix, for my object was to illustrate what many of us think an exceptional recent flowering.

I do not propose to analyse the tendencies, in idea and in method, exhibited in the poems here collected. These things are always better seen at a distance; and anyhow the materials are here for the production of an analysis by the reader himself, if he is eager for one. But I will express one opinion, and call attention to one phenomenon. The opinion is that the majority of the poems in this book have merit and that many more could have been printed without lowering the standard. And the phenomenon is the simultaneous appearance—the result of underlying currents of thought and feeling—of a very large number of poets who write only or mainly in lyrical forms. Several living poets of the highest repute have won their reputation solely on short

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poems, and there are, and have been, a very large number indeed who have written one or two good poems.

The better production of our generation has been mainly lyrical and it has been widely diffused. Where is the ambitious work on a large scale? Where is the twentieth century poet who is fulfilling the usual functions of the greatest poets: to display human life in all its range and variety, or to exercise a clear and powerful influence on the thought of mankind with regard to the main problems of our existence? These questions are asked; possibly Echo may give its traditional and ironic answer.

There are several observations, however, which should be made. One is that the great doctrinal poets have not always become widely recognised as such in their own prime, their general vogue being posthumous. Another is that we cannot possibly tell what a poet now living and young may or may not do before he dies. But though I have my own views on this subject I do not think that the age, even if admitted to be purely lyrical, stands in need of defence. It is of no use asking a poetical renaissance to conform to type, for there isn't any type. There are marked differences in the features of all those English poetical movements which have chiefly contributed to the body of our "immortal" poetry. In the Elizabethan age we had the greatest diversity of production: a multitude of great and small men, with much genius, or but a spark of it blown to life by the favourable wind, produced works in every form and on every scale. The age of Herbert and Vaughan, of Crashaw, Herrick, Marvell, Carew, Suckling, Lovelace, Corbet, Habington, is memorable almost solely for its lyrical work. The era of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats was an age during which a vast amount of great poetry was written by a few great poets; there was very little healthy undergrowth. Should our literary age be remembered by posterity solely as an age during which fifty men had written lyrics of some durability for their truth and beauty,

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it would not be remembered with contempt. It is in that conviction that I have compiled this anthology.

It is irritating to feel that even within its own limits it does not appear to myself—not to mention others—as good or as nearly representative as it might have been. Permission could not be obtained to print Mr Masefield's *Biography* and his *August 1914*, which I personally happen to prefer to any of his shorter works. Since the time in 1919-20 when I was compiling the book two volumes have come out from which I should like to have made large selections: Edmund Blunden's *The Waggoner* and the late Wilfrid Owen's *Poems*. Each of these poets is inadequately represented here; and a few things by others, who do not appear here at all, came to my notice when it was too late to put them in.

I have to thank the living poets from whose works I have drawn for permitting me to use everything I wanted. I am grateful to Mrs Brooke and Rupert Brooke's literary executor, Mr Edward Marsh (whose "Georgian" collections have been a great stimulus and help to me) for permission to use a selection from Brooke; to Mrs J. E. Flecker for poems by her husband; to Lady Desborough for the poems by her son, Julian Grenfell; to Lord Dunsany for the poems by Francis Ledwidge; to Mrs Thomas Macdonagh and Mrs Joseph Plunkett for the poems by their husbands; to Mrs Owen for her son Wilfrid Owen's *Strange Meeting*; to Professor W. R. Sorley for the poems by his son, Charles Sorley; to Lady Glenconner for those by her son, Edward Wyndham Tennant; to Mrs Edward Thomas for the poems (published too late for him ever to know how people would admire them) by Edward Thomas.

Finally, almost every publisher in the kingdom has assisted the book with permission to reprint copyright poems. The full list of publishers and works is as follows: Messrs Bell (Edward L. Davison, *Poems*); Blackwell (E. Wyndham Tennant, *Worple Flit*); Burns' Oates and Washbourne (G. K. Chesterton, *Poems*); Cambridge University Press (C. H. Sorley, *Marlborough and*

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*other Poems*); Chatto and Windus (Robert Nichols, *Ardours and Endurances*, Aurelia, Wilfred Owen, *Poems*), Collins (F. Brett Young, *Poems*); Constable (Gordon Bottomley, *Annual of New Poetry*, 1917, W. de la Mare, *Collected Poems*); Dent (G. K. Chesterton, *The Wild Knight*); Duckworth (H. Belloc, *Poems*, D. H. Lawrence, *Love Poems*, Sturge Moore, *Collected Poems*); Fifeild (W. H. Davies, *Collected Poems*); Heffer (A. Y. Campbell, *Poems*); Heinemann (Robert Graves, *Fairies and Fusiliers*, John Masefield, *Lollingdon Downs*, Siegfried Sassoon, *The Old Huntsman*, *Counter-Attack*, *War Poems*); Herbert Jenkins (Francis Ledwidge, *Poems*); Lane (Lascelles Abercrombie, *Emblems of Love*); Macmillan (Ralph Hodgson, *Poems*, James Stephens, *Songs from the Clay*); Elkin Mathews (Gordon Bottomley, *Chambers of Imagery*, James Joyce, *Chamber Music*, Sturge Moore, *The Vinedresser*); Maunsel and Roberts (Padraic Colum, *Poems*, Seumas O'Sullivan, *The Twilight People*, Joseph Plunkett, *Poems*); Methuen (G. K. Chesterton, *The Ballad of the White Horse*, W. H. Davies, *The Bird of Paradise*, I. A. Williams, *Poems*); Palmer (Francis Burrows, *The Green Knight*); Poetry Bookshop (Frances Cornford, *Poems*, Harold Monro, *Children of Love*, *Strange Meetings*); Secker (Martin Armstrong, *The Buzzards*, Maurice Baring, *Poems 1914-1919*, J. E. Flecker, *Collected Poems*, Robert Graves, *Country Sentiment*, Edward Shanks, *The Queen of China*); Selwyn and Blount (Robin Flower, *Hymenæa*, John Freeman, *Poems New and Old*, Edward Thomas, *Collected Poems*); Sidgwick & Jackson (Edmund Blunden, *The Waggoner*, Rupert Brooke, *Collected Poems*, John Drinkwater, *Olton Pools*, R. C. K. Ensor, *Odes*, Ivor Gurney, *Severn and Somme*, R. Macaulay, *The Two Blind Countries*, W. J. Turner, *The Hunter*, *The Dark Fire*); Talbot Press and Fisher Unwin (T. Macdonagh, *Poems*).

J. C. SQUIRE.

**LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE**



## MARRIAGE SONG

### I

Come up, dear chosen morning, come,  
Blessing the air with light,  
And bid the sky repent of being dark :  
Let all the spaces round the world be white,  
And give the earth her green again.  
Into new hours of beautiful delight,  
Out of the shadow where she has lain,  
Bring the earth awake for glee,  
Shining with dews as fresh and clear  
As my beloved's voice upon the air.  
For now, O morning chosen of all days, on thee  
A wondrous duty lies :  
There was an evening that did loveliness foretell ;  
Thence upon thee, O chosen morn, it fell  
To fashion into perfect destiny  
The radiant prophecy.  
For in an evening of young moon, that went  
Filling the moist air with a rosy fire,  
I and my beloved knew our love ;

And knew that thou, O morning, wouldst arise  
To give us knowledge of achieved desire.  
For, standing stricken with astonishment,  
Half terrified in the delight,  
Even as the moon did into clear air move  
And made a golden light,  
Lo there, croucht up against it, a dark hill,  
A monstrous back of earth, a spine  
Of hunchèd rock, furred with great growth of  
    pine,  
Lay like a beast, snout in its paws, asleep ;  
Yet in its sleeping seemed it miserable,  
As though strong fear must always keep  
Hold of its heart, and drive its blood in dream.  
Yea, for to our new love, did it not seem,  
That dark and quiet length of hill,  
The sleeping grief of the world?—Out of it we  
Had like imaginations stept to be  
Beauty and golden wonder; and for the lovely  
    fear  
Of coming perfect joy, had changed  
The terror that dreamt there !  
And now the golden moon had turned  
To shining white, white as our souls that burned  
With vision of our prophecy assured :  
Suddenly white was the moon; but she  
At once did on a woven modesty  
Of cloud, and soon went in obscured :

And we were dark, and vanisht that strange hill.  
But yet it was not long before  
There opened in the sky a narrow door,  
Made with pearl lintel and pearl sill ;  
And the earth's night seem'd pressing there,—  
All as a beggar on some festival would peer,—  
To gaze into a room of light beyond,  
The hidden silver splendour of the moon.  
Yea, and we also, we  
Long gazed wistfully  
Towards thee, O morning, come at last,  
And towards the light that thou wilt pour upon  
us soon !

## II

O soul who still art strange to sense,  
Who often against beauty wouldst complain,  
Doubting between joy and pain :  
If like the startling touch of something keen  
Against thee, it hath been  
To follow from an upland height  
The swift sun hunting rain  
Across the April meadows of a plain,  
Until the fields would flash into the air  
Their joyous green, like emeralds alight ;  
Or when in the blue of night's mid-noon  
The burning naked moon  
Draws to a brink of cloudy weather near,

A breadth of snow, firm and soft as a wing,  
Stretcht out over a wind that gently goes,—  
Through the white sleep of snowy cloud there grows  
An azure-border'd shining ring,  
The gleaming dream of the approaching joy of  
her;—

What now wilt thou do, Soul? What now,  
If with such things as these troubled thou wert?  
How wilt thou now endure, or how  
Not now be strangely hurt?—

When utter beauty must come closer to thee  
Than even anger or fear could be;

When thou, like metal in a kiln, must lie  
Seized by beauty's mightily able flame;  
Enjoyed by beauty as by the ruthless glee  
Of an unescapable power;

Obeying beauty as air obeys a cry;

Yea, one thing made of beauty and thee,  
As steel and a white heat are made the same!

—Ah, but I know how this infirmity

Will fail and be not, no, not memory,

When I begin the marvellous hour.

This only is my heart's strain'd eagerness,

Long waiting for its bliss.—

But from those other fears, from those

That keep to Love so close,

From fears that are the shadow of delight,

Hide me, O joys; make them unknown to-night!

### III

Thou bright God that in dream camest to me last  
night,

Thou with the flesh made of a golden light,

Knew I not thee, thee and thy heart,

Knew I not well, God, who thou wert?

Yea, and my soul divinely understood

The light that was beneath thee a ground,

The golden light that cover'd thee round,

Turning my sleep to a fiery morn,

Was as a heavenly oath there sworn

Promising me an immortal good :

Well I knew thee, God of Marriages, thee and  
thy flame !

Ah, but wherefore beside thee came

That fearful sight of another mood ?

Why in thy light, to thy hand chained,

Towards me its bondage terribly strained,

Why came with thee that dreadful hound,

The wild hound Fear, black, ravenous, and  
gaunt ?

Why him with thee should thy dear light  
surround ?

Why broughtest thou that beast to haunt

The blissful footsteps of my golden dream ?

All shadowy black the body dread,

All frenzied fire the head,—

The hunger of its mouth a hollow crimson flame,  
The hatred in its eyes a blaze  
Fierce and green, stabbing the ruddy glaze,  
And sharp white jetting fire the teeth snarl'd at  
me,  
And white the dribbling rage of froth,—  
A throat that gaped to bay and paws working  
violently,  
Yet soundless all as a winging moth;  
Tugging towards me, famishing for my heart;—  
Even while thou, O golden god, wert still  
Looking the beautiful kindness of thy will  
Into my soul, even then must I be,  
With thy bright promise looking at me,  
Then bitterly of that hound afraid?—  
Darkness, I know, attendeth bright,  
And light comes not but shadow comes :  
And heart must know, if it know thy light,  
Thy wild hound Fear, the shadow of love's  
delight.

Yea, is it thus? Are we so made  
Of death and darkness, that even thou,  
O golden God of the joys of love,  
Thy mind to us canst only prove,  
The glorious devices of thy mind,  
By so revealing how thy journeying here  
Through this mortality, doth closely bind  
Thy brightness to the shadow of dreadful Fear?—

Ah no, it shall not be ! Thy joyous light  
Shall hide me from the hunger of fear to-night.

#### IV

For wonderfully to live I now begin :  
So that the darkness which accompanies  
Our being here, is fasten'd up within  
The power of light that holdeth me ;  
And from these shining chains, to see  
My joy with bold misliking eyes,  
The shrouded figure will not dare arise.  
For henceforth, from to-night,  
I am wholly gone into the bright  
Safety of the beauty of love :  
Not only all my waking vigours plied  
Under the searching glory of love,  
But knowing myself with love all satisfied  
Even when my life is hidden in sleep ;  
As high clouds, to themselves that keep  
The moon's white company, are all possest  
Silverly with the presence of their guest ;  
Or as a darken'd room  
That hath within it roses, whence the air  
And quietness are taken everywhere  
Deliciously by sweet perfume.

## EPILOGUE

What shall we do for Love these days?  
How shall we make an altar-blaze  
To smite the horny eyes of men  
With the renown of our Heaven,  
And to the unbelievers prove  
Our service to our dear god, Love?  
What torches shall we lift above  
The crowd that pushes through the mire,  
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?  
I should think I were much to blame,  
If never I held some fragrant flame  
Above the noises of the world,  
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,  
Worshipt before the sacred fears  
That are like flashing curtains furl'd  
Across the presencé of our lord Love.  
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze  
Of the whole earth with some great praise  
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,  
Some tower of glittering masonries,  
Therein such a spirit flourishing

Men should see what my heart can sing :  
All that Love hath done to me  
Built into stone, a visible glee ;  
Marble carried to gleaming height  
As moved aloft by inward delight ;  
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,  
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.  
For of all those who have been known  
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,  
I envy one for just one thing :  
In Cordova of the Moors  
There dwelt a passion-minded King,  
Who set great bands of marble-hewers  
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving  
In a tall palace, shapen so  
All the wondering world might know  
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.  
His love, that brighter and larger was  
Than the starry places, into firm stone  
He sent, as if the stone were glass  
Fired and into beauty blown.

Solemn and invented gravely  
In its bulk the fabric stood,  
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely  
In its own exceeding good  
To be better than the waste  
Of time's devices ; grandly spaced,  
Seriously the fabric stood.

Of carven delicate ornament,  
Wreathing up like ravishment,  
Mentioning in sculptures twined  
The blitheness Love hath in his mind ;  
And like delighted senses were  
The windows, and the columns there  
Made the following sight to ache  
As the heart that did them make.  
Well I can see that shining song  
Flowering there, the upward throng  
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,  
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,  
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight ;  
All glancing in the Spanish light  
White as water of arctic tides,  
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.  
You had said, the radiant sheen  
Of that palace might have been  
A young god's fantasy, ere he came  
His serious worlds and suns to frame ;  
Such an immortal passion  
Quiver'd among the slim hewn stone.  
And in the nights it seemed a jar  
Cut in the substance of a star,  
Wherein a wine, that will be poured  
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.  
But within this fretted shell,

The wonder of Love made visible,  
The King a private gentle mood  
There placed, of pleasant quietude.  
For right amidst there was a court,  
Where always muskèd silences  
Listened to water and to trees ;  
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—  
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,  
Basil, tansy, centaury,—  
Was the grass of that orchard, hid  
Love's amazements all amid.  
Jarring the air with rumour cool,  
Small fountains played into a pool  
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss  
When its beard just sprouting is ;  
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,  
Prettily rimpled the court across.  
And in the pool's clear idleness,  
Moving like dreams through happiness,  
Shoals of small bright fishes were ;  
In and out weed-thickets bent  
Perch and carp, and sauntering went  
With mouching jaws and eyes a-stare ;  
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl,  
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,  
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt  
Into the water ; but quick as fear  
Back his shining brown head slipt

To crouch on the gravel of his lair,  
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,  
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.

So within that green-veiled air,  
Within that white-walled quiet, where  
Innocent water thought aloud,—  
Childish prattle that must make  
The wise sunlight with laughter shake  
On the leafage overbowed,—  
Often the King and his love-lass  
Let the delicious hours pass.  
All the outer world could see  
Graved and sawn amazingly  
Their love's delighted riotise,  
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes ;  
But only these twain could abide  
In the cool peace that withinside  
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt ;  
They only knew the still meaning spelt  
By Love's flaming script, which is  
God's word written in ecstasies.

And where is now that palace gone,  
All the magical skill'd stone,  
All the dreaming towers wrought  
By Love as if no more than thought  
The unresisting marble was ?  
How could such a wonder pass ?  
Ah, it was but built in vain

Against the stupid horns of Rome,  
That pusht down into the common loam  
The loveliness that shone in Spain.  
But we have raised it up again !  
A loftier palace, fairer far,  
Is ours, and one that fears no war.  
Safe in marvellous walls we are ;  
Wondering sense like builded fires,  
High amazement of desires,  
Delight and certainty of love,  
Closing around, roofing above  
Our unapproacht and perfect hour  
Within the splendours of love's power.



**MARTIN ARMSTRONG**



## THE BUZZARDS

When evening came and the warm glow grew  
deeper,

And every tree that bordered the green  
meadows

And in the yellow cornfields every reaper  
And every corn-shock stood above their shadows  
Flung eastward from their feet in longer measure,  
Serenely far there swam in the sunny height  
A buzzard and his mate who took their pleasure  
Swirling and poising idly in golden light.

On great pied motionless moth-wings borne  
along,

So effortless and so strong,  
Cutting each other's paths together they glided,  
Then wheeled asunder till they soared divided  
Two valleys' width (as though it were delight  
To part like this, being sure they could unite  
So swiftly in their empty, free dominion);  
Curved headlong downward, towered up the  
sunny steep,

Then, with a sudden lift of the one great pinion,  
Swung proudly to a curve, and from its height  
Took half a mile of sunlight in one long sweep.

And we, so small on the swift immense hillside,  
Stood tranced, until our souls arose uplifted

On those far-sweeping, wide,  
Strong curves of flight—swayed up and hugely  
drifted,

Were washed, made strong and beautiful in the  
tide

Of sun-bathed air. But far beneath, beholden  
Through shining deeps of air, the fields were  
golden

And rosy burned the heather where cornfields  
ended.

And still those buzzards whirled, while light  
withdrew

Out of the vales and to surging slopes ascended,  
Till the loftiest flaming summit died to blue.

**MAURICE BARING**



DIFFUGERE NIVES, 1917

To J. C. S.

The snows have fled, the hail, the lashing rain,  
    Before the Spring.

The grass is starred with buttercups again,  
    The blackbirds sing.

Now spreads the month that feast of lovely things  
    We loved of old.

Once more the swallow glides with darkling  
    wings  
    Against the gold.

Now the brown bees about the peach trees boom  
    Upon the walls;  
And far away beyond the orchard's bloom  
    The cuckoo calls.           .

The season holds a festival of light  
    For you, for me;  
But shadows are abroad, there falls a blight  
    On each green tree.

And every leaf unfolding, every flower  
    Brings bitter meed ;  
Beauty of the morning and the evening hour  
    Quickens our need.

All is reborn, but never any Spring  
    Can bring back this ;  
Nor any fullness of midsummer bring  
    The voice we miss.

The smiling eyes shall smile on us no more ;  
    The laughter clear,  
Too far away on the forbidden shore,  
    We shall not hear.

Bereft of these until the day we die,  
    We both must dwell ;  
Alone, alone, and haunted by the cry :  
    “ Hail and farewell ! ”

Yet when the scythe of Death shall near us hiss,  
    Through the cold air,  
Then on the shuddering marge of the abyss  
    They will be there.

They will be there to lift us from sheer space  
    And empty night ;  
And we shall turn and see them face to face  
    In the new light.

So shall we pay the unabated price  
    Of their release,  
And found on our consenting sacrifice  
    Their lasting peace.

The hopes that fall like leaves before the wind,  
    The baffling waste,  
And every earthly joy that leaves behind  
    A mortal taste.

The uncompleted end of all things dear,  
    The clanging door  
Of Death, forever loud with the last fear,  
    Haunt them no more.

Without them the awakening world is dark  
    With dust and mire;  
Yet as they went they flung to us a spark,  
    A thread of fire.

To guide us while beneath the sombre skies  
    Faltering we tread,  
Until for us like morning stars shall rise  
    The deathless dead.

## JULIAN GRENFELL

Because of you we will be glad and gay,  
Remembering you, we will be brave and strong ;  
And hail the advent of each dangerous day,  
And meet the last adventure with a song.  
And, as you proudly gave your jewelled gift,  
We'll give our lesser offering with a smile,  
Nor falter on that path where, all too swift,  
You led the way and leapt the golden stile.

Whether new paths, new heights to climb you  
find,  
Or gallop through the unfooted asphodel,  
We know you know we shall not lag behind,  
Nor halt to waste a moment on a fear ;  
And you will speed us onward with a cheer,  
And wave beyond the stars that all is well.

## PIERRE

I saw you starting for another war,  
The emblem of adventure and of youth,  
So that men trembled, saying : " He forsooth  
Has gone, has gone, and shall return no more."  
And then out there, they told me you were dead,  
Taken and killed ; how was it that I knew,  
Whatever else was true, that was not true ?  
And then I saw you pale upon your bed,

Scarcely a year ago, when you were sent  
Back from the margin of the dim abyss ;  
For Death had sealed you with a warning kiss,  
And let you go to meet a nobler fate :  
To serve in fellowship, O fortunate :  
To die in battle with your regiment.



**HILAIRE BELLOC**



## THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands  
That are sodden and unkind,  
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 fast 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 ;  
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,  
Of if ever I 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.

## THE NIGHT

Most holy Night, that still dost keep  
The keys of all the doors of sleep,  
To me when my tired eyelids close  
Give thou repose.

And let the far lament of them  
That chant the dead day's requiem  
Make in my ears, who wakeful lie,  
Soft lullaby.

Let them that know the horned moth  
By my bedside their memories clothe.  
So shall I have new dreams and blest  
In my brief rest.

Fold your great wings about my face,  
Hide dawning from my resting-place,  
And cheat me with your false delight,  
Most Holy Night.

## S O N G

INVITING THE INFLUENCE OF A YOUNG  
LADY UPON THE OPENING YEAR.

### I

You wear the morning like your dress  
And all with mastery crowned ;  
When as you walk your loveliness  
Goes shining all around.  
Upon your secret, smiling way  
Such new contents were found,  
The Dancing Loves made holiday  
On that delightful ground.

### II

Then summon April forth, and send  
Commandment through the flowers ;  
About our woods your grace extend  
A queen of careless hours.  
For oh, not Vera veiled in vain,  
Nor Dian's sacred Ring,  
With all her royal nymphs in train  
Could so lead on the Spring.

## THE FALSE HEART

I said to Heart, "How goes it?"

Heart replied :

"Right as a Ribstone Pippin!"

But it lied.

## HANNAKER MILL (1913)

Sally is gone that was so kindly ;  
Sally is gone from Hannaker Hill,  
And the briar grows ever since then so blindly ;  
And ever since then the clapper is still . . .  
And the sweeps have fallen from Hannaker  
Mill.

Hannaker Hill is in desolation ;  
Ruin a-top and a field unploughed.  
And Spirits that call on a falling nation,  
Spirits that loved her calling aloud,  
Spirits abroad in a windy cloud.

Spirits that call and no one answers—  
Hannaker's down and England's done.  
Wind and thistle for pipe and dancers,  
And never a ploughman under the sun :  
Never a ploughman, never a one.

## T A R A N T E L L A

Do you remember an Inn,  
Miranda?

Do you remember an Inn?  
And the tedding and the spreading  
Of the straw for a bedding,  
And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees,  
And the wine that tasted of the tar?  
And the cheers and the jeers of the young mule-  
teers

(Under the dark of the vine verandah)?

Do you remember an Inn, Miranda,  
Do you remember an Inn?  
And the cheers and the jeers of the young mule-  
teers

Who hadn't got a penny,  
And who weren't paying any,  
And the hammer at the doors and the Din?  
And the Hip! Hop! Hap!  
Of the clap  
Of the hands to the twirl and the swirl  
Of the girl gone chancing,

Glancing,  
Dancing,  
Backing and advancing,  
Snapping of the clapper to the spin  
Out and in—  
And the Ting, Tong, Tang of the guitar !  
Do you remember an Inn,  
Miranda ?  
Do you remember an Inn ?

Never more ;  
Miranda,  
Never more.  
Only the high peaks hoar :  
And Aragon a torrent at the door.  
No sound  
In the walls of the Halls where falls  
The tread  
Of the feet of the dead to the ground.  
No sound :  
Only the boom  
Of the far Waterfall like Doom.

## ON A DEAD HOSTESS

Of this bad world the loveliest and the best  
Has smiled, and said good-night, and gone to  
rest.

**EDMUND BLUNDEN**



## ALMSWOMEN

At Quincey's moat the squandering village  
ends,

And there in the almshouse dwell the dearest  
friends

Of all the village, two old dames that cling  
As close as any true loves in the spring.

Long, long ago they passed three-score-and-ten,  
And in this doll's house lived together then ;

All things they have in common being so poor,  
And their one fear, Death's shadow at the door.

Each sundown makes them mournful, each sun-  
rise

Brings back the brightness in their failing eyes.

How happy go the rich fair-weather days

When on the roadside folk stare in amaze

At such a honeycomb of fruit and flowers

As mellows round their threshold ; what long  
hours

They gloat upon their steeping hollyhocks,

Bee's balsams, feathery southernwood and stocks,

Fiery dragons'-mouths, great mallow leaves  
For salves, and lemon plants in bushy sheaves,  
Shagged Esau's Hands with five green finger-  
tips !

Such old sweet names are ever on their lips.  
As pleased as little children where these grow  
In cobbled pattens and worn gowns they go,  
Proud of their wisdom when on gooseberry  
shoots

They stuck egg-shells to fright from coming  
fruits

The brisk-billed rascals ; waiting still to see  
Their neighbour owls saunter from tree to tree  
Or in the hushing half-light mouse the lane  
Long-winged and lordly.

But when those hours wane  
Indoors they ponder, scared by the harsh storm  
Whose pelting saracens on the window swarm,  
And listen for the mail to clatter past  
And church clock's deep bay withering on the  
blast ;  
They feed the fire that flings a freakish light  
On pictured kings and queens grotesquely  
bright,  
Platters and pitchers, faded calendars,  
And graceful hour-glass trim with lavenders.

Many a time they kiss and cry, and pray  
Both may be summoned in the self-same day,  
And wiseman linnets tinkling in his cage  
End too with them the friendship of old age,  
And all together leave their treasured room  
Some bell-like evening when the May's in bloom.

## GLEANNING

Along the baulk the grasses drenched in dews  
Soak through the morning gleaners' clumsy  
shoes,

And cloying cobwebs trammel their brown  
cheeks

While from the shouldering sun the dewfog  
reeks.

Then soon begun, on ground where yesterday  
The rakers' warning-sheaf forbade their way,  
Hard clucking dames in great white hoods make  
haste

To cram their lap-bags with the barley waste,  
Scrambling as if a thousand were but one,  
Careless of stabbing thistles. Now the sun  
Gulps up the dew and dries the stubs, and  
scores

Of tiny people trundle out of doors  
Among the stiff stalks, where the scratched hands  
ply,

Red ants and blackamoors and such as fly;

Tunbellied, too, with legs a finger long,  
The spider harvestman; the churlish, strong  
Black scorpion, prickled earwig, and that mite  
Who shuts up like a leaden shot in fright  
And lies for dead. And still before the rout  
The young rats and the field mice whisk about  
And from the trod whisk out the leveret darts.  
Bawled at by boys that pass with blundering  
carts

Top-heavy to the red-tiled barns. And still  
The children feed their cornsacks with goodwill,  
And farm wives ever faster stoop and flounce.  
The hawk drops down a plummet's speed to  
pounce

The nibbling mouse or resting lark away,  
The lost mole tries to pierce the matted clay  
In agony and terror of the sun.

The dinner hour and its grudging leisure won,  
All sit below the pollards on the dykes,  
Rasped with the twinge of creeping barley spikes :  
Sweet beyond telling now the small beer goes  
From the hooped hardwood bottles, the wasp  
knows,

And even hornets whizz from the eaten ash—  
Then crusts are dropt and switches snatched to  
slash,

While, safe in shadow of the apron thrown  
Aside the bush which years before was grown  
To snap the poacher's nets, the baby sleeps.  
Now toil returns, in red-hot fluttering light,  
And far afield the weary rabble creeps,  
Oft clutching blind wheat black among the  
white,

That smutches where it touches quick as soot—  
Oft gaping where the landrail seems afoot,  
Who with such magic throws his baffling speech,  
Far off he sounds when scarce beyond arm's  
reach.

Mongrels are left to mind the morning's gain,  
But squinting knaves can slouch to steal the  
grain ;

Now close the farm the fields are gleaned agen,  
Where the boy droves the turkey and white  
hen

To pick the shelled sweet corn ; their hue and cry  
Answers the gleaners' gabble, and sows trudge  
by

With little pigs to play and rootle there  
And all the fields are full of din and blare.

So steals the time past, so they glean and gloat ;  
The hobby-horses whir, the moth's dust coat  
Blends with the stubble, scarlet soldiers fly  
In airy pleasure ; but the gleaners' eye

Sees little but their spoil, or robin flower  
Ever on tenterhooks to shun the shower,  
Their weather-prophet never known astray ;  
When he folds up, then toward the hedge glean  
they.

But now the dragon of the sky droops, pales,  
And wandering in the wet grey western vales,  
Stumbles, and passes, and the gleaning's done.  
The farmer, with fat hares slung on his gun,  
Gives folk goodnight as down the ruts they pull  
The creaking two-wheeled hand carts bursting  
full,  
And whimpering children cease their teasing  
squalls,

While left alone the supping partridge calls—  
Till all at home is stacked from mischief's way  
To thrash and dress the first wild, windy day,  
And each good wife crowns weariness with pride,  
With such small riches more than satisfied.



**GORDON BOTTOMLEY**



## THE PLOUGHMAN

Under the long fell's stony eaves  
The ploughman, going up and down,  
Ridge after ridge man's tide-mark leaves,  
And turns the hard grey soil to brown.

Striding, he measures out the earth  
In lines of life, to rain and sun ;  
And every year that comes to birth  
Sees him still striding on and on.

The seasons change, and then return ;  
Yet still, in blind, unsparing ways,  
However I may shrink or yearn,  
The ploughman measures out my days.

His acre brought forth roots last year ;  
This year it bears the gloomy grain ;  
Next Spring shall seedling grass appear ;  
Then roots and corn and grass again.

Five times the young corn's pallid green  
I have seen spread and change and thrill;  
Five times the reapers I have seen  
Go creeping up the far-off hill :

And, as the unknowing ploughman climbs  
Slowly and inveterately,  
I wonder long how many times  
The corn will spring again for me.

## BABEL : THE GATE OF THE GOD

Lost towers impend, copeless primeval props  
Of the new threatening sky, and first rude digits  
Of awe remonstrance and uneasy power  
Thrust out by man when speech sank back in his  
throat :

Then had the last rocks ended bubbling up  
And rhythms of change within the heart begun  
By a blind need that would make Springs and  
Winters ;

Pylons and monoliths went on by ages,  
Mycenæ and Great Zimbabwe came about ;  
Cowed hearts in This conceived a pyramid  
That leaned to hold itself upright, a thing  
Foredoomed to limits, death and an easy apex ;  
Then postulants for the stars' prexious wisdom  
Standing on Carthage must get nearer still ;  
While in Chaldea an altitude of God  
Being mooted, and a Saurian unearthed  
Upon a mountain stirring a surmise  
Of floods and alterations of the sea,

A round-walled tower must rise upon Senaar  
Temple and escape to God the ascertained.  
These are decayed like Time's teeth in his mouth,  
Black cavities and gaps, yet earth is darkened  
By their deep-sunken and unfounded shadows  
And memories of man's earliest theme of towers.

Space—the old source of time—should be undone,  
Eternity defined, by men who trusted  
Another tier would equal them with God.  
A city of grimed brick-kilns, squat truncations,  
Hunched like spread toads yet high beneath their  
circles

Of low packed smoke, assemblages of thunder  
That glowed upon their under sides by night  
And lit like storm small shadowless workmen's  
toil.

Meaningless stumps, unturned bare roots,  
remained

In fields of mashy mud and trampled leaves,  
While, if a horse died hauling, plasterers  
Knelt on a plank to-clip its sweaty coat. . .

A builder leans across the last wide courses;  
His unadjustable unreaching eyes

Fail under him before his glances sink

the clouds' upper layers of sooty curls  
some long lightning goes like swallows  
ward,

But at the wider gallery next below  
Recognize master masons with pricked parch-  
ments :

That builder then, as one who condescends  
Unto the sea and all that is beneath him,  
His hairy breast on the wet mortar calls  
“ How many fathoms is it yet to heaven ! ”  
On the next eminence the orgulous King  
Nimrod stands up conceiving he shall live  
To conquer God, now that he knows where God is :  
His eager hands push up the tower in thought . .  
Again, his shaggy inhuman height strides down  
Among the carpenters because he has seen  
One shape an eagle-woman on a door-post :  
He drives his spear-beam through him for wasted  
day.

Little men hurrying, running here and there,  
Within the dark and stifling walls, dissent  
From every sound, and shoulder empty hods :  
“ The God’s great altar should stand in the crypt  
Among our earth’s foundations ”—“ The God’s  
great altar  
Must be the last far coping of our work ”—  
“ It should inaugurate the broad main stair ”—  
“ Or end it ”—“ It must stand toward the  
East ! ”

But here a grave contemptuous youth cries out

“Womanish babblers, how can we build God’s  
altar

Ere we divine its foreordained true shape? ”

Then one “ It is a pedestal for deeds ”—

“ ’Tis more and should be hewn like the King’s  
brow ”—

“ It has the nature of a woman’s bosom ”—

“ The tortoise, first created, signifies it ”—

“ A blind and rudimentary navel shows  
The source of worship better than horned  
moons.”

Then a lean giant “ Is not a calyx needful? ”—

“ Because round grapes on statues well expressed  
Become the nadir of incense, nodal lamps,  
Yet apes have hands that but and carved red  
crystals—

“ Birds molten, touchly talc veins bronze buds  
crumble

Ablid ublai ghan isz rad eighar ghaurl . . . ”

Words said too often seemed such ancient sounds  
That men forget them or were lost in them;  
The guttural glottis-chasms of language reached  
A rhythm, a gasp, were curves of immortal  
thought.

Man with his bricks was building, building yet,  
Where dawn and midnight mingled and woke no  
birds,

In the last courses, building past his knowledge  
A wall that swung—for towers can have no tops,  
No chord can mete the universal segment,  
Earth has no basis. Yet the yielding sky,  
Invincible vacancy, was there discovered—  
Though piled-up bricks should pulp the sappy  
    balks,  
Weight generate a secrecy of heat,  
Cankorous charring, crevices' fronds of flame.

## THE END OF THE WORLD

The snow had fallen many nights and days ;  
The sky was come upon the earth at last,  
Sifting thinly down as endlessly  
As though within the system of blind planets  
Something had been forgot or overdriven.  
The dawn now seemed neglected in the grey  
Where mountains were unbuilt and shadowless  
trees  
Rootlessly paused or hung upon the air.  
There was no wind, but now and then a sigh  
Crossed that dry falling dust and rifted it  
Through crevices of slate and door and casement.  
Perhaps the new moon's time was even past.  
Outside, the first white twilights were too void  
Until a sheep called once, as to a lamb,  
And tenderness crept everywhere from it ;  
But now the flock must have strayed far away.  
The lights across the valley must be veiled,  
The smoke lost in the greyness or the dusk.  
For more than three days now the snow had  
thatched

That cow-house roof where it had ever melted  
With yellow stains from the beasts' breath inside ;  
But yet a dog howled there, though not quite  
lately.

Someone passed down the valley swift and sing-  
ing,

Yes, with locks spreaded like a son of morning ;

But if he seemed too tall to be a man

It was that men had been so long unseen,

Or shapes loom larger through a moving snow.

And he was gone and food had not been given  
him.

When snow slid from an overweighted leaf  
Shaking the tree, it might have been a bird  
Slipping in sleep or shelter, whirring wings ;  
Yet never bird fell out, save once a dead one—  
And in two days the snow had covered it.

The dog had howled again—or thus it seemed

Until a lean fox passed and cried no more.

All was so safe indoors where life went on

Glad of the close enfolding snow—O glad

To be so safe and secret at its heart,

Watching the strangeness of familiar things.

They knew not what dim hours went on, went  
by,

For while they slept the clock stopt newly wound  
As the cold hardened. Once they watched the  
road,

Thinking to be remembered. Once they doubted  
If they had kept the sequence of the days,  
Because they heard not any sound of bells.  
A butterfly, that hid until the Spring  
Under a ceiling's shadow, dropt, was dead.  
The coldness seemed more nigh, the coldness  
    deepened  
As a sound deepens into silences ;  
It was of earth and came not by the air ;  
The earth was cooling and drew down the sky.  
The air was crumbling. There was no more sky.  
Rails of a broken bed charred in the grate,  
And when he touched the bars he thought the  
    sting  
Came from their heat—he could not feel such  
    cold . . .  
She said “ O do not sleep,  
Heart, heart of mine, keep near me. No, no ;  
    sleep.  
I will not lift his fallen, quiet eyelids,  
Although I know he would awaken then—  
He closed them thus but now of his own will.  
He can stay with me while I do not lift them.”

## A T L A N T I S

What poets sang in Atlantis? Who can tell  
The epics of Atlantis or their names?  
The sea hath its own murmurs, and sounds not  
The secrets of its silences beneath,  
And knows not any cadences enfolded  
When the last bubbles of Atlantis broke  
Among the quieting of its heaving floor.

O, years and tides and leagues and all their  
billows  
Can alter not man's knowledge of men's hearts—  
While trees and rocks and clouds include our  
being

We know the epics of Atlantis still :  
A hero gave himself to lesser men,  
Who first misunderstood and murdered him,  
And then misunderstood and worshipped him ;  
A woman was lovely and men fought for her,  
Towns burnt for her, and men put men in  
bondage,  
But she put lengthier bondage on them all ;

A wanderer toiled among all the isles  
That fleck this turning star or shifting sea,  
Or lonely purgatories of the mind,  
In longing for his home or his lost love.

Poetry is founded on the hearts of men :  
Though in Nirvana or the Heavenly courts  
The principle of beauty shall persist,  
Its body of poetry, as the body of man,  
Is but a terrene form, a terrene use,  
That swifter being will not loiter with ;  
And, when mankind is dead and the world cold,  
Poetry's immortality will pass.

. NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1918

O, Cartmel bells ring soft to-night,  
And Cartmel bells ring clear  
But I lie far away to-night,  
Listening with my dear ;

Listening in a frosty land  
Where all the bells are still  
And the small-windowed bell-towers stand  
Dark under heath and hill.

I thought that, with each dying year,  
As long as life should last  
The bells of Cartmel I should hear  
Ring out an agèd past :

The plunging, mingling sounds increase  
Darkness's depth and height,  
The hollow valley gains more peace  
And ancientness to-night :

The loveliness, the fruitfulness,  
The power of life lived there  
Return, revive, more closely press  
Upon that midnight air.

But many deaths have place in men  
Before they come to die ;  
Joys must be used and spent, and then  
Abandoned and passed by.

Earth is not ours ; no cherished space  
Can hold us from life's flow,  
That bears us thither and thence by ways  
We knew not we should go.

O, Cartmel bells ring loud, ring clear,  
Through midnight deep and hoar,  
A year new-born, and I shall hear  
The Cartmel bells no more.

## TO IRON-FOUNDERS AND OTHERS

When you destroy a blade of grass  
You poison England at her roots :  
Remember no man's foot can pass  
Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high  
Where your unnatural vapours creep :  
Surely the living rocks shall die  
When birds no rightful distance keep.

You have brought down the firmament  
And yet no heaven is more near ;  
You shape huge deeds without event,  
And half made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,  
Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,  
Have molten bowels ; your vision is  
Machines for making more machines.

O, you are buried in the night,  
    Preparing destinies of rust;  
Iron misused must turn to blight  
    And dwindle to a tettered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone,  
    But plants that spring in ruins and shards  
Attend until your dream is done :  
    I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm  
    Know not your loads piled on their soil ;  
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm  
    Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,  
    And when, to grasp more power and feasts,  
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,  
    The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield  
    Last priceless slags for fashionings high,  
Ploughs to make grass in every field,  
    Chisels men's hands to magnify.

**RUPERT BROOKE**

*Born 1887*

*Died at Lemnos 1915*



## S O N N E T

Oh ! Death will find me, long before I tire  
Of watching you ; and swing me suddenly  
Into the shade and loneliness and mire  
Of the last land ! There, waiting patiently,

One day, I think, I'll feel a cool wind blowing,  
See a slow light across the Stygian tide,  
And hear the Dead about me stir, unknowing,  
And tremble. And *I* shall know that you have  
died.

And watch you, a broad-browed and smiling  
dream,  
Pass, light as ever, through the lightless host,  
Quietly ponder, start, and sway, and gleam—  
Most individual and bewildering ghost !—

And turn, and toss your brown delightful head  
Amusedly, among the ancient Dead.

## THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me ;  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is for ever England. There shall be  
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;  
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,  
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to  
    roam,  
A body of England's, breathing English air,  
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,  
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less  
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by  
    England given ;  
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;  
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,  
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

## THE TREASURE

When colour goes home into the eyes,  
And lights that shine are shut again,  
With dancing girls and sweet birds' cries  
Behind the gateways of the brain;  
And that no-place which gave them birth, shall  
close  
The rainbow and the rose :—

Still may Time hold some golden space  
Where I'll unpack that scented store  
Of song and flower and sky and face,  
And count, and touch, and turn them o'er,  
Musing upon them; as a mother, who  
Has watched her children all the rich day  
through,  
Sits, quiet-handed, in the fading light,  
When children sleep, ere night.

*August, 1914.*

## THE GREAT LOVER

I have been so great a lover : filled my days  
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,  
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,  
Desire illimitable, and still content,  
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair  
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear  
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.  
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife  
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,  
My night shall be remembered for a star  
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.  
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise  
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared  
    with me  
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see  
The inenarrable godhead of delight?  
Love is a flame :—we have beaconed the world's  
    night.  
A city :—and we have built it, these and I.  
An emperor :—we have taught the world to  
    die.

So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,  
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,  
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those  
names

Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,  
And set them as a banner, that men may know,  
To dare the generations, burn, and blow  
Out on the wind of Time, shining and stream-  
ing . . . . .

These I have loved :

White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,  
Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faery dust;  
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light; the strong  
crust

Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;  
Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;  
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;  
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny  
hours,

Dreaming of moths that drink them under the  
moon;

Then, the cool kindness of sheets, that soon  
Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss  
Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is  
Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen  
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;

The benison of hot water; furs to touch;  
The good smell of old clothes; and other such—  
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,  
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers  
About dead leaves and last year's ferns . . .

Dear names,  
And thousand other throng to me! Royal flames;  
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;  
Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing;  
Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,  
Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;  
Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam  
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes  
home;

And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold  
Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mould;  
Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;  
And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-  
new;

And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on  
grass;—

All these have been my loves. And these shall  
pass,

Whatever passes not, in the great hour,  
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power  
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.  
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor  
breath,

Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's  
trust

And sacramented covenant to the dust.

—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall  
wake,

And give what's left of love again; and make  
New friends, now strangers . . . .

But the best I've known,  
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is  
blown

About the winds of the world, and fades from  
brains

Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again  
This one last gift I give : that after men  
Shall know, and later lovers, far removed,  
Praise you, ' All these were lovely ' ; say, ' He  
loved.'

## C L O U D S

Down the blue night the unending columns press  
In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,  
Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow  
Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.  
Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,  
And turn with profound gesture vague and  
slow,  
As who would pray good for the world, but  
know  
Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain  
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.  
I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as  
these,  
In wise majestic melancholy train,  
And watch the moon, and the still-raging  
seas,  
And men, coming and going on the earth.

*The Pacific*

## THE OLD VICARAGE, GRANTCHESTER

*Café des Westens, Berlin.*

Just now the lilac is in bloom,  
All before my little room ;  
And in my flower-beds, I think,  
Smile the carnation and the pink ;  
And down the borders, well I know,  
The poppy and the pansy blow . . .  
Oh ! there the chestnuts, summer through,  
Beside the river make for you  
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep  
Deeply above ; and green and deep  
The stream mysterious glides beneath,  
Green as a dream and deep as death.—  
Oh, damn ! I know it ! and I know  
How the May fields all golden show,  
And when the day is young and sweet,  
Gild gloriously the bare feet  
That run to bathe . . .

*Du lieber Gott !*

Here am I, sweating, sick and hot,  
 And there the shadowed waters fresh  
 Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.  
*Temperamentvoll* German Jews  
 Drink beer around; and *there* the dews  
 Are soft beneath a morn of gold.  
 Here tulips bloom as they are told;  
 Unkempt about those hedges blows  
 An English unofficial rose;  
 And there the unregulated sun  
 Slopes down to rest when day is done,  
 And wakes a vague unpunctual star,  
 A slippered Hesper; and there are  
 Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton  
 Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten* . . .

εἴθε γενοίμην . . . would I were  
 In Grantchester, in Grantchester!—  
 Some, it may be, can get in touch  
 With Nature there, or Earth, or such.  
 And clever modern men have seen  
 A Faun a-peeping through the green,  
 And felt the Classics were not dead,  
 To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,  
 Or hear the Goat-foot piping low . . .  
 But these are things I do not know.  
 I only know that you may lie  
 Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,

And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,  
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,  
Until the centuries blend and blur  
In Grantchester, in Grantchester . . .  
Still in the dawnlit waters cool  
His ghostly Lordship swims his pool,  
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,  
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx ;  
Dan Chaucer hears his river still  
Chatter beneath a phantom mill ;  
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,  
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .  
And in that garden, black and white  
Creep whispers through the grass all night ;  
And spectral dance, before the dawn,  
A hundred Vicars down the lawn ;  
Curates, long dust, will come and go  
On lissom, clerical, printless toe ;  
And oft between the boughs is seen  
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .  
Till, at a shiver in the skies,  
Vanishing with Satanic cries,  
The prim ecclesiastic rout  
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,  
Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,  
The falling house that never falls.

God ! I will pack, and take a train,  
And get me to England once again !  
For England's the one land, I know,  
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go ;  
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,  
The shire for Men who Understand ;  
And of *that* district I prefer  
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.  
For Cambridge people rarely smile,  
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile ;  
And Royston men in the far South  
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth ;  
At Over they fling oaths at one,  
And worse than oaths at Trumpington,  
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,  
And there's none in Harston under thirty,  
And folks in Shelford and those parts  
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,  
And Barton men make cockney rhymes,  
And Coton's full of nameless crimes,  
And things are done you'd not believe  
At Madingley on Christmas Eve.  
Strong men have run for miles and miles  
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles ;  
Strong men have blanched and shot their wives  
Rather than send them to St. Ives ;  
Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,  
To hear what happened at Babraham.

But Grantchester, ah, Grantchester !  
There's peace and holy quiet there,  
Great clouds along pacific skies,  
And men and women with straight eyes,  
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,  
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,  
And little kindly winds that creep  
Round twilight corners, half asleep.  
In Grantchester their skins are white,  
In Grantchester their skins are white,  
They bathe by day, they bathe by night ;  
The women there do all they ought ;  
The men observe the Rules of Thought.  
They love the Good ; they worship Truth ;  
They laugh uproariously in youth ;  
(And when they get to feeling old,  
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God ! to see the branches stir  
Across the moon at Grantchester !  
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten  
Unforgettable, unforgotten  
River smell, and hear the breeze  
Sobbing in the little trees.  
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand,  
Still guardians of that holy land ?  
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,  
The yet unacademic stream ?

Is dawn a secret shy and cold  
Anadyomene, silver-gold ?  
And sunset still a golden sea  
From Haslingfield to Madingley ?  
And after, ere the night is born,  
Do hares come out about the corn ?  
Oh, is the water sweet and cool  
Gentle and brown, above the pool ?  
And laughs the immortal river still—  
Under the mill, under the mill ?  
Say, is there Beauty yet to find ?  
And Certainty ? and Quiet kind ?  
Deep-meadows yet, for to forget  
The lies, and truths, and pain ? . . . oh ! yet  
Stands the Church clock at ten to three ?  
And is there honey still for tea ?

## THE BUSY HEART

Now that we've done our best and worst, and  
parted,

I would fill my mind with thoughts that will  
not rend.

(O heart, I do not dare go empty-hearted)

I'll think of Love in books, Love without end ;  
Women with child, content ; and old men sleep-  
ing ;

And wet strong ploughlands, scarred for certain  
grain ;

And babes that weep, and so forget their weep-  
ing ;

And the young heavens, forgetful after rain ;

And evening hush, broken by homing wings ;

And Song's nobility, and Wisdom holy,

That live, we dead. I would think of a thousand  
things,

Lovely and loveable, and taste them slowly,

One after one, like tasting a sweet food.

I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

•     D I N I N G - R O O M   T E A

When you were there, and you, and you,  
Happiness crowned the night ; I too,  
Laughing and looking, one of all,  
I watched the quivering lamplight fall  
On plate and flowers and pouring tea  
And cup and cloth ; and they and we  
Flung all the dancing moments by  
With jest and glitter. Lip and eye  
Flashed on the glory, shone and cried,  
Improvident, unmemoried ;  
And fitfully and like a flame  
The light of laughter went and came.  
Proud in their careless transience moved  
The changing faces that I loved.

Till suddenly, and otherwhence,  
I looked upon your innocence ;  
For lifted clear and still and strange  
From the dark woven flow of change

Under a vast and starless sky  
I saw the immortal moment lie.  
One instant I, an instant, knew  
As God knows all. And it and you  
I, above Time, oh, blind ! could see  
In witless immortality.  
I saw the marble cup ; the tea,  
Hung on the air, an amber stream ;  
I saw the fire's unglittering gleam,  
The painted flame, the frozen smoke.  
No more the flooding lamplight broke  
On flying eyes and lips and hair ;  
But lay, but slept unbroken there,  
On stiller flesh, and body breathless,  
And lips and laughter stayed and deathless,  
And words on which no silence grew.  
Light was more alive than you.

For suddenly, and otherwhence,  
I looked on your magnificence.  
I saw the stillness and the light,  
And you, august, immortal, white,  
Holy and strange ; and every glint  
Posture and jest and thought and tint  
Freed from the mask of transiency,  
Triumphant in eternity,  
Immote, immortal.

Dazed at length  
Human eyes grew, mortal strength  
Wearied ; and Time began to creep.  
Change closed about me like a sleep.  
Light glinted on the eyes I loved.  
The cup was filled. The bodies moved.  
The drifting petal came to ground.  
The laughter chimed its perfect round.  
The broken syllable was ended.  
And I, so certain and so friended,  
How could I cloud, or how distress  
The heaven of your unconsciousness ?  
Or shake at Time's sufficient spell,  
Stammering of lights unutterable ?  
The eternal holiness of you,  
The timeless end, you never knew,  
The peace that lay, the light that shone  
You never knew that I had gone  
A million miles away, and stayed  
A million years. The laughter played  
Unbroken round me ; and the jest  
Flashed on. And we that knew the best  
Down wonderful hours grew happier yet.  
I sang at heart, and talked, and eat,  
And lived from laugh to laugh, I too,  
When you were there, and you, and you.

**FRANCIS BURROWS**



## THE PRAYER TO DEMETER

Mother, whose hair I grasp, whose bosom I tread,  
Thy son\* adopted. Thou who dost so charm  
me

And in thy lappels of affection warm me,  
Heap all thine other misery on my head;

Madness alone of evils do I dread,  
Against its imminent presence guard and arm  
me,

Suffer its broad flung shadow not to harm me  
But plunge me rather with the naked dead.

Yet if it must come, let it be entire;  
Cast then upon me unillumined night,  
One whole eclipse not knowing any fire  
To give it record of the former light.  
Complete destruction of the heart's desire,  
A ruin of thought and audience and sight.

## THE GIANT'S DIRGE

Remember him who battled here,  
What was his living character?  
To friends an heart for ever filled  
    With love and with compassion brave;  
To foes a power never stilled  
    In pushing vengeance to the grave;  
Where is his spirit gone now, O where?  
What of his ten grand paces here  
Whose motion was a perfect sphere?  
To friends a making unafraid,  
    A sure defence, a wall of glass.  
To foes a hidden trap well laid  
    To catch them stalking through the grass;  
Where is he walking now, O where?  
What of his power who is here  
Enclosed within the sepulchre?  
To friends an eager sword of joy,  
    A shield to nestle underneath.  
To foes whose love is to destroy,

A stumbling block, a hidden death;  
Where is his power gone now, O where?

What of his eye that floated here  
Like sky-born dewy gossamer?  
To friends the ever-sought desire,  
    The hope achieved, the loving cup;  
To foes an unassaulted fire,  
    A furnace withering them up.  
Where is he shining now, O where?

What of the head that breathed so here  
And the hair beloved so, is it sere;  
To friends a shadow shedding stars,  
    Like blessings, from the upper deep;  
To foes a poisoned tree that mars  
    Men's lives thereunder laid asleep.  
Where does it blossom now, O where?

He lives, is living everywhere,  
Where human hearts are, he is there.  
To friends a soul of certainty  
    That love though lost is more than none.  
To foes an inability  
    To say, "We slew him, we alone,  
His soul is here, we slew him here."

## THE UNFORGOTTEN

There is a cave beneath the throne of grace  
Where these have honoured and remembered  
place ;

Strong hairy men, huge-jawed, with wiry limbs,  
Half hid in mist, the heroes of old times.

They lie among the pots and flints and beads  
Their friends once buried with them as the needs  
Of the after-life, to hunt with and to slay with,  
And flay and cook, or in repose to play with.

Here he who shaped the flint and bound to axe  
And arrow first ; who made the thread of flax  
And hemp to weave ; and he who to the plough  
Harnessed and tamed the bull and milked the  
cow ;

Who taught to bake and grind and till the seed  
Of corn sufficient for the future's need ;  
And he who said : " These are my children,  
these ;

My blood between them and their enemies ;

For when I age and cannot win my meat,  
They shall become new head and hands and  
feet ”;

And he who said : “ Let none of our tribe die  
Slain by ourselves with violence. For why,  
Our foes are plentiful, our friends are few,  
Our living scarce. All may have work to do,  
As hunting, warring, digging for the strong,  
Or potting, cooking, weaving for the young,  
The old, the weak, yet for adornment skilled ”—  
Too early born and by his brethren killed.

Here he who dreamed a strange dream in the  
night,

And from his rushes springing swat with fright,  
But thought and said with opened eyes, “ ’Tis  
beauty,”

And terror left him. Those who spoke of duty,  
Mercy and truth, and taught the undying soul,  
And many more. And many a grunt and growl  
They give in friendly dreams; when haunches  
quiver

And nostrils widen, and hands do twitch and  
shiver.

And often one awakes, and blinks, half speaks,  
And yawns and licks and blows upon his cheeks :

Pure spirits laugh, and with a kindly eye  
The father views their rough-haired majesty.

## THE WELL

See this plashing fount enshrined, .  
Some ancient people roofed and lined ;  
Some memory here of a forlorn rime,  
A thought, a breath of a thought sublime,  
A sobbing under the wings of time.

See the ancient people's grave :  
No Andromache, no slave  
Water here for a master draws,  
No slaves longer laugh and pause,  
All's strange language and new laws.

O words, be good to impart assurance  
Of hope, of memory, of endurance,  
O flourish grass upon our tomb,  
Grant us, sunk in a little room,  
Both a sepulchre and home.

## EGYPTIAN

The pyramid is built, is built,  
And stone by stone the sphinx ;  
Upon the ground the wine is spilt,  
And deep the builder drinks.  
*Deeply the wise man in the desert thinks.*

Hark to the lanterned gondolas !  
The stream is incense-calmed ;  
We smoke, we draw the gods with praise,  
They walk amongst us charmed.  
Cries : “ *Never are the desert-sands disarmed.*”

Our building toil is done, is done,  
All strifes and quarrels cease ;  
And slaves and masters are at one,  
And enemies at peace.  
Cries : “ *Yet the sands are stirred and wars  
increase.*”

Riches and joy and thankfulness  
By our rich river are ;  
To see our noble work and bless  
Shall travellers come afar.  
Cries : “ *Yes, a few, but many more for war.*”

## L I F E

When I consider this, that bare  
Water and earth and common air  
Combine together to compose  
A being who breathes and stands and goes,  
With eyes to see the sun, with brain  
To contemplate his origin,  
I marvel not at death and pain  
But rather how he should have been.

**A. Y. CAMPBELL**



## ANIMULA VAGULA

Night stirs but wakens not, her breathings climb  
To one slow sigh; the strokes of many twelves  
From unseen spires mechanically chime,  
Mingling like echoes, to frustrate themselves;  
My soul, remember Time.

The tones like smoke into the stillness curl,  
The slippered hours their placid business ply,  
And in thy hand there lies occasion's pearl;  
But thou art playing with it absently  
And dreaming, like a girl.

## A B I R D

His haunts are by the brackish ways  
Where rivers and sea-currents meet ;  
He is familiar with the sprays,  
Over the stones his flight is fleet.

Low, low he flutters, like a rat  
That scampers up a river-bank ;  
Swift, lizard-like, he scours the flat  
Where pools are wersh and weeds are dank.

The fresh green smell of inland groves,  
The pureness of the upper air,  
Are poorer than his pungent coves  
That hold strange spices everywhere.

Strong is the salt of open sea ;  
Far out, the virgin brine is keen :  
No home is there for such as he,  
Out of the beach he is not seen.

By shallows and capricious foams  
Are the queer corners he frequents,  
And in an idle humour roams  
The borderland of elements.

## THE DROMEDARY

In dreams I see the Dromedary still,  
As once in a gay park I saw him stand :  
A thousand eyes in vulgar wonder scanned  
His humps and hairy neck, and gazed their fill  
At his lank shanks and mocked with laughter  
shrill.

He never moved : and if his Eastern land  
Flashed on his eye with stretches of hot sand,  
It wrung no mute appeal from his proud will.  
He blinked upon the rabble lazily ;  
And still some trace of majesty forlorn  
And a coarse grace remained : his head was high,  
Though his gaunt flanks with a great mange  
were worn :  
There was not any yearning in his eye,  
But on his lips and nostril infinite scorn.

## THE PANIC

Pale in her evening silks she sat  
That but a week had been my bride ;  
Then, while the stars we wondered at,  
Without a word she left my side ;  
Devious and silent as a bat,  
I watched her round the garden glide.

Soon o'er the moonlit lawn she streamed,  
Then floated idly down the glade ;  
Now like a forest nymph she seemed,  
Now like a light within a shade ;  
She turned, and for a moment gleamed,  
And suddenly I saw her fade.

I had been held in tranced stare  
Till she had vanished from my sight ;  
Then did I start in wild despair,  
And followed fast in mad affright ;  
What if herself a spirit were  
And had so soon rejoined the night ?

**G. K. CHESTERTON**



## WINE AND WATER

Old Noah he had an ostrich farm and fowls on  
the largest scale,  
He ate his egg with a ladle in an egg-cup big  
as a pail,  
And the soup he took was Elephant Soup and  
the fish he took was Whale,  
But they all were small to the cellar he took  
when he set out to sail,  
And Noah he often said to his wife when he sat  
down to dine,  
“ I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't  
get into the wine.”

The cataract of the cliff of heaven fell blinding  
off the brink  
As if it would wash the stars away. as suds go  
down a sink,  
The seven heavens came roaring down for the  
throats of hell to drink,  
And Noah he cocked his eye and said, “ It looks  
like rain, I think,

The water has drowned the Matterhorn as deep as  
a Mendip mine,  
But I don't care where the water goes if it  
doesn't get into the wine."

But Noah he sinned, and we have sinned; on  
tipsy feet we trod,  
Till a great big black teetotaller was sent to us  
for a rod,  
And you can't get wine at a P.S.A., or chapel,  
or Eisteddfod,  
But the Curse of Water has come again because  
of the wrath of God,  
And water is on the Bishop's board and the  
Higher Thinker's shrine,  
But I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't  
get into the wine.

## THE ROLLING ENGLISH ROAD

Before the Roman came to Rye or out of Severn  
strode,

The rolling English drunkard made the rolling  
English road.

A reeling road, a rolling road, that rambles round  
the shire,

And after him the parson ran, the sexton and the  
squire;

A merry road, a mazy road, and such as we did  
tread,

The night we went to Birmingham by way of  
Beachy Head.

I knew no harm of Bonaparte and plenty of the  
Squire,

And for to fight the Frenchman I did not much  
desire;

But I did bash their bagginets because they came  
arrayed

To straighten out the crooked road an English  
drunkard made,

When you and I went down the lane with ale-  
mugs in our hands,

The night we went to Glastonbury by way of  
Goodwin Sands.

His sins they were forgiven him; or why do  
flowers run

Behind him; and the hedges all strengthening in  
the sun?

The wild thing went from left to right and knew  
not which was which,

But the wild rose was above him when they  
found him in the ditch.

God pardon us, nor harden us : we did not see so  
clear

The night we went to Bannockburn by way of  
Brighton Pier.

My friends, we will not go again or ape an ancient  
rage,

Or stretch the folly of our youth to be the shame  
of age,

But walk with clearer eyes and ears this path that  
wandereth,

And see undrugged in evening light the decent  
inn of death ;

But there is good news yet to hear and fine things  
to be seen,

Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal  
Green.

## 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 ears 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 ears,  
And palms before my feet.

## THE SECRET PEOPLE

Smile at us, pay us, pass us ; but do not quite  
forget,  
For we are the people of England, that never has  
spoken yet.  
There is many a fat farmer that drinks less  
cheerfully,  
There is many a free French peasant who is richer  
and sadder than we.  
There are no folk in the whole world so helpless or  
so wise.  
There is hunger in our bellies, there is laughter  
in our eyes ;  
You laugh at us and love us, both mugs and eyes  
are wet :  
Only you do not know us. For we have not  
spoken yet.  
The fine French kings came over in a flutter of  
flags and dames.  
We liked their smiles and battles, but we never  
could say their names.

The blood ran red to Bosworth and the high  
French lords went down ;  
There was naught but a naked people under a  
naked crown.  
And the eyes of the King's Servants turned ter-  
ribly every way,  
And the gold of the King's Servants rose higher  
every day.  
They burnt the homes of the shaven men, that  
had been quaint and kind,  
Till there was no bed in a monk's house, nor food  
that man could find.  
The inns of God where no man paid, that were  
the wall of the weak,  
The King's Servants ate them all. And still we  
did not speak.

And the face of the King's Servants grew greater  
than the King :  
He tricked them, and they trapped him, and  
stood round him in a ring.  
The new grave lords closed round him, that had  
eaten the abbey's fruits,  
And the men of the new religion, with their  
Bibles in their boots,  
We saw their shoulders moving, to menace or  
discuss,

And some were pure and some were vile; but  
none took heed of us.  
We saw the King as they killed him, and his face  
was proud and pale;  
And a few men talked of freedom, while England  
talked of ale.

A war that we understood not came over the  
world and woke  
Americans, Frenchmen, Irish; but we knew not  
the things they spoke.  
They talked about rights and nature and peace  
and the people's reign :  
And the squires, our masters, bade us fight; and  
never scorned us again.  
Weak if we be for ever, could none condemn us  
then;  
Men called us serfs and drudges; men knew that  
we were men.  
In foam and flame at Trafalgar, on Albuera  
plains,  
We did and died like lions, to keep ourselves in  
chains,  
We lay in living ruins; firing and fearing not  
The strange fierce face of the Frenchmen who  
knew for what they fought,  
And the man who seemed to be more than man  
we strained against and broke;

And we broke our own rights with him. And  
still we never spoke.

Our path of glory ended; we never heard guns  
again.

But the squire seemed struck in the saddle; he  
was foolish, as if in pain

He leaned on a staggering lawyer, he clutched a  
cringing Jew,

He was stricken; it may be, after all, he was  
stricken at Waterloo.

Or perhaps the shades of the shaven men, whose  
spoil is in his house,

Come back in shining shapes at last to spoil his  
last carouse :

We only know the last sad squires ride slowly  
towards the sea,

And a new people takes the land : and still it is  
not we.

They have given us into the hands of the new  
unhappy lords,

Lords without anger and honour, who dare not  
carry their swords.

They fight by shuffling papers; they have bright  
dead alien eyes;

They look at our labour and laughter as a tired  
man looks at flies.

And the load of their loveless pity is worse than  
the ancient wrongs,  
Their doors are shut in the evening; and they  
know no songs.

We hear men speaking for us of new laws strong  
and sweet,  
Yet is there no man speaketh as we speak in the  
street.

It may be we shall rise the last as Frenchmen  
rose the first,

Our wrath come after Russia's wrath and our  
wrath be the worst.

It may be we are meant to mark with our riot  
and our rest

God's scorn for all men governing. It may be  
beer is best.

But we are the people of England; and we have  
not spoken yet.

Smile at us, pay us, pass us. But do not quite  
forget.

FROM THE BALLAD OF THE WHITE  
HORSE

Far northward and far westward  
    The distant tribes drew nigh,  
Plains beyond plains, fell beyond fell,  
That a man at sunset sees so well,  
And the tiny coloured towns that dwell  
    In the corners of the sky.

But dark and thick as thronged the host,  
    With drum and torch and blade,  
The still-eyed King sat pondering,  
As one that watches a live thing,  
    The scoured chalk; and he said,

“ Though I give this land to Our Lady,  
    That helped me in Athelney,  
Though lordlier trees and lustier sod  
And happier hills hath no flesh trod  
Than the garden of the Mother of God  
    Between Thames side and the sea,

“ I know that weeds shall grow in it  
Faster than men can burn ;  
And though they scatter now and go,  
In some far century, sad and slow,  
I have a vision, and I know  
The heathen shall return.

“ They shall not come with warships,  
They shall not waste with brands,  
But books be all their eating,  
And ink be on their hands.

“ Not with the humour of hunters  
Or savage skill in war,  
But ordering all things with dead words,  
Strings shall they make of beasts and birds  
And wheels of wind and star.

“ They shall come mild as monkish clerks,  
With many a scroll and pen ;  
And backward shall ye turn and gaze,  
Desiring one of Alfred's days,  
When pagans still were men.

“ The dear sun dwarfed of dreadful suns,  
Like fiercer flowers on stalk,  
Earth lost and little like a pea  
In high heaven's towering forestry,  
—These be the small weeds ye shall see  
Crawl, covering the chalk.

- “ But though they bridge St. Mary’s sea,  
Or steal St. Michael’s wing—  
Though they rear marvels over us,  
Greater than great Vergilius  
Wrought for the Roman king ;
- “ By this sign you shall know them,  
The breaking of the sword,  
And Man no more a free knight,  
That loves or hates his lord.
- “ Yea, this shall be the sign of them,  
The sign of the dying fire ;  
And Man made like a half-wit,  
That knows not of his sire.
- “ What though they come with scroll and pen,  
And grave as a shaven clerk,  
By this sign you shall know them,  
That they ruin and make dark ;
- “ By all men bond to Nothing,  
Being slaves without a lord,  
By one blind idiot world obeyed,  
Too blind to be abhorred ;
- “ By terror and the cruel tales  
Of curse in bone and kin,

By weird and weakness winning,  
Accursed from the beginning,  
By detail of the sinning,  
And denial of the sin ;

“ By thought a crawling ruin,  
By life a leaping mire,  
By a broken heart in the breast of the world,  
And the end of the world’s desire ;

“ By God and man dishonoured,  
By death and life made vain,  
Know ye the old barbarian,  
The barbarian come again —

“ When is great talk of trend and tide,  
And wisdom and destiny,  
Hail that undying heathen  
That is sadder than the sea.

“ In what wise men shall smite him,  
Or the Cross stand up again,  
Or charity, or chivalry,  
My vision saith not ; and I see  
No more ; but now ride doubtfully  
To the battle of the plain.”

And the grass-edge of the great down  
Was clean cut as a lawn,

While the levies thronged from near and far,  
From the warm woods of the western star,  
And the King went out to his last war  
    On a tall grey horse at dawn.

And news of his far-off fighting  
    Came slowly and brokenly  
From the land of the East Saxons,  
    From the sunrise and the sea,

From the plains of the white sunrise,  
    And sad St. Edmund's crown,  
Where the pools of Essex pale and gleam  
    Out beyond London Town—

In mighty and doubtful fragments,  
    Like faint or fabled wars,  
Climbed the old hills of his renown,  
Where the bald brow of White Horse Down  
    Is close to the cold stars.

But away in the eastern places  
    The wind of death walked high,  
And a raid was driven athwart the raid,  
The sky reddened and the smoke swayed,  
    And the tall grey horse went by.

The gates of the great river  
Were breached as with a barge,  
The walls sank crowded, say the scribes,  
And high towers populous with tribes  
Seemed leaning from the charge.

Smoke like rebellious heavens rolled  
Curled over coloured flames,  
Billowed in monstrous purple dreams  
In the mighty pools of Thames.

Loud was the war on London wall,  
And loud in London gates,  
And loud the sea-kings in the cloud  
Broke through their dreaming gods, and loud  
Cried on their dreadful fates.

And all the while on White Horse Hill  
The horse lay long and wan,  
The turf crawled and the fungus crept,  
And the little sorrel, while all men slept,  
Unwrought the work of man.

With velvet finger, velvet foot,  
The fierce soft mosses then  
Crept on the large white commonweal  
All folk had striven to strip and peel,  
And the grass, like a great green witch's wheel,  
Unwound the toils of men.

And clover and silent thistle throve,  
And buds burst silently,  
With little care for the Thames Valley  
Or what things there might be—

That away on the widening river,  
In the eastern plains for crown  
Stood up in the pale purple sky  
One turret of smoke like ivory;  
And the smoke changed and the wind went by,  
And the King took London Town.



**PADRAIC COLUM**



## THE OLD WOMAN OF THE ROADS

O, to have a little house !  
To own the hearth and stool and all !  
The heaped up sods upon the fire  
The pile of turf again' the wall !

To have a clock with weights and chains,  
And pendulum swinging up and down !  
A dresser filled with shining delph,  
Speckled with white and blue and brown !

I could be busy all the day  
Cleaning and sweeping hearth and floor,  
And fixing on their shelf again  
My white and blue and speckled store !

I could be quiet there at night  
Beside the fire and by myself,  
Sure of a bed, and loth to leave  
The ticking clock and shining delph !

Och ! but I'm weary of mist and dark,  
And roads where there's never a house or bush,  
And tired I am of bog and road,  
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush !

And I am praying to God on high,  
And I am praying Him night and day,  
For a little house—a house of my own—  
Out of the wind's and rain's way.

**FRANCES CORNFORD**



## AUTUMN EVENING

The shadows flickering, the daylight dying,  
And I upon the old red sofa lying,  
The great brown shadows leaping up the wall,  
The sparrows twittering ; and that is all.

I thought to send my soul to far-off lands,  
Where fairies scamper on the windy sands,  
Or where the autumn rain comes drumming down  
On huddled roofs in an enchanted town.

But O my sleepy soul, it will not roam,  
It is too happy and too warm at home :  
With just the shadows leaping up the wall,  
The sparrows twittering ; and that is all.

.



**W. H. DAVIES**



## DAYS TOO SHORT

When Primroses are out in Spring,  
And small, blue violets come between ;  
When merry birds sing on boughs green,  
And rills, as soon as born, must sing ;

When butterflies will make side-leaps,  
As though escaped from Nature's hand  
Ere perfect quite ; and bees will stand  
Upon their heads in fragrant deeps ;

When small clouds are so silvery white  
Each seems a broken rimmèd moon—  
When such things are, this world too soon,  
For me, doth wear the veil of Night.

## THE EXAMPLE

Here's an example from  
A Butterfly;  
That on a rough, hard rock  
Happy can lie;  
Friendless and all alone  
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard  
No care take I;  
I'll make my joy like this  
Small Butterfly;  
Whose happy heart has power  
To make a stone a flower.

## THE EAST IN GOLD

Somehow this world is wonderful at times,  
As it has been from early morn in May;  
Since I first heard the cock-a-doodle-do,  
Timekeeper on green farms—at break of day.

Soon after that I heard ten thousand birds,  
Which made me think an angel brought a bin  
Of golden grain, and none was scattered yet—  
To rouse those birds to make that merry din.

I could not sleep again, for such wild cries,  
And went out early into their green world;  
And then I saw what set their little tongues  
To scream for joy—they saw the East in gold.

## THE HAPPY CHILD

I saw this day sweet flowers grow thick—  
But not one like the child did pick.

I heard the packhounds in green park—  
But no dog like the child heard bark.

I heard this day bird after bird—  
But not one like the child has heard.

A hundred butterflies saw I—  
But not one like the child saw fly.

I saw the horses roll in grass—  
But no horse like the child saw pass.

My world this day has lovely been—  
But not like what the child has seen.

## A GREAT TIME

Sweet Chance, that led my steps abroad,  
    Beyond the town, where wild flowers grow—  
A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord,  
    How rich and great the times are now !  
        Know, all ye sheep  
        And cows, that keep  
On staring that I stand so long  
    In grass that's wet from heavy rain—  
A rainbow and a cuckoo's song  
    May never come together again ;  
        May never come  
        This side the tomb.

## THE WHITE CASCADE

What happy mortal sees that mountain now,  
The white cascade that's shining on its brow ;

The white cascade that's both a bird and star,  
That has a ten-mile voice and shines as far ?

Though I may never leave this land again,  
Yet every spring my mind must cross the main

To hear and see that water-bird and star  
That on the mountain sings, and shines so far.

## I N M A Y

Yes, I will spend the livelong day  
With Nature in this month of May ;  
And sit beneath the trees, and share  
My bread with birds whose homes are there ;  
While cows lie down to eat, and sheep  
Stand to their necks in grass so deep ;  
While birds do sing with all their might,  
As though they felt the earth in flight.  
This is the hour I dreamed of, when  
I sat surrounded by poor men ;  
And thought of how the Arab sat  
Alone at evening, gazing at  
The stars that bubbled in clear skies ;

And of young dreamers, when their eyes  
Enjoyed methought a precious boon  
In the adventures of the Moon  
Whose light, behind the Clouds' dark bars,  
Searched for her stolen flocks of stars.  
When I, hemmed in by wrecks of men,  
Thought of some lonely cottage then,  
Full of sweet books ; and miles of sea,  
With passing ships, in front of me ;  
And having, on the other hand,  
A flowery, green, bird-singing land.

## THUNDERSTORMS

My mind has thunderstorms,  
That brood for heavy hours :  
Until they rain me words,  
My thoughts are drooping flowers  
And sulking, silent birds.

Yet come, dark thunderstorms,  
And brood your heavy hours ;  
For when you rain me words  
My thoughts are dancing flowers  
And joyful singing birds.



Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom  
Where green things had such little room  
They pleased the eye like fairer 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—

**EDWARD L. DAVISON**



## THE TREES

I did not know your names and yet I saw  
The handiwork of Beauty in your boughs,  
I worshipped as the Druids did, in awe,  
Feeling at Spring my pagan soul arouse  
To see your leaf-buds open to the day,  
And dull green moss upon your ragged girth,  
The hoary sanctity of your decay,  
Life and Death glimmering upon the Earth.

## IN THIS DARK HOUSE

I shall come back to die  
From a far place at last  
After my life's carouse  
In the old bed to lie,  
Remembering the past  
    In this dark house.

Because of a clock's chime  
In the long waste of night  
I shall awake and wait  
At that calm lonely time  
Each smell and sound and sight  
Mysterious and innate :  
Some shadow on the wall  
When curtains by the door  
Move in a draught of wind ;  
Or else a light footfall  
In a near corridor ;  
Even to feel the kind  
Caress of a cool hand  
Smoothing the draggled hair  
Back from my shrunken brow,

And strive to understand  
The woman's presence there,  
And whence she came, and how.

What gust of wind that night  
Shall mutter her lost name  
Through windows open wide,  
And twist the flickering light  
Of a sole candle's flame  
Smoking from side to side,  
Till the last spark it blows  
Sets a moth's wings aflame  
As the faint flame goes out?

Some distant door may close;  
Perhaps a heavy chair  
On bare floors dragged about  
O'er the low ceiling sound,  
And the thin twig of a tree  
Knock on my window-pane  
Till all the night around  
Is listening with me,  
While like a noise of rain  
Leaves rustle in the wind.

Then from the inner gloom  
The scratching of a mouse  
May echo down my mind  
And sound around the room

In this dark house.

The vague scent of a flower,  
Smelt then in that warm air  
From gardens drifting in,  
May slowly overpower  
The vapid lavender,  
Till feebly I begin  
To count the scents I knew  
And name them one by one,  
And search the names for this.

Dreams will be swift and few  
Ere that last night be done,  
And gradual silences  
In each long interim  
Of halting time awake  
Confuse all conscious sense.  
Shadows will grow more dim,  
And sound and scent forsake  
The dark ere dawn commence.

In the new morning then,  
So fixed the stare and fast,  
The calm unseeing eye  
Will never close again.

. . . . .

I shall come back at last  
To this dark house to die.

**WALTER DE LA MARE**



## THE LISTENERS

“ Is there anybody there ? ” said the Traveller,  
Knocking on the moonlit door ;  
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses  
Of the forest’s ferny floor :  
And a bird flew up out of the turret,  
Above the Traveller’s head :  
And he smote upon the door again a second time ;  
“ Is there anybody there ? ” he said.  
But no one descended to the Traveller ;  
No head from the leaf-fringed sill  
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,  
Where he stood perplexed and still.  
But only a host of phantom listeners  
That dwelt in the lone house then  
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight  
To that voice from the world of men :  
Stood thronging the faint moon beams on the  
dark stair,  
That goes down to the empty hall,  
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken  
By the lonely traveller’s call.

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,  
Their stillness answering his cry,  
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,  
'Neath the starred and leafy sky ;  
For he suddenly smote on the door, even  
Louder, and lifted his head :—  
“ Tell them I came, and no one answered,  
That I kept my word,” he said.  
Never the least stir made the listeners,  
Though every word he spake  
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still  
house  
From the one man left awake :  
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,  
And the sound of iron on stone  
And how the silence surged softly backward  
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

## A R A B I A

Far are the shades of Arabia,  
Where the Princes ride at noon,  
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,  
Under the ghost of the moon ;  
And so dark is that vaulted purple  
Flowers in the forest rise  
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars  
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia  
In my heart, when out of dreams  
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn  
Descry her gliding streams ;  
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks  
Ring loud with the grief and delight  
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians  
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests ;  
No beauty on earth I see

But shadowed with that dream recalls  
    Her loveliness to me :  
Still eyes look coldly upon me,  
    Cold voices whisper and say—  
“ He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,  
    They have stolen his wits away.”

## MUSIC

When music sounds, gone is the earth I know,  
And all her lovely things even lovelier grow;  
Her flowers in vision flame, her forest trees  
Lift burdened branches, stilled with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the water rise  
Naiads whose beauty dims my waking eyes,  
Rapt in strange dream burns each enchanted face,  
With solemn echoing stirs their dwelling-place.

When music sounds, all that I was I am  
Ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came;  
And from Time's woods break into distant song  
The swift-winged hours, as I hasten along.

## THE SCRIBE

What lovely things  
Thy hand hath made,  
The smooth-plumed bird  
In its emerald shade,  
The seed of the grass,  
The speck of stone  
Which the wayfaring ant  
Stirs, and hastes on.

Though I should sit  
By some tarn in Thy hills,  
Using its ink  
As the spirit wills  
To write of Earth's wonders  
Its live willed-things,  
Flit would the ages  
On soundless wings  
Ere unto Z  
My pen drew nigh,  
Leviathan told,  
And the honey-fly ;

And still would remain  
My wit to try—  
My worn reeds broken,  
The dark tarn dry,  
All words forgotten—  
Thou, Lord, and I.

## THE GHOST

“ Who knocks ? ” “ I, who was beautiful  
Beyond all dreams to restore,  
I from the roots of the dark thorn am hither,  
And knock on the door.”

“ Who speaks ? ” “ I—once was my speech  
Sweet as the bird’s on the air,  
When echo lurks by the waters to heed ;  
’Tis I speak thee fair.”

“ Dark is the hour ! ” “ Aye, and cold.”  
“ Lone is my house.” “ Ah, but mine ? ”  
“ Sight, touch, lips, eyes gleamed in vain.”  
“ Long dead these to thine.”

Silence. Still faint on the porch  
Broke the flames of the stars.  
In gloom groped a hope-wearied hand  
Over keys, bolts, and bars.

A face peered. All the grey night  
In chaos of vacancy shone ;  
Nought but vast sorrow was there—  
The sweet cheat gone.

## CLEAR EYES

Clear eyes so dim at last,  
And cheeks outlive their rose.  
Time, heedless of the past,  
No loving kindness knows;  
Chill unto mortal lip  
Still Lethe flows.

Griefs, too, but brief while stay,  
And sorrow, being o'er,  
Its salt tears shed away,  
Woundeth the heart no more.  
Stealthily lave these waters  
That solemn shore.

Ah, then, sweet face burn on,  
While yet quick memory lives!  
And Sorrow, ere thou art gone,  
Know that my heart forgives—  
Ere yet, grown cold in peace,  
It loves not, nor grieves.

## FARE WELL

When I lie where shades of darkness  
Shall no more assail mine eyes,  
Nor the rain make lamentation  
    When the wind sighs ;  
How will fare the world whose wonder  
Was the very proof of me ?  
Memory fades, must the remembered  
    Perishing be ?

Oh, when this my dust surrenders  
Hand, foot, lip to dust again,  
May those loved and loving faces  
    Please other men !  
May the rusting harvest hedgerow  
Still the Traveller's Joy entwine,  
And as happy children gather  
    Posies once mine.

Look thy last on all things lovely,  
Every hour. Let no night  
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber  
    Till to delight  
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing ;  
Since that all things thou wouldst praise  
Beauty took from those who loved them  
    In other days.

## ALL THAT'S PAST

Very old are the woods ;  
    And the buds that break  
Out of the briar's boughs,  
    When March winds wake,  
So old with their beauty are—  
    Oh, no man knows  
Through what wild centuries  
    Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks ;  
    And the rills that rise  
When snow sleeps cold beneath  
    The azure skies  
Sing such a history  
    Of come and gone,  
Their every drop is as wise  
    As Solomon.

Very old are we men ;  
    Our dreams are tales  
Told in dim Eden  
    By Eve's nightingales ;  
We wake and whisper awhile  
    But, the day gone by,  
Silence and sleep like fields  
    Of Amaranth lie.

## THE SONG OF THE MAD PRINCE

Who said, " Peacock Pie " ?

The old King to the sparrow :

Who said, " Crops are ripe " ?

Rust to the harrow :

Who said, " Where sleeps she now ?

Where rests she now her head,

Bathed in Eve's loveliness " ?—

That's what I said.

Who said, " Ay, mum's the word " ?

Sexton to willow :

Who said, " Green dust for dreams,

Moss for a pillow " ?

Who said, " All Time's delight

Hath she for narrow bed ;

Life's troubled bubble broken " ?—

That's what I said.

**JOHN DRINKWATER**



## BIRTHRIGHT

Lord Rameses of Egypt sighed  
Because a summer evening passed ;  
And little Ariadne cried  
That summer fancy fell at last  
To dust ; and young Verona died  
When beauty's hour was overcast.

Theirs was the bitterness we know  
Because the clouds of hawthorn keep  
So short a state, and kisses go  
To tombs unfathomably deep,  
While Rameses and Romeo  
And little Ariadne sleep.

## MOONLIT APPLES

At the top of the house the apples are laid in  
rows,  
And the skylight lets the moonlight in, and those  
Apples are deep-sea apples of green. There goes  
A cloud on the moon in the autumn night.

A mouse in the wainscot scratches, and scratches,  
and then  
There is no sound at the top of the house of men  
Or mice; and the cloud is blown, and the moon  
again  
Dapples the apples with deep-sea light.

They are lying in rows there, under the gloomy  
beams;  
On the sagging floor; they gather the silver  
streams  
Out of the moon, those moonlit apples of dreams,  
And quiet is the steep stair under.

In the corridors under there is nothing but sleep,  
And stiller than ever on orchard boughs they  
keep  
Tryst with the moon, and deep is the silence,  
deep  
On moon-washed apples of wonder.

**R. C. K. ENSOR**



## ODE TO REALITY

O Real, O That Which Is,  
Beyond all earthly bliss  
My spirit prays to be at one with Thee;  
Away from that which seems,  
From unenduring dreams,  
From vain pursuits and vainer needs set free.

How rosy to our eyes  
The mists of error rise,  
The proud pavilions that we weave at will !  
How glittering the ray  
Of that illusive day,  
The hills how grand, the vales how green and  
still !

And how inviting yet  
The service of deceit,  
Paid by the crowd that does not understand,  
Parents and friends and foes  
All bowing down to those  
Who against Thee have lifted up their hand !

Ah, but on whomsoever  
Amid such glib endeavour  
Thy light has shined in sudden sovereignty,  
He who has fallen and heard  
Thy spirit-searching word :  
*Why kick against the pricks? Why outrage Me?*

He can no longer stay  
There in the easy way,  
No longer please himself with make-believe,  
No longer shape at will  
The forms of good and ill  
And what he shall reject and what receive.

Nor may he dwell content  
In self-aggrandisement,  
To the deep wrong of modern Mammon blind ;  
Nor can he drown his cares  
Among the doctrinaires,  
Who think by sowing hate to save mankind.

For every scheme of vision  
He sees as the condition  
Not of the truest only but the best—  
The riches of all wealth,  
The beauty of Beauty's self—  
That on Thee and within Thee it should rest.

By Thee our bounds are set ;  
Thou madest us ; and yet  
O Mother, when we strain to see Thy face,  
Still dost Thou tease our prying  
With masks and mystifying,  
Still hold us at arm's length from Thy embrace !

Yet would I rather in act  
Plough with the iron Fact  
And earn at least some harvest that is bread,  
Than rich and popular  
In gay Imposture's car  
Dazzle mankind and leave them still unfed.

Rather would I in thought  
Miss all that I had sought,  
Still pining on Negation's desert isle,  
Than with the current float  
In Pragmatism's boat  
Down to the fatal shore where sirens smi

Rather would I be thrown  
Against Thine altar-stone,  
Unsanctified, unpitied, unreprieve  
Than in some other shrine  
Sup the priests' meat and wine,  
Taking the wages of a world deceived.



**JAMES ELROY FLECKER**

*Born 1884*

*Died 1915*



## RIOUPEROUX

High and solemn mountains guard Rioupéroux,  
—Small untidy village where the river drives a  
mill :

Frail as wood anemones, white and frail were  
you, .

And drooping a little, like the slender daffodil.

Oh I will go to France again, and tramp the  
valley through,

And I will change these gentle clothes for clog  
and corduroy,

And work with the mill-hands of black  
Rioupéroux,

And walk with you, and talk with you, like any  
other boy.

## WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

We are they who come faster than fate : we are  
they who ride early or late :

We storm at your ivory gate : Pale Kings of the  
Sunset, beware !

Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained  
solemnity die

Among women who chatter and cry, and chil-  
dren who mumble a prayer.

But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we  
rise with a shout, and we tramp

With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the  
spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the  
forts of Merou and Balghar,

Our steel we have brought and our star to shine  
on the ruins of Rum.

We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and  
by God we will go there again ;

We have stood on the shore of the plain where  
the Waters of Destiny boom.

A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where  
men were afraid,

For death was a difficult trade, and the sword  
was a broker of doom ;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured  
not a few of ambition,

And drave not a few to perdition with medicine  
bitter and strong :

And the shield was a grief to the fool and as  
bright as a desolate pool,

And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when  
their cavalry thundered along :

For the coward was drowned with the brave  
when our battle sheered up like a wave,

And the dead to the desert we gave, and the  
glory to God in our song.

## THE OLD SHIPS

I have seen old ships sail like swans asleep  
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,  
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep  
For Famagusta and the hidden sun  
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire ;  
And all those ships were certainly so old  
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,  
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,  
The pirate Genoese  
Hell-raked them till they rolled  
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.  
But now through friendly seas they softly run,  
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,  
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in  
gold.

But I have seen,  
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn  
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,  
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;

And, wonder's breath indrawn,  
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in  
that same  
(Fished up beyond Ææa, patched up new  
—Stern painted brighter blue—)  
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came  
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)  
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,  
And with great lies about his wooden horse  
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows?  
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain  
To see the mast burst open with a rose,  
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

## STILLNESS

When the words rustle no more,  
    And the last work's done,  
When the bolt lies deep in the door,  
    And Fire, our Sun,  
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor ;

When from the clock's last chime to the next  
    chime  
    Silence beats his drum,  
And Space with gaunt grey eyes and her brother  
    Time  
    Wheeling and whispering come,  
She with the mould of form and he with the loom  
    of rhyme :

Then twittering out in the night my thought-  
    birds flee,  
    I am emptied of all my dreams :  
I only hear Earth turning, only see  
    Ether's long bankless streams,  
• And only know I should drown if you laid not  
    your hand on me.

## A R E I Y A

This place was formed divine for love and us to  
dwell ;

This house of brown stone built for us to sleep  
therein ;

Those blossoms haunt the rocks that we should  
see and smell ;

Those old rocks break the hill that we the  
heights should win.

Those heights survey the sea that there our  
thoughts should sail

Up the steep wall of wave to touch the Syrian  
sky :

For us that sky at eve fades out of purple pale,  
Pale as the mountain mists beneath our house  
that lie.

In front of our small house are brown stone  
arches three ;

Behind it, the low porch where all the jasmine  
grows ;

Beyond it, red and green, the gay pomegranate  
tree ;

Around it, like love's arms, the summer and  
the rose.

•  
Within it sat and wrote in minutes soft and few  
This worst and best of songs, one who loves it,  
and you.

## THE QUEEN'S SONG

Had I the power  
    To Midas given of old  
To touch a flower  
    And leave the petals gold  
I then might touch thy face,  
    Delightful boy,  
And leave a metal grace,  
    A graven joy.

Thus would I slay,—  
    Ah, desperate device !  
The vital day  
    That trembles in thine eyes,  
And let the red lips close  
    Which sang so well,  
And drive away the rose  
    To leave a shell.

Then I myself,  
    Rising austere and dumb

On the high shelf  
    Of my half-lighted room,  
Would place the shining bust  
    And wait alone,  
Until I was but dust,  
    Buried unknown.

Thus in my love  
    For nations yet unborn,  
I would remove  
    From our two lives the morn,  
And muse on loveliness  
    In mine arm-chair,  
Content should Time confess  
    How sweet you were.

## BRUMANA

Oh shall I never never be home again?  
Meadows of England shining in the rain  
Spread wide your daisied lawns : your ramparts  
green

With briar fortify, with blossom screen  
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow  
And pure and deep through plains and playlands  
go,

For me your love and all your kingcups store,  
And—dark militia of the southern shore,  
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the last lines  
Of that long saga which you sung me, pines,  
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree  
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

O traitor pines, you sang what life has found  
The falsest of fair tales.  
Earth blew a far-horn prelude all around,  
That native music of her forest home,

While from the sea's blue fields and syren dales  
Shadows and light noon-spectres of the foam  
Riding the summer gales  
On aery viols plucked an idle sound.

Hearing you sing, O trees,  
Hearing you murmur, "There are older seas,  
That beat on vaster sands,  
Where the wise snailfish move their pearly towers  
To carven rocks and sculptured promont'ries,"  
Hearing you whisper, "Lands  
Where blaze the unimaginal flowers."

Beneath me in the valley waves the palm,  
Beneath, beyond the valley, breaks the sea;  
Beneath me sleep in mist and light and calm  
Cities of Lebanon, dream-shadow-dim,  
Where Kings of Tyre and Kings of Tyre did rule  
In ancient days in endless dynasty,  
And all around the snowy mountains swim  
Like mighty swans afloat in heaven's pool.

But I will walk upon the wooded hill  
Where stands a grove, O pines, of sister pines,  
And when the downy twilight droops her wing  
And no sea glimmers and no mountain shines  
My heart shall listen still.

For pines are gossip pines the wide world  
through  
And full of runic tales to sigh or sing.

'Tis ever sweet through pine to see the sky  
Mantling a deeper gold or darker blue.  
'Tis ever sweet to lie  
On the dry carpet of the needles brown,  
And though the fanciful green lizard stir  
And windy odours light as thistledown  
Breathe from the lavdanon and lavender,  
Half to forget the wandering and pain,  
Half to remember days that have gone by,  
And dream and dream that I am home again !

## HYALI

Στὸ Γυαλί, στὸ γαλάζιο βράχο

Island in blue of summer floating on,  
Little brave sister of the Sporades,  
Hail and farewell! I pass, and thou art gone,  
So fast in fire the great boat beats the seas.

But slowly fade, soft Island! Ah to know  
Thy town and who the gossips of thy town,  
What flowers flash in thy meadows, what winds  
blow  
Across thy mountain when the sun goes down.

There is thy market, where the fisher throws  
His gleaming fish that gasp in the death-bright  
dawn :  
And there thy Prince's house, painted old rose,  
Beyond the olives, crowns its slope of lawn.

And is thy Prince so rich that he displays  
At festal board the flesh of sheep and kine?

Or dare he—summer days are long hot days--  
Load up with Asian snow his Coan wine?

Behind a rock, thy harbour, whence a noise  
Of tarry sponge-boats hammered lustily :  
And from that little rock thy naked boys  
Like burning arrows shower upon the sea.

And there by the old Greek chapel—there  
beneath

A thousand poppies that each sea-wind stirs  
And cyclamen, as honied and white as death,  
Dwell deep in earth the elder islanders.

\* \* \*

Thy name I know not, Island, but *his* name  
I know, and why so proud thy mountain  
stands,

And what thy happy secret, and Who came  
Drawing his painted galley up thy sands.

For my Gods—Trident Gods who deep and pale  
Swim in the Latmian Sound, have murmured  
thus :

“ To such an island came with a pompous sail  
On his first voyage young Herodotus.”

Since then—tell me no tale how Romans built,  
Saracens plundered—or that bearded lords

Rowed by to fight for Venice, and here spilt  
Their blood across the bay that keeps their  
swords.

That old Greek day was all thy history :  
For that did Ocean poise thee as a flower.  
Farewell : this boat attends not such as thee :  
Farewell : I was thy lover for an hour !

Farewell ! But I who call upon thy caves  
Am far like thee,—like thee, unknown and  
poor.  
And yet my words are music as thy waves,  
And like thy rocks shall down through time  
endure.

## THE GOLDEN JOURNEY TO SAMARKAND

### PROLOGUE

We who with songs beguile your pilgrimage  
And swear that Beauty lives though lilies die,  
We Poets of the proud old lineage  
Who sing to find your hearts, we know not  
why,—

What shall we tell you? Tales, marvellous tales  
Of ships and stars and isles where good men  
rest,  
Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales,  
And winds and shadows fall toward the West :

And there the world's first huge white-bearded  
kings  
In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep,  
And closer round their breasts the ivy clings,  
Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep.

## II

And how beguile you? Death has no repose  
Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand  
Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those  
Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

And now they wait and whiten peaceably,  
Those conquerors, those poets, those so fair :  
They know time comes, not only you and I,  
But the whole world shall whiten, here or there ;

When those long caravans that cross the plain  
With dauntless feet and sound of silver bells  
Put forth no more for glory or for gain,  
Take no more solace from the palm-girt wells,

When the great markets by the sea shut fast  
All that calm Sunday that goes on and on :  
When even lovers find their peace at last,  
And Earth is but a star, that once had shone.

## EPILOGUE

*At the Gate of the-Sun, Bagdad, in olden time*

THE MERCHANTS (*together*)

Away, for we are ready to a man !  
Our camels sniff the evening and are glad.  
Lead on, O Master of the Caravan :  
Lead on the Merchant-Princes of Bagdad.

### THE CHIEF DRAPER

Have we not Indian carpets dark as wine,  
Turbans and sashes, gowns and bows and veils,  
And broideries of intricate design,  
And printed hangings in enormous bales ?

### THE CHIEF GROCER

We have rose-candy, we have spikenard,  
Mastic and terebinth and oil and spice,  
And such sweet jams meticulously jarred  
As God's own Prophet eats in Paradise.

### THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

And we have manuscripts in peacock styles  
By Ali of Damascus ; we have swords  
Engraved with storks and apes and crocodiles,  
And heavy beaten necklaces, for Lords.

### THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But you are nothing but a lot of Jews.

### THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

Sir, even dogs have daylight, and we pay.

## THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But who are ye in rags and rotten shoes,  
You dirty-bearded, blocking up the way?

## THE PILGRIMS

We are the Pilgrims, master; we shall go  
Always a little further : it may be  
Beyond that last blue mountain barred with  
snow,  
Across that angry or that glimmering sea,  
White on a throne or guarded in a cave  
There lives a prophet who can understand  
Why men were born : but surely we are brave,  
Who make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

## THE CHIEF MERCHANT

We gnaw the nail of hurry. Master, away !

## ONE OF THE WOMEN

O turn your eyes to where your children stand. .  
Is not Bagdad the beautiful? O stay !

## THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We take the Golden Road to Samarkand.

## AN OLD MAN

Have you not girls and garlands in your homes,  
Eunuchs and Syrian boys at your command?  
Seek not excess : God hateth him who roams !

## THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

## A PILGRIM WITH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE

Sweet to ride forth at evening from the wells  
When shadows pass gigantic on the sand,  
And softly through the silence beat the bells  
Along the Golden Road to Samarkand.

## A MERCHANT

We travel not for trafficking alone :  
By hotter winds our fiery hearts are fanned :  
For lust of knowing what should not be known  
We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

## THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

Open the gate, O watchman of the night !

## THE WATCHMAN

Ho, travellers, I open. For what land  
Leave you the dim-moon city of delight?

THE MERCHANTS (*with a shout*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

[*The Caravan passes through the gate*]

THE WATCHMAN (*consoling the women*)

What would ye, ladies? It was ever thus.  
Men are unwise and curiously planned.

## A WOMAN

They have their dreams, and do not think of us.

VOICES OF THE CARAVÁN (*in the distance, singing*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

**ROBIN FLOWER**



## LA VIE CEREBRALE

I am alone—alone ;  
There is nothing—only I,  
And, when I will to die,  
All must be gone.

Eternal thought in me  
Puts on the dress of time  
And builds a stage to mime  
Its listless tragedy.

And in that dress of time  
And on that stage of space  
I place, change, and replace  
Life to a wilful rime.

I summon at my whim  
All things that are, that were :  
The high incredible air,  
Where stars—my creatures—swim.

I dream, and from my mind  
The dead, the living come ;

I build a marble Rome,  
I give it to the wind.

Athens and Babylon  
I breathe upon the night,  
Troy towers for my delight  
And crumbles stone by stone.

I change with white and green  
The seasons hour by hour ;  
I think—it is a flower,  
Think—and the flower has been.

Men, women, things, a stream  
That wavers and flows by,  
A lonely dreamer, I  
Build and cast down the dream.

And one day weary grown  
Of all my brain has wrought,  
I shall destroy my thought  
And I and all be gone.

## THE PIPES

With the spring awaken other springs,  
Those swallows' wings are shadowed by other  
wings

And another thrush behind that glad bird sings

A multitude are the flowers, but multitudes  
Blossom and waver and breathe from forgotten  
woods,

And in silent places an older silence broods.

With the spring long-buried springs in my heart  
awaken,

Time takes the years, but the springs he has not  
taken,

My thoughts with a boy's wild thoughts are  
mixed and shaken.

And here amid inland fields by the down's green  
shoulder

I remember an ancient sea and mountains older,  
Older than all but time, skies sterner and colder.

When the swift spring night on the sea and the  
mountains fell

In the hush of the solemn hills I remember well  
The far pipes calling and the tale they had to tell.

Sad was the tale, ah ! sad beyond all saying  
The lament of the lonely pipes in the evening  
playing  
Lost in the glens, in the still, dark pines delaying.

And now with returning spring I remember all,  
On southern fields those mountain shadows fall,  
Those wandering pipes in the downland evening  
call.

## SAY NOT THAT BEAUTY

Say not that beauty is an idle thing  
And gathered lightly as a wayside flower  
That on the trembling verges of the spring  
Knows but the sweet survival of an hour.  
For 'tis not so. Through dedicated days  
And foiled adventure of deliberate nights  
We lose and find and stumble in the ways  
That lead to the far confluence of delights.  
Not with the earthly eye and fleshly ear,  
But lifted far above mortality,  
We see at last the eternal hills, and hear  
The sighing of the universal sea ;  
And kneeling breathless in the holy place  
We know immortal Beauty face to face.



**JOHN FREEMAN**



## THE WAKERS

The joyous morning ran and kissed the grass  
And drew his fingers through her sleeping hair,  
And cried, " Before thy flowers are well awake  
Rise, and the lingering darkness from thee shake.

" Before the daisy and the sorrel buy  
Their brightness back from that close-folding  
night,  
Come, and the shadows from thy bosom shake,  
Awake from thy thick sleep, awake, awake ! "

Then the grass of that mounded meadow stirred  
Above the Roman bones that may not stir  
Though joyous morning whispered, shouted,  
sang :  
The grass stirred as that happy music rang.

O, what a wondrous rustling everywhere !  
The steady shadows shook and thinned and died,  
The shining grass flashed brightness back for  
brightness,  
And sleep was gone, and there was heavenly  
lightness.

As if she had found wings, light as the wind,  
The grass flew, bent with the wind, from east to  
west,  
Chased by one wild grey cloud, and flashing  
all  
Her dews for happiness to hear morning  
call . . .

But even as I stepped out the brightness dimmed,  
I saw the fading edge of all delight.  
The sober morning waked the drowsy herds,  
And there was the old scolding of the birds.

## THE BODY

When I had dreamed and dreamed what woman's  
    beauty was,  
    And how that beauty seen from unseen surely  
    flowed,  
I turned and dreamed again, but sleeping now  
    no more :  
    My eyes shut and my mind with inward vision  
    glowed.

“ I did not think ! ” I cried, seeing that waver-  
    ing shape  
    That steadied and then wavered, as a cherry  
    bough in June  
Lifts and falls in the wind—each fruit a fruit of  
    light ;  
    And then she stood as clear as an unclouded  
    moon.

As clear and still she stood, moonlike remotely  
    near ;

I saw and heard her breathe, I years and  
years away.

Her light streamed through the years, I saw her  
clear and still,

Shape and spirit together mingling night with  
day.

Water falling, falling with the curve of time  
Over green-hued rock, then plunging to its  
pool

Far, far below, a falling spear of light ;

Water falling golden from the sun but moon-  
like cool :

Water has the curve of her shoulder and breast,  
Water falls as straight as her body rose,  
Water her brightness has from neck to still feet,  
Water crystal-cold as her cold body flows.

But not water has the colour I saw when I  
dreamed,

Nor water such strength has. I joyed to behold  
How the blood lit her body with lamps of fire  
And made the flesh glow that like water  
gleamed cold.

A flame in her arms and in each finger flame,  
And flame in her bosom, flame above, below,

The curve of climbing flame in her waist and her  
thighs;  
From foot to head did flame into red flame  
flow.

I knew how beauty seen from unseen must rise,  
How the body's joy for more than body's use  
was made.  
I knew then how the body is the body of the  
mind,  
And how the mind's own fire beneath the cool  
skin played.

O shape that once to have seen is to see evermore,  
Falling stream that falls to the deeps of the  
mind,  
Fire that once lit burns while aught burns in the  
world,  
Foot to head a flame moving in the spirit's  
wind!

If these eyes could see what these eyes have not  
seen—  
The inward vision clear—how should I look for  
joy,  
Knowing that beauty's self rose visible in the  
world  
Over age that darkens, and griefs that destroy?

## STONE TREES

Last night a sword-light in the sky  
Flashed a swift terror on the dark.  
In that sharp light the fields did lie  
Naked and stone-like; each tree stood  
Like a tranced woman, bound and stark.

    Far off the wood  
With darkness ridged the riven dark.

The cows astonished stared with fear,  
And sheep crept to the knees of cows,  
And conies to their burrows slid,  
And rooks were still in rigid boughs,  
And all things else were still or hid.

    From all the wood  
Came but the owl's hoot, ghostly, clear.

In that cold trance the earth was held  
It seemed an age, or time was nought.  
Sure never from that stone-like field  
Sprang golden corn, nor from those chill

Gray granite trees was music wrought.  
    In all the wood  
Even the tall poplar hung stone still.

It seemed an age, or time was none . . .  
Slowly the earth heaved out of sleep  
And shivered, and the trees of stone  
Bent and sighed in the gusty wind,  
And rain swept as birds flocking sweep.  
    Far off the wood  
Rolled the slow thunders on the wind.

From all the wood came no brave bird,  
No song broke through the close-fall'n night,  
Nor any sound from cowering herd :  
Only a dog's long lonely howl  
When from the window poured pale ligh  
    And from the wood  
The hoot came ghostly of the owl.

## MORE THAN SWEET

The noisy fire,  
The drumming wind,  
The creaking trees,  
And all that hum  
Of summer air  
And all the long inquietude  
Of breaking seas—

Sweet and delightful are  
In loneliness.  
But more than these  
The quiet light  
From the morn's sun  
And night's astonished moon,  
Falling gently upon breaking seas.

Such quietness  
Another beauty is—  
Ah, and those stars  
So gravely still  
More than light, than beauty pour  
Upon the strangeness  
Of the heart's breaking seas.

## W A K I N G

Lying beneath a hundred seas of sleep  
With all those heavy waves flowing over me,  
And I unconscious of the rolling night  
Until, slowly, from deep to lesser deep  
Risen, I felt the wandering seas no longer cover  
    me  
But only air and light . . .

It was a sleep  
So dark and so bewilderingly deep  
That only death's were deeper or completer,  
And none when I awoke stranger or sweeter.  
Awake, the strangeness still hung over me  
As I with far-strayed senses stared at the light.

I—and who was I?  
Saw—oh, with what unaccustomed eye!  
The room was strange and everything was  
    strange

Like a strange room entered by wild moonlight;  
And yet familiar as the light swept over me  
And I rose from the night.

Strange—yet stranger I.  
And as one climbs from water up to land  
Fumbling for weedy steps with foot and hand,  
So I for yesterdays whereon to climb  
To this remote and new-struck isle of time.  
But I found not myself nor yesterday—

Until, slowly, from deep to lesser deep  
Risen, I felt the seas no longer over me  
But only air and light.  
Yes, like one clutching at a ring I heard  
The household noises as they stirred,  
And holding fast I wondered, What were they?

I felt a strange hand lying at my side,  
Limp and cool. I touched it and knew it mine.  
A murmur, and I remembered how the wind died  
In the near aspens. Then  
Strange things were no more strange.  
I travelled among common thoughts again;

And felt the new-forged links of that strong chain  
That binds me to myself, and this to-day  
To yesterday. I heard it rattling near  
With a no more astonished ear.

And I had lost the strangeness of that sleep,  
No more the long night rolled its great seas over  
me.

—O, too anxious I!  
For in this press of things familiar  
I have lost all that clung  
Round me awaking of strangeness and such  
sweetness.  
Nothing now is strange  
Except the man that woke and then was I.

## THE CHAIR

The chair was made  
By hands long dead,  
Polished by many bodies sitting there,  
Until the wood-lines flowed as clean as waves.

Mine sat restless there,  
Or propped to stare  
Hugged the low kitchen with fond eyes  
Or tired eyes that looked at nothing at all.

Or watched from the smoke rise  
The flame's snake-eyes,  
Up the black-bearded chimney leap;  
Then on my shoulder my dull head would drop.

And half asleep  
I heard her creep—  
Her never-singing lips shut fast,  
Fearing to wake me by a careless breath.

Then, at last,  
My lids upcast,  
Our eyes met, I smiled and she smiled,  
And I shut mine again and truly slept.

Was I that child  
Fretful, sick, wild?  
Was that you moving soft and soft  
Between the rooms if I but played at sleep?

Or if I laughed,  
Talked, cried, or coughed,  
You smiled too, just perceptibly,  
Or your large kind brown eyes said, O poor boy!

From the fireside I  
Could see the narrow sky  
Through the barred heavy window panes,  
Could hear the sparrows quarrelling round the  
lilac;

And hear the heavy rains  
Choking in the roof-drains :—  
Else of the world I nothing heard  
Or nothing remember now. But most I loved

To watch when you stirred  
Busily like a bird  
At household doings; with hands floured  
Mixing a magic with your cakes and tarts.

O into me, sick, froward,  
Yourself you poured ;  
In all those days and weeks when I  
Sat, slept, woke, whimpered, wondered and slept  
again.

Now but a memory  
To bless and harry me  
Remains of you still swathed with care ;  
Myself your chief care, sitting by the hearth

Propped in the pillowed chair,  
Following you with tired stare,  
And my hand following the wood lines  
By dead hands smoothed and followed many  
years.

## THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES

And now, while the dark vast earth shakes and  
rocks

In this wild dream-like snare of mortal shocks,  
How look (I muse) those cold and solitary stars  
On these magnificent, cruel wars?—

Venus, that brushes with her shining lips  
(Surely!) the wakeful edge of the world and  
mocks

With hers its all ungentle wantonness?—  
Or the large moon (pricked by the spars of ships  
Creeping and creeping in their restlessness),  
The moon pouring strange light on things more  
strange,

Looks she unheedfully on seas and lands  
Trembling with change and fear of counter-  
change?

O, not earth trembles, but the stars, the stars!  
The sky is shaken and the cool air is quivering.

I cannot look up to the crowded height  
And see the fair stars trembling in their light,  
For thinking of the starlike spirits of men  
Crowding the earth and with great passion  
quivering :—

Stars quenched in anger and hate, stars sick with  
pity.

I cannot look up to the naked skies  
Because a sorrow on dark midnight lies,  
Death, on the living world of sense;  
Because on my own land a shadow lies  
That may not rise;  
Because from bare grey hillside and rich city  
Streams of uncomprehending sadness pour,  
Thwarting the eager spirit's pure intelligence . . .  
How look (I muse) those cold and solitary stars  
On these magnificent, cruel wars ?

Stars trembled in broad heaven, faint with pity.  
An hour to dawn I looked. Beside the trees  
Wet mist shaped other trees that branching rose,  
Covering the woods and putting out the stars. .  
There was no murmur on the seas,  
No wind blew—only the wandering air that grows  
With dawn, then murmurs, sighs,  
And dies.

The mist climbed slowly, putting out the stars,

And the earth trembled when the stars were  
gone;  
And moving strangely everywhere upon  
The trembling earth, thickened the watery  
mist.

And for a time the holy things are veiled.  
England's wise thoughts are swords; her quiet  
hours  
Are trodden underfoot like wayside flowers,  
And every English heart is England's wholly.  
In starless night  
A serious passion streams the heaven with light.  
A common beating is in the air—  
The heart of England throbbing everywhere.  
And all her roads are nerves of noble thought,  
And all her people's brain is but her brain;  
And all her history, less her shame,  
Is part of her requicken'd consciousness.  
Her courage rises clean again.

Even in victory there hides defeat;  
The spirit's murdered though the body survives,  
Except the cause for which a people strives  
Burn with no covetous, foul heat.  
Fights she against herself who infamously  
draws  
The sword against man's secret spiritual laws.

But thou, England, because a bitter heel  
Hath sought to bruise the brain, the sensitive  
will,

The conscience of the world,  
For this, England, art risen, and shalt fight  
Purely through long profoundest night,

Making their quarrel thine who are grieved like  
thee ;

And (if to thee the stars yield victory)  
Tempering their hate of the great foe that hurled  
Vainly her strength against the conscience of the  
world.

I looked again, or dreamed I looked, and saw  
The stars again and all their peace again.  
The moving mist had gone, and shining still  
The moon went high and pale above the hill.  
Not now those lights were trembling in the vast  
Ways of the nervy heaven, nor trembled earth :  
Profound and calm they gazed as the soft-shod  
hours passed.

And with less fear (not with less awe,  
Remembering, England, all the blood and pain)  
How look, I cried, you stern and solitary stars  
On these disastrous wars !

August, 1914.

## SHADOWS

The shadow of the lantern on the wall,  
The lantern hanging from the twisted beam,  
The eye that sees the lantern, shadow and all.

The crackle of the sinking fire in the grate,  
The far train, the slow echo in the coombe,  
The ear that hears fire, train and echo and all.

The loveliness that is the secret shape  
Of once-seen, sweet and oft-dreamed loveliness,  
The brain that builds shape, memory, dream and  
all . . .

A white moon stares Time's thinning fabric  
through,  
And makes substantial insubstantial seem,  
And shapes immortal mortal as a dream;  
And eye and brain flicker as shadows do  
Restlessly dancing on a cloudy wall.



**ROBERT GRAVES**



## STAR-TALK

“ Are you awake, Gemelli,  
This frosty night? ”

“ We’ll be awake till reveillé,  
Which is Sunrise,” say the Gemelli,  
“ It’s no good trying to go to sleep :  
If there’s wine to be got we’ll drink it deep,  
But rest is hopeless to-night,  
But rest is hopeless to-night.”

“ Are you cold too, poor Pleiads,  
This frosty night? ”

“ Yes, and so are the Hyads :  
See us cuddle and hug,” say the Pleiads,  
“ All six in a ring : it keeps us warm :  
We huddle together like birds in a storm :  
It’s bitter weather to-night,  
It’s bitter weather to-night.”

“ What do you hunt, Orion,  
This starry night? ”

“The Ram, the Bull and the Lion  
And the Great Bear,” says Orion,  
“With my starry quiver and beautiful belt  
I am trying to find a good thick pelt  
To warm my shoulders to-night,  
To warm my shoulders to-night.”

“Did you hear that, Great She-bear,  
This frosty night?”

“Yes, he’s talking of stripping *me* bare  
Of my own big fur,” says the She-bear.

“I’m afraid of the man and his terrible arrow :  
The thought of it chills my bones to the marrow,  
And the frost so cruel to-night !  
And the frost so cruel to-night !”

“How is your trade, Aquarius,  
This frosty night?”

“Complaints is many and various  
And my feet are cold,” says Aquarius,  
“There’s Venus objects to Dolphin-scales,  
And Mars to Crab-spawn found in my pails,  
And the pump has frozen to-night,  
And the pump has frozen to-night.”

TO LUCASTA ON GOING TO THE WARS—  
FOR THE FOURTH TIME

It doesn't matter what's the cause,  
What wrong they say we're righting,  
A curse for treaties, bonds and laws,  
When we're to do the fighting !  
And since we lads are proud and true,  
What else remains to do ?

Lucasta, when to France your man  
Returns his fourth time, hating war,  
Yet laughs as calmly as he can  
And flings an oath, but says no more,  
That is not courage, that's not fear—  
Lucasta he is Fusilier,  
And his pride sends him here.

Let statesmen bluster, bark and bray  
And so decide who started  
This bloody war, and who's to pay  
But he must be stout-hearted,

Must sit and stake with quiet breath,  
Playing at cards with Death.

Don't plume yourself he fights for you;  
It is no courage, love or hate  
That lets us do the things we do;  
It's pride that makes the heart so great;  
It is not anger, no, nor fear—  
Lucasta he's a Fusilier,  
And his pride keeps him here.

## NOT DEAD

Walking through trees to cool my heat and pain,  
I know that David's with me here again.  
All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.  
Caressingly I stroke  
Rough bark of the friendly oak.  
A brook goes bubbling by : the voice is his.  
Turf burns with pleasant smoke ;  
I laugh at chaffinch and at primroses.  
All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.  
Over the whole wood in a little while  
Breaks his slow smile.

## IN THE WILDERNESS

Christ of his gentleness  
Thirsting and hungering,  
Walked in the wilderness ;  
Soft words of grace He spoke  
Unto lost desert-folk  
That listened wondering.  
He heard the bittern's call  
From ruined palace wall,  
Answered them brotherly.  
He held communion  
With the she-pelican  
Of lonely piety.  
Basilisk, cockatrice,  
Flocked to His homilies,  
With mail of dread device,  
With monstrous barbèd stings,  
With eager dragon-eyes ;  
Great rats on leather wings  
And poor blind broken things,  
Foul in their miseries.

And ever with Him went,  
Of all His wanderings  
Comrade, with ragged coat,  
Gaunt ribs—poor innocent—  
Bleeding foot, burning throat,  
The guileless old scape-goat;  
For forty nights and days  
Followed in Jesus' ways,  
Sure guard behind Him kept,  
Tears like a lover wept.

## NEGLECTFUL EDWARD

*Nancy*

Edward back from the Indian Sea,  
“What have you brought for Nancy?”

*Edward*

“A rope of pearls and a gold earring,  
And a bird of the East that will not sing.  
A carven tooth, a box with a key——”

*Nancy*

“God be praised you are back,” says she,  
“Have you nothing more for your Nancy?”

*Edward*

“Long as I sailed the Indian Sea  
I gathered all for your fancy :  
Toys and silk and jewels I bring,  
And a bird of the East that will not sing :  
What more can you want, dear girl, from me?”

*Nancy*

“ God be praised you are back,” said she,  
“ Have you nothing better for Nancy ? ”

*Edward*

“ Safe and home from the Indian Sea  
And nothing to take your fancy ? ”

*Nancy*

“ You can keep your pearls and your gold earring,  
And your bird of the East that will not sing,  
But, Ned, have you *nothing* more for me  
Than heathenish gew-gaw toys ? ” says she,  
“ Have you nothing better for Nancy ? ”



**JULIAN GRENFELL**

*Born 1888*

*Killed in Action 1915*



## TO A BLACK GREYHOUND

Shining black in the shining light,  
Inky black in the golden sun,  
Graceful as the swallow's flight,  
Light as swallow, winged one,  
Swift as driven hurricane,  
Double-sinewed stretch and spring,  
Muffled thud of flying feet—  
See the black dog galloping,  
Hear his wild foot-beat.

See him lie when the day is dead,  
Black curves curled on the boarded floor.  
Sleepy eyes, my sleepy-head—  
Eyes that were aflame before.  
Gentle now, they burn no more;  
Gentle now and softly warm,  
With the fire that made them bright  
Hidden—as when after storm  
Softly falls the night.

## INTO BATTLE

The naked earth is warm with Spring,  
And with green grass and bursting trees  
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,  
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;  
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,  
And a striving evermore for these ;  
And he is dead who will not fight ;  
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun  
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;  
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,  
And with the trees to newer birth ;  
And find, when fighting shall be done,  
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven  
Hold him in their high comradeship,  
The Dog-*Star* and the Sisters Seven,  
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,  
They stand to him each one a friend,  
They gently speak in the windy weather;  
They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,  
And the little owls that call by night,  
Bid him be swift and keen as they,  
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,  
If this be the last song you shall sing  
Sing well, for you may not sing another;  
Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,  
Before the brazen frenzy starts,  
The horses show him nobler powers;  
O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,  
And all things else are out of mind,  
And only Joy of Battle takes  
Him by the throat, and makes him blind—

Through joy and blindness he shall know,  
Not caring much to know, that still,

Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so  
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,  
And in the air Death moans and sings;  
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,  
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

**IVOR GURNEY**



## TO THE POET BEFORE BATTLE

Now, youth, the hour of thy dread passion  
comes :

Thy lovely things must all be laid away ;  
And thou, as others, must face the riven day  
Unstirred by rattle of the rolling drums,  
Or bugles' strident cry. When mere noise  
numbs

The sense of being, the fear-sick soul doth sway,  
Remember thy great craft's honour, that they  
may say

Nothing in shame of poets. Then the crumbs  
Of praise the little versemen joyed to take  
Shall be forgotten : then they must know we are,  
For all our skill in words, equal in might  
And strong of mettle as those we honoured ; make  
The name of poet terrible in just war,  
And like a crown of honour upon the fight.

## SONG OF PAIN AND BEAUTY

To M. M. S.

O may these days of pain,  
These wasted-seeming days,  
Somewhere reflower again  
With scent and savour of praise,  
Draw out of memory all bitterness  
Of night with Thy sun's rays.

And strengthen Thou in me  
The love of men here found,  
And eager charity,  
That, out of difficult ground,  
Spring like flowers in barren deserts, or  
Like light, or a lovely sound.

A simpler heart than mine  
Might have seen beauty clear  
When I could see no sign  
Of Thee, but only fear.  
Strengthen me, make me to see  
Thy beauty always  
In every happening here.

*In Trenches, March 1917.*

**RALPH HODGSON**



## E V E

Eve, with her basket, was  
Deep in the bells and grass,  
Wading in bells and grass  
Up to her knees,  
Picking a dish of sweet  
Berries and plums to eat,  
Down in the bells and grass  
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a  
Corner the cobra lay,  
Curled round a bough of the  
Cinnamon tall . . . . .  
Now to get even and  
Humble proud heaven and -  
Now was the moment or  
Never at all.

“Eva!” Each syllable  
Light as a flower fell,

“Eva!” he whispered the  
Wondering maid,  
Soft as a bubble sung  
Out of a linnet’s lung,  
Soft and most silverly  
“Eva!” he said.

Picture that orchard sprite,  
Eve, with her body white,  
Supple and smooth to her  
Slim finger tips,  
Wondering, listening,  
Eve with a berry  
Half way to her lips.

Oh had our simple Eve  
Seen through the make-believe!  
Had she but known the  
Pretender he was!  
Out of the boughs he came  
Whispering still her name  
Tumbling in twenty rings  
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair  
In the world anywhere;  
Eve in the bells and grass  
Kneeling, and he

Telling his story low . . . . .  
Singing birds saw them go  
Down the dark path to  
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh what a clatter when  
Titmouse and Jenny Wren  
Saw him successful and  
Taking his leave !  
How the birds rated him,  
How they all hated him !  
How they all pitied  
Poor motherless Eve !

Picture her crying  
Outside in the lane,  
Eve, with no dish of sweet  
Berries and plums to eat,  
Haunting the gate of the  
Orchard in vain . . . . .  
Picture the lewd delight  
Under the hill to-night—  
“ Eva ! ” the toast goes round,  
“ Eva ! ” again.

## THE BULL

See an old unhappy bull,  
Sick in soul and body both,  
Slouching in the undergrowth  
Of the forest beautiful,  
Banished from the herd he led,  
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go  
Up and down the burning sky ;  
Tree-top cats purr drowsily  
In the dim-day green below ;  
And troops of monkeys, nutting, some,  
All disputing, go and come ;

And things abominable sit  
Picking offal buck or swine,  
On the mess and over it  
Burnished flies and beetles shine,  
And spiders big as bladders lie  
Under hemlocks ten foot high ;

And a dotted serpent curled  
Round and round and round a tree,  
Yellowing its greenery,  
Keeps a watch on all the world,  
All the world and this old bull  
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came :  
One he led, a bull of blood  
Newly come to lustihood,  
Fought and put his prince to shame,  
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head  
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,  
Left him there without a lick,  
Left him for the birds to pick,  
Left him there for carrion,  
Vilely from their bosom cast  
Wisdom, worth and love at last.

When the lion left his lair  
And roared his beauty through the hills,  
And the vultures pecked their quills  
And flew into the middle air,  
Then this prince no more to reign  
Came to life and lived again.

He snuffed the herd in far retreat,  
He saw the blood upon the ground,  
And snuffed the burning airs around  
Still with beevish odours sweet,  
While the blood ran down his head  
And his mouth ran slaver red.

Pity him, this fallen chief,  
All his splendour, all his strength,  
All his body's breadth and length  
Dwindled down with shame and grief,  
Half the bull he was before,  
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dewlap-deep  
In the rushes at the lake,  
Surly, stupid, half asleep,  
Waiting for his heart to break  
And the birds to join the flies  
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes,—

Standing with his head hung down  
In a stupor, dreaming things :  
Green savannas, jungles brown,  
Battlefields and bellowings,  
Bulls undone and lions dead  
And vultures flapping overhead.

Dreaming things : of days he spent  
With his mother gaunt and lean  
In the valley warm and green,  
Full of baby wonderment,  
Blinking out of silly eyes  
At a hundred mysteries ;

Dreaming over once again  
How he wandered with a throng  
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,  
Wandered on from plain to plain,  
Up the hill and down the dale,  
Always at his mother's tail ;

How he lagged behind the herd,  
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,  
And she turned and ran to him  
Blaring at the loathly bird  
Stationed always in the skies,  
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming maybe of a day  
When her drained and drying paps  
Turned him to the sweets and saps,  
Richer fountains by the way,  
And she left the bull she bore  
And he looked to her no more ;

And his little frame grew stout,  
And his little legs grew strong,  
And the way was not so long;  
And his little horns came out,  
And he played at butting trees  
And boulder-stones and tortoises,

Joined a game of knobby skulls  
With the youngsters of his year,  
All the other little bulls,  
Learning both to bruise and bear,  
Learning how to stand a shock  
Like a little bull of rock.

Dreaming of a day less dim,  
Dreaming of a time less far,  
When the faint but certain star  
Of destiny burned clear for him,  
And a fierce and wild unrest  
Broke the quiet of his breast.

And the gristles of his youth  
Hardened in his comely pow,  
And he came to fighting growth,  
Beat his bull and won his cow,  
And flew his tail and trampled off  
Past the tallest, vain enough,

And curved about in splendour full  
And curved again and snuffed the airs  
As who should say Come out who dares !  
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,  
And knew that here was surely one  
That backed for no bull, fearing none.

And the leader of the herd  
Looked and saw, and beat the ground,  
And shook the forest with his sound,  
Bellowed at the loathly bird  
Stationed always in the skies,  
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,  
Surely dreaming of the hour  
When he came to sultan power,  
And they owned him master-horn,  
Chiefest bull of all among  
Bulls and cows a thousand strong.

And in all the tramping herd .  
Not a bull that barred his way,  
Not a cow that said him nay,  
Not a bull or cow that erred  
In the furnace of his look  
Dared a second, worse rebuke ;

Not in all the forest wide,  
Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,  
Not another dared him then,  
Dared him and again defied ;  
Not a sovereign buck or boar  
Came a second time for more.

Not a serpent that survived  
Once the terrors of his hoof  
Risky a second time reproof,  
Came a second time and lived,  
Not a serpent in its skin  
Came again for discipline ;

Not a leopard bright as flame,  
Flashing fingerhooks of steel,  
That a wooden tree might feel,  
Met his fury once and came  
For a second reprimand,  
Not a leopard in the land.

Not a lion of them all  
Not a lion of the hills,  
Hero of a thousand kills,  
Dared a second fight and fall,  
Dared that ram terrific twice,  
Paid a second time the price . . . . .

Pity him, this dupe of dream,  
Leader of the herd again  
Only in his daft old brain,  
Once again the bull supreme  
And bull enough to bear the part  
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake ;  
Even now the swarm of flies  
Blackening his bloodshot eyes  
Bursts and blusters round the lake,  
Scattered from the feast half-fed,  
By great shadows overhead.

And the dreamer turns away  
From his visionary herds  
And his splendid yesterday,  
Turns to meet the loathly birds  
Flocking round him from the skies,  
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

## THE SONG OF HONOUR

I climbed a hill as light fell short,  
And rooks came home in scramble sort,  
And filled the trees and flapped and fought  
And sang themselves to sleep ;  
An owl from nowhere with no sound  
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,  
I heard him calling half-way round,  
Holloing loud and deep ;  
A pair of stars, faint pins of light,  
Then many a star, sailed into sight,  
And all the stars, the flower of night,  
Were round me at a leap ;  
To tell how still the valleys lay  
I heard a watchdog miles away . . . . .  
And bells of distant sheep.

I heard no more of bird or bell,  
The mastiff in a slumber fell,  
I stared into the sky,

As wondering men have always done,  
Since beauty and the stars were one,  
Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,  
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,  
Save me and me alone ;  
So pure and wide that silence was  
I feared to bend a blade of grass,  
And there I stood like stone.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—  
*Ah! some wild lovesick singing bird  
Woke singing in the trees ?  
The nightingale and babble-wren  
Were in the English greenwood then,  
And you heard one of these ?*

The babble-wren and nightingale  
Sang in the Abyssinian vale  
That season of the year !  
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain,  
I heard them both again, again, .  
As sharp and sweet and clear  
As if the Abyssinian tree  
Had thrust a bough across the sea,  
Had thrust a bough across to me  
With music for my ear !

I heard them both, and oh ! I heard  
The song of every singing bird  
That sings beneath the sky,  
And with the song of lark and wren  
The song of mountains, moths and men  
And seas and rainbows vie !

I heard the universal choir  
The Sons of Light exalt their Sire  
With universal song,  
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,  
Her million times ten million throats  
Exalt Him loud and long,  
And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace  
From every part and every place  
Within the shining of His face  
The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of being sound  
From every well of honour found  
In human sense and soul :  
The song of poets when they write  
The testament of Beautysprite  
Upon a flying scroll,  
The song of painters when they take  
A burning brush for Beauty's sake  
And limn her features whole—

The song of men divinely wise  
Who look and see in starry skies  
Not stars so much as robins' eyes,  
And when these pale away  
Hear flocks of shiny pleiades  
Among the plums and apple trees  
Sing in the summer day—  
The song of all both high and low  
To some blest vision true,  
The song of beggars when they throw  
The crust of pity all men owe  
To hungry sparrows in the snow,  
Old beggars hungry too—  
The song of kings of kingdoms when  
They rise above their fortune men,  
And crown themselves anew,—

The song of courage, heart and will  
And gladness in a fight,  
Of men who face a hopeless hill  
With sparking and delight,  
The bells and bells of song that ring  
Round banners of a cause or king.  
From armies bleeding white—

The songs of sailors every one  
When monstrous tide and tempest run  
At ships like bulls at red,

When stately ships are twirled and spun  
Like whipping-tops and help there's none  
And mighty ships ten thousand ton  
Go down like lumps of lead—

And songs of fighters stern as they  
At odds with fortune night and day,  
Crammed up in cities grim and grey  
As thick as bees in hives,  
Hosannas of a lowly throng  
Who sing unconscious of their song,  
Whose lips are in their lives—

And song of some at holy war  
With spells and ghouls more dread by far  
Than deadly seas and cities are,  
Or hordes of quarrelling kings—  
The song of fighters great and small,  
The song of pretty fighters all,  
And high heroic things—

The song of lovers—who knows how  
Twitched up from place and time  
Upon a sigh, a blush, a vow,  
A curve or hue of cheek or brow,  
Borne up and off from here and now  
Into the void sublime !

And crying loves and passions still  
In every key from soft to shrill  
And numbers never done,  
Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,  
And loves like Ruth's of old no end,  
And intermission none—

And burst on burst for beauty and  
For numbers not behind,  
From men whose love of motherland  
Is like a dog's for one dear hand,  
Sole, selfless, boundless, blind—  
And song of some with hearts beside  
For men and sorrows far and wide,  
Who watch the world with pity and pride  
And warm to all mankind—

And endless joyous music rise  
From children at their play,  
And endless soaring lullabies  
From happy, happy mother's eyes,  
And answering crows and baby cries,  
How many who shall say !  
And many a song as wondrous well  
With pangs and sweets intolerable  
From lonely hearths too gray to tell,  
God knows how utter gray !

And song from many a house of care  
When pain has forced a footing there  
And there's a Darkness on the stair  
Will not be turned away—

And song—that song whose singers 'come  
With old kind tales of pity from  
The Great Compassion's lips,  
That makes the bells of Heaven to peal  
Round pillows frosty with the feel  
Of Death's cold finger tips—

The song of men all sorts and kinds,  
As many tempers, moods and minds  
As leaves are on a tree,  
As many faiths and castes and creeds,  
As many human bloods and breeds  
As in the world may be ;

The song of each and all who gaze  
On Beauty in her naked blaze,  
Or see her dimly in a haze,  
Or get her light in fitful rays  
And tiniest needles even,  
The song of all not wholly dark,  
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark  
Too deep for groping Heaven—

And alleluias sweet and clear  
And wild with beauty men mishear,  
From choirs of song as near and dear  
To Paradise as they,  
The everlasting pipe and flute  
Of wind and sea and bird and brute,  
And lips deaf men imagine mute  
In wood and stone and clay ;

The music of a lion strong  
That shakes a hill a whole night long,  
A hill as loud as he,  
The twitter of a mouse among  
Melodious greenery,  
The ruby's and the rainbow's song,  
The nightingale's—all three,  
The song of life that wells and flows  
From every leopard, lark and rose  
And everything that gleams or goes  
Lack-lustre in the sea.

I heard it all, each, every note .  
Of every lung and tongue and throat,  
Ay, every rhythm and rhyme  
Of everything that lives and loves  
And upward, ever upward moves  
From lowly to sublime !

Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,  
I heard them lift their lyric might  
With each and every chanting sprite  
That lit the sky that wondrous night  
As far as eye could climb !

I heard it all, I heard the whole  
Harmonious hymn of being roll  
Up through the chapel of my soul  
And at the altar die,  
And in the awful quiet then  
Myself I heard Amen, Amen,  
Amen I heard me cry !  
I heard it all, and then although  
I caught my flying senses, oh,  
A dizzy man was I !  
I stood and stared ; the sky was lit,  
The sky was stars all over it,  
I stood, I knew not why,  
Without a wish, without a will,  
I stood upon that silent hill  
And stared into the sky until  
My eyes were blind with stars and still  
I stared into the sky.

## REASON HAS MOONS

Reason has moons, but moons not hers  
Lie mirror'd on her sea,  
Confounding her astronomers,  
But, O! delighting me.



**JAMES JOYCE**



## STRINGS IN THE EARTH

Strings in the earth and air  
    Make music sweet ;  
Strings by the river where  
    The willows meet.

There's music along the river  
    For Love wanders there,  
Pale flowers on his mantle,  
    Dark leaves on his hair.

All softly playing,  
    With head to the music bent,  
And fingers straying  
    Upon an instrument.

## I HEAR AN ARMY

I hear an army charging upon the land,  
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam  
about their knees :  
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,  
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the  
charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name :  
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling  
laughter.  
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding  
flame,  
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an  
anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long green  
hair :  
They come out of the sea and run shouting by  
the shore.  
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?  
My love, my love, my love, why have you left  
me alone ?

**D. H. LAWRENCE**



## SERVICE OF ALL THE DEAD

Between the avenues of cypresses,  
All in their scarlet cloaks, and surplices  
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,  
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery  
The round, dark heads of men crowd silently,  
And black-scarved faces of women-folk, wistfully  
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands  
With sunken head, and forgotten, folded hands ;  
And at the foot of a grave a woman kneels  
With pale shut face, and neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers  
Between the avenues of cypresses,  
The silence of the many villagers,  
The candle-flames beside the surplices.



**FRANCIS LEDWIDGE**

*Killed in Action, 1917.*



## I N F R A N C E

The silence of maternal hills  
Is round me in my evening dreams ;  
And round me music-making rills  
And mingling waves of pastoral streams.

Whatever way I turn I find  
The path is old unto me still.  
The hills of home are in my mind,  
And there I wander as I will.

*February 3rd, 1917.*

THOMAS MACDONAGH

He shall not hear the bittern cry  
In the wild sky, where he is lain,  
Nor voices of the sweeter birds  
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blows  
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,  
Blowing to flame the golden cup  
Of many an upset daffodil.

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,  
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,  
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn  
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

## IN SEPTEMBER

Still are the meadowlands, and still  
Ripens the upland corn,  
And over the brown gradual hill  
The moon has dipped a horn.

The voices of the dear unknown  
With silent hearts now call,  
My rose of youth is overblown  
And trembles to the fall.

My song forsakes me like the birds  
That leave the rain and grey,  
I hear the music of the words  
My lute can never say.



**ROSE MACAULAY**



## TRINITY SUNDAY

As I walked in Petty Cury on Trinity Day,  
While the cuckoos in the fields did shout,  
Right through the city stole the breath of the  
    may,  
And the scarlet doctors all about

Lifted up their heads to snuff at the breeze,  
And forgot they were bound for great St.  
    Mary's

To listen to a sermon from the Master of Caius,  
And "How balmy," they said, "the air is!"

And balmy it was; and the sweet bells rocking  
    Shook it till it rent in two  
And fell, a torn veil; and like maniacs mocking  
    The wild things from without passed through.

Wild wet things that swam in King's Parade  
    The days it was a marshy fen,  
Through the rent veil they did sprawl and wade  
    Blind bog-beasts and Ugrian men.

And the city was not. (For cities are wrought  
Of the stuff of the world's live brain.  
Cities are thin veils, woven of thought,  
And thought, breaking, rends them in twain.)

And the fens were not. (For fens are dreams  
Dreamt by a race long dead ;  
And the earth is naught, and the sun but seems :  
And so those who know have said.)

So veil beyond veil illimitably lifted :  
And I saw the world's naked face,  
Before, reeling and baffled and blind, I drifted  
Back within the bounds of space.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have forgot the unforgettable.  
All of honey and milk the air is.  
God send I do forget . . . . The merry winds  
swell  
In the scarlet gowns bound for St. Mary's.

THOMAS MACDONAGH

*Born 1878.*

*Executed after Easter Week Rising, 1916.*



## INSCRIPTION ON A RUIN

I stood beside the postern here,  
High up above the trampling sea,  
In shadow, shrinking from the spear  
Of light, not daring hence to flee.

The moon beyond the western cliff  
Had passed, and let the shadow fall,  
Across the water to the skiff  
That came on to the castle wall.

I heard below murmur of words  
Not loud, the splash upon the strand,  
And the long cry of darkling birds.  
The ivory horn fell from my hand.

## THE NIGHT HUNT

In the morning, in the dark,  
When the stars begin to blunt,  
By the wall of Barna Park  
Dogs I heard and saw them hunt;  
All the parish dogs were there,  
All the dogs for miles around,  
Teeming up behind a hare,  
In the dark, without a sound.

How I heard I scarce can tell—  
'Twas a patter in the grass—  
And I did not see them well  
Come across the dark and x ;  
Yet I saw them and I knew's  
Spearman's dog and Spellman's dog  
And, beside my own dog too,  
Leamy's from the Island Bog.

In the morning when the sun  
Burnished all the green to gorse,

I went out to take a run  
Round the bog upon my horse;  
And my dog that had been sleeping  
In the heat beside the door  
Left his yawning and went leaping  
On a hundred yards before.

Through the village street we passed—  
Not a dog there raised a snout—  
Through the street and out at last  
On the white bog road and out  
Over Barna Park full pace,  
Over to the silver stream,  
Horse and dog in happy race,  
Rider between thought and dream.

By the stream, at Leamy's house,  
Lay a dog—my pace I curbed—  
But our coming did not rouse  
Him from drowsing undisturbed;  
And my dog, as unaware  
Of the other, dropped beside  
And went running by me there  
With my horse's slackened stride.

Yet by something, by a twitch  
Of the sleeper's eye, a look  
From the runner, something which  
Little chords of feeling shook,

I was conscious that a thought  
Shuddered through the silent deep  
Of a secret—I had caught  
Something I had known in sleep.

**JOHN MASEFIELD**



C. L. M.

In the dark womb where I began  
My mother's life made me a man.  
Through all the months of human birth  
Her beauty fed my common earth.  
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,  
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave  
She cannot see the life she gave.  
For all her love, she cannot tell  
Whether I use it ill or well,  
Nor knock at dusty doors to find  
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,  
She would not know her little son,  
I am so grown. If we should meet  
She would pass by me in the street,  
Unless my soul's face let her see  
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind  
My debt to her and womankind?  
What woman's happier life repays  
Her for those months of wretched days?  
For all my monthless body leeched  
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reached?

What have I done, or tried, or said  
In thanks to that dear woman dead?  
Men triumph over women still,  
Men trample women's rights at will,  
And man's lust roves the world untamed.

\* \* \* \* \*

O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

## WHAT AM I, LIFE?

What am I, Life? A thing of watery salt  
Held in cohesion by unresting cells  
Which work they know not why, which never  
halt,

Myself unwitting where their master dwells.  
I do not bid them, yet they toil, they spin;  
A world which uses me as I use them,  
Nor do I know which end or which begin,  
Nor which to praise, which pamper, which con-  
demn.

So, like a marvel in a marvel set,  
I answer to the vast, as wave by wave  
The sea of air goes over, dry or wet,  
Or the full moon comes swimming from her cave,  
Or the great sun comes north, this myriad I  
Tingles, not knowing how, yet wondering why.



**HAROLD MONRO**



## J O U R N E Y

### I

How many times I nearly miss the train  
By running up the staircase once again  
For some dear trifle almost left behind.  
At that last moment the unwary mind  
Forgets the solemn tick of station-time;  
That muddy lane the feet must climb—  
The bridge—the ticket—signal down—  
Train just emerging beyond the town :  
The great blue engine panting as it takes  
The final curve, and grinding on its brakes  
Up to the platform-edge. . . The little doors  
Swing open, while the burly porter roars.  
The tight compartment fills : our careful eyes  
Go to explore each other's destinies.  
A lull. The station-master waves. The train  
Gathers, and grips, and takes the rails again,  
Moves to the shining open land, and soon  
Begins to tittle-tattle a tame tattoo.

## II

They ramble through the country-side,  
Dear gentle monsters, and we ride  
Pleasantly seated—so we sink  
Into a torpor on the brink  
Of thought, or read our books, and understand  
Half them and half the backward-gliding land :  
(Trees in a dance all twirling round ;  
Large rivers flowing with no sound ;  
The scattered images of town and field,  
Shining flowers half concealed.)  
And, having settled to an equal rate,  
They swing the curve and straighten to the  
    straight,  
Curtail their stride and gather up their joints,  
Snort, dwindle their steam for the noisy points,  
Leap them in safety, and, the other side,  
Loop again to an even stride.

The long train moves : we move in it along.  
Like an old ballad, or an endless song,  
It drones and wimbles its unwearied croon—  
Croons, drones, and mumbles all the afternoon.

Towns with their fifty chimneys close and high,  
Wreathed in great smoke between the earth and  
    sky,

It hurtles through them, and you think it must  
Halt—but it shrieks and sputters them with dust,  
Cracks like a bullet through their big affairs,  
Rushes the station-bridge, and disappears  
Out to the suburb, laying bare  
Each garden trimmed with pitiful care ;  
Children are caught at idle play,  
Held a moment, and thrown away.  
Nearly everyone looks round.  
Some dignified inhabitant is found  
Right in the middle of the commonplace—  
Buttoning his trousers, or washing his face.

### III

Oh the wild engine ! Every time I sit  
In any train I must remember it.  
The way it smashes through the air ; its great  
Petulant majesty and terrible rate :  
Driving the ground before it, with those round  
Feet pounding, eating, covering the ground ;  
The piston using up the white steam so  
You cannot watch it when it come or go ;  
The cutting, the embankment ; how it takes  
The tunnels, and the clatter that it makes ;  
So careful of the train and of the track,  
Guiding us out, or helping us go back ;  
Breasting its destination : at the close  
Yawning, and slowly dropping to a doze.

## IV

We who have looked each other in the eyes  
This journey long, and trundled with the train,  
Now to our separate purposes must rise,  
Becoming decent strangers once again.  
The little chamber we have made our home  
In which we so conveniently abode,  
The complicated journey we have come,  
Must be an unremembered episode.  
Our common purpose made us all like friends.  
How suddenly it ends !  
A nod, a murmur, or a little smile,  
Or often nothing, and away we file.  
I hate to leave you, comrades. I will stay  
To watch you drift apart and pass away.  
It seems impossible to go and meet  
All those strange eyes of people in the street.  
But, like some proud unconscious god, the train  
Gathers us up and scatters us again.

## SOLITUDE

When you have tidied all things for the night,  
And while your thoughts are fading to their sleep,  
You'll pause a moment in the late firelight,  
Too sorrowful to weep.

The large and gentle furniture has stood  
In sympathetic silence all the day  
With that old kindness of domestic wood ;  
Nevertheless the haunted room will say :  
“ Some one must be away.”

The little dog rolls over half awake,  
Stretches his paws, yawns, looking up at you,  
Wags his tail very slightly for your sake,  
That you may feel he is unhappy too.

A distant engine whistles, or the floor  
Creaks, or the wandering night-wind bangs a  
door.

Silence is scattered like a broken glass.  
The minutes prick their ears and run about,  
Then one by one subside again and pass  
Sedately in, monotonously out.

You bend your head and wipe away a tear.  
Solitude walks one heavy step more near.

## MILK FOR THE CAT

When the tea is brought at five o'clock,  
And all the neat curtains are drawn with care,  
The little black cat with bright green eyes  
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,  
She has come in merely to blink by the grate,  
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be  
sour  
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes  
Take a soft large milky haze,  
And her independent casual glance  
Becomes a stiff, hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ea  
Or twists her tail and begins to stir,  
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes  
One breathing, trembling purr.

The children eat and wriggle and laugh ;  
The two old ladies stroke their silk :  
But the cat is grown small and thin with desire,  
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk :

The white saucer like some full moon descends  
At last from the clouds of the table above ;  
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,  
Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,  
Buries her chin in the creamy sea ;  
Her tail hangs loose ; each drowsy paw  
Is doubled under each bending knee.

A long dim ecstasy holds her life ;  
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,  
Till her tongue has curled the last half drop,  
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap  
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,  
Lies defeated and buried deep  
Three or four hours unconscious there.



**T. STURGE MOORE**



SENT FROM EGYPT WITH A FAIR ROBE  
OF TISSUE TO A SICILIAN VINE-DRESSER.

276 B.C.

Put out to sea, if wine thou wouldest make  
Such as is made in Cos : when open boat  
May safely launch, advice of pilots take ;  
And find the deepest bottom, most remote  
From all encroachment of the crumbling shore,  
Where no fresh stream tempers the rich salt  
    wave,

Forcing rash sweetness on sage ocean's brine ;  
As youthful shepherds pour  
Their first love forth to Battos gnarled and grave,  
Fooling shrewd age to bless some fond design.

Not after storm ! but when, for a long spell,  
No white-maned horse has raced across the blue,  
Put from the beach ! lest troubled be the well—  
Less pure thy draught than from such depth were  
    due.

Fast close thy largest jars, prepared and clean !  
Next weigh each buoyant womb down through  
the flood,  
Far down ! when, with a cord the lid remove,  
And it will fill unseen,  
Swift as a heart Love smites sucks back the  
blood :—  
This bubbles, deeper born than sighs, shall prove.

If thy bowed shoulders ache, as thou dost haul—  
Those groan who climb with rich ore from the  
mine ;  
Labour untold round Ilion girt a wall ;  
A god toiled that Achilles' arms might shine ;  
Think of these things and double knit thy will !  
Then, should the sun be hot on thy return,  
Cover thy jars with piles of bladder weed,  
Dripping, and fragrant still  
From sea-wolds where it grows like bracken-  
fern :  
A grapnel dragged will soon supply thy need.

Home to a tun convey thy precious freight !  
Wherein, for thirty days, it should abide,  
Closed, yet not quite closed from the air, and  
wait  
While, through dim stillness, slowly doth subside  
Thick sediment. The humour of a day,

Which has defeated youth and health and joy,  
Down, through a dreamless sleep, will settle thus,  
Till riseth maiden gay  
Set free from all glooms past—or else a boy  
Once more a school-friend worthy Troilus.

Yet to such cool wood tank some dream might  
dip :

Vision of Aphrodite sunk to sleep,  
Or of some sailor let down from a ship,  
Young, dead, and lovely, while across the deep,  
Through the calm night, his hoarse-voiced com-  
rades chaunt—

So far at sea, they cannot reach the land  
To lay him perfect in the warm brown earth.  
Pray that such dreams there haunt !  
While, through damp darkness, where thy tun  
doth stand,  
Cold salamanders sidle round its girth.

Gently draw off the clear and tomb it yet  
For other twenty days in cedarn casks !  
Where through trance, surely, prophecy will set ;  
As, dedicated to light temple-tasks,  
The young priest dreams the unknown mystery.  
Through Ariadne, knelt disconsolate  
In the sea's marge, so welled back warmth which  
throbbled

With nuptial promise : she  
Turned ; and, half-choked through dewy glens,  
    some, great,  
Some magic drone of revel coming sobbed.

Of glorious fruit, indeed, must be thy choice,  
such as has fully ripened on the branch,  
such as due rain, then sunshine, made rejoice,  
Which, pulped and coloured, now deep bloom  
    doth blanch ;  
Bustles like odes for victors in the games,  
Strophe on strophe globed, pure nectar all !  
Spread such to dry,—if Helios grant thee grace,  
Exposed unto his flames  
Two days, or, if not, three ; or, should rain fall ;  
Stretch them on hurdles in the house four days.

Grapes are not sharded chestnuts, which the tree  
Lets fall to burst them on the ground, where red  
Rolls forth the fruit, from white-lined wards set  
    free,  
And all undamaged glows 'mid husks it shed ;  
Nay, they are soft and should be singly stripped  
From off the bunch, by maiden's dainty hand, ·  
Then dropped through the cool silent depth to  
    sink  
(Coy, as herself hath slipped,  
Bathing, from shelves in caves along the strand)

Till round each dark grape water barely wink ;  
Since some nine measures of sea-water fill  
A butt of fifty, ere the plump fruit peep,  
—Like sombre dolphin shoals when nights are  
still,

Which penned in Proteus' wizard circle sleep,  
And 'twixt them glinting curves of silver glance  
If Zephyr, dimpling dark calm, counts them  
o'er.—

Let soak thy fruit for two days thus, then tread !  
While bare-legged bumpkins dance,  
Bright from thy bursting press arched spouts  
shall pour,  
And gurgling torrents towards thy vats run red.

Meanwhile the maidens, each with wooden rake,  
Drag back the skins and laugh at aprons  
splashed ;

Or youths rest, boasting how their brown arms  
ache,

So fast their shovels for so long have flashed,  
Baffling their comrades' legs with mounting  
heaps.

Treble their labour ! still the happier they,  
Who at this genial task wear out long hours,  
Till vast night round them creeps,  
When soon the torch-light dance whirls them  
away ;

For gods who love wine double all their powers.  
Iacchus is the always grateful god !  
His vineyards are more fair than gardens far ;  
Hanging, like those of Babylon, they nod  
O'er each Ionian cliff and hill-side scar !  
While Cypris lends him saltness, depth, and  
    peace ;  
The brown earth yields him sap for richest green ;  
And he has borrowed laughter from the sky ;  
Wildness from winds ; and bees  
Bring honey.—Then choose casks which thou  
    hast seen  
Are leakless, very wholesome, and quite dry !

That Coan wine the very finest is,  
I do assure thee, who have travelled much  
And learned to judge of diverse vintages.  
Faint not before the toil ! this wine is such  
As tempteth princes launch long pirate barks ;—  
From which may Zeus protect Sicilian bays,  
And, ere long, me safe home from Egypt bring,  
Letting no black-sailed sharks  
Scent this king's gifts, for whom I sweeten  
    praise  
With those same songs thou didst to Chloë sing !  
  
I wrote them 'neath the vine-cloaked elm, for  
    thee.

Recall those nights ! our couches were a load  
Of scented lentisk ; upward, tree by tree,  
Thy father's orchard sloped, and past us flowed  
A stream sluiced for his vineyards ; when, above,  
The apples fell, they on to us were rolled,  
But kept us not awake.—O Laco, own  
How thou didst rave of love !  
Now art thou staid, thy son is three years old ;  
But I, who made thee love-songs, live alone.

Muse thou at dawn o'er thy yet slumbering  
wife !—

Not chary of her best was nature there,  
Who, though a third of her full gift of life  
Was spent, still added beauties still more rare ;  
What calm slow days, what holy sleep at night,  
Evolved her for long twilight trystings fraught  
With panic blushes and tip-toe surmise :  
And then, what mystic might—  
All, with a crowning boon, through travail  
brought !

Consider this and give thy best likewise !

Ungrateful be not ! Laco, ne'er be that !  
Well worth thy while to make such wine 'twould  
be :

I see thy red face 'neath thy broad straw hat,  
I see thy house, thy vineyards, Sicily !—

Thou dost demur, good but too easy friend !  
Come, put those doubts away ! thou hast strong  
    lads,  
Brave wenches ; on the steep beach lolls thy ship  
Where vine-clad slopes descend,  
Sheltering our bay, that headlong rillet glads,  
Like a stripped child fain in the sea to dip.

## A SPANISH PICTURE

Thy life is over now, Don Juan :  
Thy fingers are so shrunk  
That all their rings from off their cold tips crowd,  
Where limp thy hand hath sunk ;

On a trestle-table laid, Don Juan,  
A half-mask near thine ear,  
A visor black in which void gape two gaps  
Where through thou oft didst leer.

Thou waitest for the priests, Don Juan,  
To bear thee to thy grave ;  
Thou'rt theirs at length beyond all doubt, but  
    ha !  
Hast now no soul to save.

Thou wast brought home last night, Don Juan,  
Upon a stable door ;

Beneath a young nun's casement, found dropped  
dead,

Where thou hadst wooed of yore :

To pay their trouble then, Don Juan,  
Those base grooms took thy sword ;  
A rapier to fetch gold, with shagreened sheath,  
Wrought hand-grip, and silk cord ;

Which, with thy fame enhanced, Don Juan,  
Were worth hidalgo's rent ;  
Yet on which now, at most, some few moidore  
May by some fop be spent.

Dull brown a cloak enwraps, Don Juan,  
Both thy lean shanks, one arm,  
That old bird-cage thy breast, where like magpie  
Thy heart hopped on alarm.

Yet out beyond thy cloak, Don Juan,  
Thrust prim white-stockin'g'd feet—  
Silk-stockin'g'd feet that in quadrille pranced  
round—

Slippers high-heeled and neat ;

Thy silver-buckled shoes, Don Juan,  
No more shall tread a floor,  
Beside their heels upon the board lies now  
A half-peeled onion's core :

Munching, a crone, that knew, Don Juan,  
Thy best contrivéd plots,  
Hobbles about the room, whose gaunt stone walls  
Drear echo as she trots ;

She makes her bundle up, Don Juan ;  
She'll not forget thy rings,  
Thy buckles, nor silk stockings ; nay, not she !  
They'll go with her few things.

Those lids she hath pulled down, Don Juan,  
That lowered ne'er for shame ;  
No spark from beauty more in thy brain pan,  
Shall make its tinder flame :

Thou hast enjoyed all that, Don Juan,  
Which good resolves doth daunt,  
Which hypocrites doth tempt to stake vile souls,  
Which cowards crave and want ;

Thou wast an envied man, Don Juan,  
Long shalt be envied still ;  
Thou hadst thy beauty as the proud pãrd hath,  
And instinct trained to skill.

## A D U E T

“ Flowers nodding gaily, scent in air,  
“ Flowers posied, flowers for the hair,  
“ Sleepy flowers, flowers bold to stare— ”  
“ Oh, pick me some ! ”

“ Shells with lip, or tooth, or bleeding gum,  
“ Tell-tale shells, and shells that whisper  
    ‘ Come,’  
“ Shells that stammer, blush, and yet are  
    dumb—”  
“ Oh, let me hear ! ”

“ Eyes so black they draw one trembling near,  
“ Brown eyes, caverns flooded with a tear,  
“ Cloudless eyes, blue eyes so windy clear— ”  
“ Oh, look at me ! ”

“ Kisses sadly blown across the sea,  
“ Darkling kisses, kisses fair and free,  
“ Bob-a-cherry kisses 'neath a tree— ”  
“ Oh, give me one ! ”

Thus sang a king and queen in Babylon.

## THE GAZELLES

When the sheen on tall summer grass is pale,  
Across blue skies white clouds float on  
In shoals, or disperse and singly sail,  
Till, the sun being set, they all are gone :

Yet, as long as they may shine bright in the sun,  
They flock or stray through the daylight bland,  
While their stealthy shadows like foxes run  
Beneath where the grass is dry and tanned :

And the waste, in hills that swell and fall,  
Goes heaving into yet dreamier haze ;  
And a wonder of silence is over all  
Where the eye feeds long like a lover's gaze :

Then, cleaving the grass, gazelles appear  
(The gentler dolphins of kindlier waves)  
With sensitive heads alert of ear ;  
Frail crowds that a delicate hearing saves,

That rely on the nostrils' keenest power,  
And are governed from trance-like distances  
By hopes and fears, and, hour by hour,  
Sagacious of safety, snuff the breeze.

They keep together, the timid hearts ;  
And each one's fear with a panic thrill  
Is passed to an hundred ; and if one starts  
In three seconds all are over the hill.

A Nimrod might watch, in his hall's wan space,  
After the feast, on the moonlit floor,  
The timorous mice that troop and race,  
As tranced o'er those herds the sun doth pour ;

Like a wearied tyrant sated with food  
Who envies each tiniest thief that steals  
Its hour from his abstracted mood,  
For it living zest and beauty reveals.

He alone, save the quite dispassionate moon,  
Sees them ; she stares at the prowling pard  
Who surprises their sleep and, ah ! how soon  
Is riding the weakest or sleepest hard !

Let an agony's nightmare course begin,  
Four feet with five spurs a piece control,  
Like a horse thief reduced to save his skin  
Or a devil that rides a human soul !

The race is as long as recorded time,  
Yet brief as the flash of assassin's knife ;  
For 'tis crammed as history is with crime  
'Twixt the throbs at taking and losing life ;

Then the warm wet clutch on the nape of the  
neck,  
Through which the keen incisors drive ;  
Then the fleet knees give, down drops the wreck  
Of yesterday's pet that was so alive.

Yet the moon is naught concerned, ah no !  
She shines as on a drifting plank  
Far in some northern sea-stream's flow  
From which two numbed hands loosened and  
sank.

Such thinning their number must suffer ; and  
worse  
When hither at times the Shah's children roam,  
Their infant listlessness to immerse  
In energy's ancient upland home :

For here the shepherd in years of old  
Was taught by the stars, and bred a race  
That welling forth from these highlands rolled  
In tides of conquest o'er earth's face :

On piebald ponies or else milk-white,  
Here, with green bridles in silver bound,  
A crescent moon on the violet night  
Of their saddle cloths, or a sun rayed round,—

With tiny bells on their harness ringing,  
And voices that laugh and are shrill by starts,  
Prancing, curvetting, and with them bringing  
Swift chetahs cooped up in light-wheeled carts,

They come, and their dainty pavilions pitch  
In some valley, beside a sinuous pool,  
Where a grove of cedars towers in which  
Hérons have built, where the shade is cool ;

Where they tether their ponies to low hung  
    boughs,  
Where long through the night their red fires  
    gleam,  
Where the morning's stir doth them arouse  
To their bath in the lake, as from dreams to a  
    dream.

And thence in an hour their hunt rides forth,  
And the chetahs course the shy gazelle  
To the east or west or south or north,  
And every eve in a distant vale

A hetacomb of the slaughtered beasts  
Is piled ; tongues loll from breathless throats ;  
Round large jet eyes the horsefly feasts—  
Jet eyes, which now a blue film coats :

Dead there they bleed, and each prince there  
Is met by his sister, wife, or bride—  
Delicious ladies with long dark hair,  
And soft dark eyes, and brows arched wide,

In quilted jacket, embroidered sash,  
And tent-like skirts of pleated lawn ;  
While their silk-lined jewelled slippers flash  
Round bare feet bedded like pools at dawn :

So choicefully prepared to please,  
Young, female, royal of race and mood,  
In indolent compassion these  
O'er those dead beauteous creatures brood :

They lean some minutes against their friend,  
A lad not slow to praise himself, -  
Who tells how this one met his end  
Out-raced, or trapped by leopard stealth,

And boasts his chetahs fleetest are ;  
Through his advice the chance occurred,

That leeward vale by which the car  
Was well brought round to head the herd.

Seeing him bronzed by sun and wind,  
She feels his power and owns him lord,  
Then, that his courage may please her mind,  
With a soft coy hand half draws his sword,

Just shudders to see the cold steel gleam,  
And drops it back in the long curved sheath ;  
She will make his evening meal a dream  
And surround his sleep like some rich wreath

Of heavy-lidded flowers bewitched  
To speak soft words of ecstasy  
To wizard king old, wise, and enriched  
With all save youth's and love's sweet glee.

But, while they sleep, the orphaned herd  
And wounded stragglers, through the night  
Wander in pain, and wail unheard  
To the moon and the stars so cruelly bright :

Why are they born ? ah ! why beget  
They in the long November gloom  
Heirs of their beauty, their fleetness,—yet  
Heirs of their panics, their pangs, their doom ?

That to princely spouses children are born  
To be daintily bred and taught to please,  
Has a fitness like the return of morn :  
But why perpetuate lives like these ?

Why, with horns that jar and with fiery eyes,  
Should the male stags fight for the shuddering  
    does  
Through the drear dark nights, with frequent  
    cries  
From tyrant lust or outlawed woes ?

Doth the meaningless beauty of their lives  
Rave in the spring, when they course afar  
Like the shadows of birds, and the young fawn  
    strives  
Till its parents no longer the fleetest are ?

Like the shadows of flames which the sun's rays  
    throw  
On a kiln's blank wall, where glaziers dwell,  
Pale shadows as those from glasses they blow,  
Yet that lap at the blank wall and rebel,—

Even so to my curious trance-like thought  
Those herds move over those pallid hills,  
With fever as of a frail life caught  
In circumstance o'er-charged with ills ;

More like the shadow of lives than life,  
Or most like the life that is never born  
From baffled purpose and foredoomed strife,  
That in each man's heart must be hidden from  
S<sup>1</sup> scorn

Yet with something of beauty very rare  
Unseizable, fugitive, half discerned ;  
The trace of intentions that might have been fair  
In action, left on a face that yearned

But long has ceased to yearn, alas !  
So faint a trace do they leave on the slopes  
Of hills as sleek as their coats with grass ;  
So faint may the trace be of noblest hopes.

Yet why are they born to roam and die ?  
Can their beauty answer thy query, O soul ?  
Nay, nor that of hopes which were born to fly,  
But whose pinions the common and coarse day  
stole.

Like that region of grassy hills outspread,  
A realm of our thoughts knows days and nights  
And summers and winters, and has fed  
Ineffectual herds of vanished delights.

**ROBERT NICHOLS**



T O ———

Asleep within the deadest hour of night  
And turning with the earth, I was aware  
How suddenly the eastern curve was bright,  
As when the sun arises from his lair.  
But not the sun arose : it was thy hair  
Shaken up heaven in tossing leagues of light.

Since then I know that neither night nor day  
May I escape thee, O my heavenly hell !  
Awake, in dreams, thou springest to waylay  
And should I dare to die, I know full well  
Whose voice would mock me in the mourning  
    bell,  
Whose face would greet me in hell's fiery way.

## FAREWELL TO PLACE OF COMFORT

For the last time, maybe, upon the knoll  
I stand. The eve is golden, languid, sad . . . . .  
Day like a tragic actor plays his rôle  
To the last whispered word, and falls gold-clad.  
I, too, take leave of all I ever had.

They shall not say I went with heavy heart :  
Heavy I am, but soon I shall be free ;  
I love them all, but O I now depart  
A little sadly, strangely, fearfully,  
As one who goes to try a Mystery.

The bell is sounding down in Dedham Vale :  
Be still, O bell ! too often standing here  
When all the air was tremulous, fine, and pale,  
Thy golden note so calm, so still, so clear,  
Out of my stony heart has struck a tear.

And now tears are not mine. I have release  
From all the former and the later pain ;  
Like the mid-sea I rock in boundless peace,  
Soothed by the charity of the deep sea rain . . . .  
Calm rain ! Calm sea ! Calm found, long sought  
in vain.

O bronzen pines, evening of gold and blue,  
Steep mellow slope, brimmed twilit pools below,  
Hushed trees, still vale dissolving in the dew,  
Farewell! Farewell! There is no more to do.  
We have been happy. Happy now I go.

## THE FULL HEART

Alone on the shore in the pause of the night-time  
I stand and I hear the long wind blow light ;  
I view the constellations quietly, quietly burning ;  
I hear the wave fall in the hush of the night.

Long after I am dead, ended this bitter journey,  
Many another whose heart holds no light  
Shall your solemn sweetness, hush, awe, and  
    comfort,  
O my companions, Wind, Waters, Stars, and  
    Night.

*Near Gold Cap, 1916.*

## THE TOWER

It was deep night, and over Jerusalem's low roofs  
The moon floated, drifting through high vaporous  
woofs.

The moonlight crept and glistened silent, solemn,  
sweet,

Over dome and column, up empty, endless street ;  
In the closed, scented gardens the rose loosed  
from the stem

Her white showery petals ; none regarded them ;  
The starry thicket breathed odours to the sen-  
tinel palm ;

Silence possessed the city like a soul possessed by  
calm.

Not a spark in the warren under the giant night,  
Save where in a turret's lantern beamed a grave,  
still light :

There in the topmost chamber a gold-eyed lamp  
was lit—

Marvellous lamp in darkness, informing, redeem-  
ing it !

For, set in that tiny chamber, Jesus, the blessed  
and doomed,  
Spoke to the lone apostles as light to men en-  
tombéd ;  
And spreading His hands in blessing, as one soon  
to be dead,  
He put soft enchantment into spare wine and  
bread.

The hearts of the disciples were broken and full  
of tears,  
Because their Lord, the spearless, was hedged  
about with spears ;  
And in His face the sickness of departure had  
spread a gloom  
At leaving His young friends friendless.

They could not forget the tomb.  
He smiled subduedly, telling, in tones soft as  
voice of the dove,  
The endlessness of sorrow, the eternal solace of  
love ;  
And lifting the earthly tokens, wine and sorrow-  
ful bread,  
He bade them sup and remember One who lived  
and was dead.

And they could not restrain their weeping.

But one rose up to depart,

Having weakness and hate of weakness raging  
within his heart,  
And bowed to the robed assembly whose eyes  
gleamed wet in the light.  
Judas arose and departed ; night went out to the  
night.

Then Jesus lifted His voice like a fountain in an  
ocean of tears,  
And comforted His disciples and calmed and  
allayed their fears.

But Judas wound down the turret, creeping from  
floor to floor,  
And would fly ; but one leaning, weeping, barred  
him beside the door.

And he knew her by her ruddy garment and two  
yet-watching men :

Mary of Seven Evils, Mary Magdalen.

And he was frightened at her. She sighed : ‘ I  
dreamed Him dead.

We sell the body for silver . . . ’

Then Judas cried out and fled  
Forth into the night ! . . . The moon had begun  
to set ;

A drear, deft wind went sifting, setting the dust  
afret,

Into the heart of the city Judas ran on and  
prayed

To stern Jehovah lest his deed make him afraid.  
But in the tiny lantern, hanging as if on air,  
The disciples sat unspeaking. Amaze and peace  
were there.

For *His* voice, more lovely than song of all  
earthly birds,  
In accents humble and happy spoke slow, con-  
soling words.

Thus Jesus discoursed, and was silent, sitting  
upright, and soon  
Past the casement behind Him slanted the sink-  
ing moon ;  
And, rising for Olivet, all stared, between love  
and dread,  
Seeing the torrid moon a ruddy halo behind His  
head.

## F U L F I L M E N T

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.  
Was there grief once? grief yet is mine.  
Other loves I have, men rough, but men who stir  
More grief, more joy, than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,  
Lined by the wind, burned by the sun;  
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,  
As whose children we are brethren : one.

And any moment may descend hot death  
To shatter limbs ! pulp, tear, blast  
Beloved soldiers who love rough life and breath  
Not less for dying faithful to the last.

O the fading eyes, the grimed face turned bony,  
Oped mouth gushing, fallen head,  
Lessening pressure of a hand shrunk, clammed,  
and stony !  
O sudden spasm, release of the dead !

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.  
Was there grief once? grief yet is mine.  
O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,  
All, all, my joy, my grief, my love, are thine !

## THE SPRIG OF LIME

He lay, and those who watched him were amazed  
To see unheralded beneath the lids  
Twin tears, new gathered at the price of pain,  
Start and at once run crookedly athwart  
Cheeks channelled long by pain, never by tears.  
So desolate too the sigh next uttered  
They had wept also, but his great lips moved,  
And bending down one heard, ' *A sprig of lime ;  
Bring me a sprig of lime.*' Whereat she stole  
With dumb signs forth to pluck the thing he  
craved.

So lay he till a lime-twigg had been snapped  
From some still branch that swept the outer grass  
Far from the silver pillar of the bole  
Which mounting past the house's crusted roof  
Split into massy limbs, crossed boughs, a maze  
Of close-compacted intercontorted staffs  
Bowered in foliage wherethrough the sun  
Shot sudden showers of light or crystal spars  
Or wavered in a green and vitreous flood.

And all the while in faint and fainter tones  
Scarce audible on deepened evening's hush  
He framed his curious and last request,  
For '*lime, a sprig of lime.*' Her trembling hand  
Closed his loose fingers on the awkward stem  
Covered above with gentle heart-shaped leaves  
And under dangling, pale as honey-wax,  
Square clusters of sweet-scented starry flowers.

She laid his bent arm back upon his breast,  
Then watched above white knuckles clenched in  
prayer.

He never moved. Only at last his eyes  
Opened, then brightened in such avid gaze  
She feared the coma mastered him again . . .  
But no ; strange sobs rose chuckling in his throat,  
A stranger ecstasy suffused the flesh  
Of that just mask so sun-dried, gouged and old  
Which few—too few!—had loved, too many  
feared.

' Father,' she cried ; ' Father ! '

He did not hear.

She knelt and kneeling drank the scent of limes,  
Blown round the slow blind by a vesperal gust,  
Till the room swam. So the lime incense blew  
Into her life as once it had in his,

Though how and when and with what ageless  
charge

Of sorrow and deep joy how could she know?

Sweet lime that often at the height of noon  
Diffusing dizzy fragrance from your boughs,  
Tasselled with blossoms more innumerable  
Than the black bees, the uproar of whose toil  
Filled your green vaults, winning such metheglyn  
As clouds their sappy cells, distil, as once  
Ye used, your sunniest emanations  
Toward the window where a woman kneels—  
She who within that room in childish hours  
Lay through the lasting murmur of blanch'd  
noon

Behind the sultry blind, now full now flat,  
Drinking anew of every odorous breath,  
Supremely happy in her ignorance  
Of Time that hastens hourly and of Death  
Who need not haste. Scatter your fumes, O lime,  
Loose from each hispid star of citron bloom,  
Tangled beneath the labyrinthine boughs,  
Cloud on such stinging cloud of exhalations  
As reek of youth, fierce life and summer's prime,  
Though hardly now shall he in that dusk room  
Savour your sweetness, since the very sprig,  
Profuse of blossom and of essences,  
He smells not, who in a paltering hand

Clasps it laid close his peaked and gleaming face  
Propped in the pillow. Breathe silent, lofty lime,  
Your curfew secrets out in fervid scent  
To the attendant shadows ! Tinge the air  
Of the midsummer night that now begins,  
At an owl's oaring flight from dusk to dusk  
And downward caper of the giddy bat  
Hawking against the lustre of bare skies,  
With something of th' unfathomable bliss  
He, who lies dying there, knew once of old  
In the serene trance of a summer night  
When with th' abundance of his young bride's  
hair

Loosed on his breast he lay and dared not sleep,  
Listening for the scarce motion of your boughs,  
Which sighed with bliss as she with blissful sleep,  
And drinking desperately each honied wave  
Of perfume wafted past the ghostly blind  
Knew first th' implacable and bitter sense  
Of Time that hastes and Death who need not  
haste.

Shed your last sweetness, limes !

But now no more.

She, fruit of that night's love, she heeds you not,  
Who bent, compassionate, to the dim floor  
Takes up the sprig of lime and presses it  
In pain against the stumbling of her heart,  
Knowing, untold, he cannot need it now.



**SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN**



## THE TWILIGHT PEOPLE

It is a whisper among the hazel bushes ;  
It is a long low whispering voice that fills  
With a sad music the bending and swaying  
rushes ;  
It is a heart beat deep in the quiet hills.

Twilight people, why will you still be crying,  
Crying and calling to me out of the trees ?  
For under the quiet grass the wise are lying,  
And all the strong ones are gone over the seas.

And I am old, and in my heart at your calling  
Only the old dead dreams a-fluttering go ;  
As the wind, the forest wind, in its falling  
Sets the withered leaves fluttering



WILFRED OWEN

*Born 1893.*

*Killed in Action, 1918.*



## STRANGE MEETING

It seemed that out of the battle I escaped  
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since  
scooped

Through granites which Titanic wars had  
groined.

Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,  
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.  
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and  
stared

With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,  
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.

And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall.

With a thousand fears that vision's face was  
grained;

Yet no blood reached there from the upper  
ground,

And no guns thumped, or down the flues made  
moan.

"Strange, friend," I said, "here is no cause to  
mourn."

"None," said the other, "save the undone  
years

The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,

Was my life also; I went hunting wild

After the wildest beauty in the world,

Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,

But mocks the steady running of the hour,  
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.  
For by my glee might many men have laughed,  
And of my weeping something has been left,  
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,  
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.  
Now men will go content with what we spoiled,  
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.  
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,  
None will break ranks, though nations trek from  
progress.

Courage was mine, and I had mystery,  
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery;  
To miss the march of this retreating world  
Into vain citadels that are not walled.  
Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-  
wheels

I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,  
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.  
I would have poured my spirit without stint  
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.  
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds  
were.

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.  
I knew you in this death: for so you frowned  
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.  
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.  
Let us sleep now . . . . .

**JOSEPH PLUNKETT**

*Born 1887.*

*Executed after the Easter Week Rising, 1916.*



## I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE

I see His blood upon the rose  
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,  
His body gleams amid eternal snows,  
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower ;  
The thunder and the singing of the birds  
Are but His voice—and carven by His power  
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,  
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating  
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,  
His cross is every tree.



**SIEGFRIED SASSOON**



## 'IN THE PINK'

So Davies wrote : ' This leaves me in the pink.  
Then scrawled his name : ' Your loving sweet-  
heart, Willie '

With crosses for a hug. He'd had a drink  
Of rum and tea ; and, though the barn was chilly,  
For once his blood ran warm ; he had pay to  
spend.

Winter was passing ; soon the year would mend.

He couldn't sleep that night. Stiff in the dark  
He groaned and thought of Sundays at the farm,  
When he'd go out as cheerful as a lark  
In his best suit to wander arm-in-arm  
With brown-eyed Gwen, and whisper in her ear  
The simple silly things she liked to hear.

And then he thought : to-morrow night we trudge  
Up to the trenches, and my boots are rotten.  
Five miles of stodgy clay and freezing sludge,  
And everything but wretchedness forgotten.  
To-night he's in the pink ; but soon he'll die.  
And still the war goes on ; *he* don't know why.

## THE DEATH-BED

He drowsed and was aware of silence heaped  
Round him, unshaken as the steadfast walls;  
Aqueous-like floating rays of amber light,  
Soaring and quivering in the wings of sleep,—  
Silence and safety; and his mortal shore  
Lipped by the inward, moonless waves of death.

Some one was holding water to his mouth,  
He swallowed, unresisting; moaned and dropped  
Through crimson gloom to darkness; and forgot  
The opiate throb and ache that was his wound.  
Water—calm, sliding green above the weir;  
Water—a sky-lit alley for his boat,  
Bird-voiced, and bordered with reflected flowers  
And shaken hues of summer : drifting down,  
He dipped contented oars, and sighed, and slept.

Night, with a gust of wind, was in the ward,  
Blowing the curtain to a glimmering curve.  
Night. He was blind; he could not see the stars  
Glinting among the wraiths of wandering cloud;  
Queer blots of colour, purple, scarlet, green,  
Flickered and faded in his drowning eyes.

Rain ; he could hear it rustling through the dark  
Fragrance and passionless music woven as one ;  
Warm rain on drooping roses ; pattering showers  
That soak the woods ; not the harsh rain that  
    sweeps  
Behind the thunder, but a trickling peace  
Gently and slowly washing life away.

. . . . .

He stirred, shifting his body ; then the pain  
Leaped like a prowling beast, and gripped and  
    tore  
His groping dreams with grinding claws and  
    fangs.

But some one was beside him ; soon he lay  
Shuddering because that evil thing had passed.  
And Death, who'd stepped toward him, paused  
    and stared.

Light many lamps and gather round his bed.  
Lend him your eyes, warm blood, and will to live.  
Speak to him ; rouse him ; you may save him yet.  
He's young ; he hated war ; how should he die  
When cruel old campaigners win safe through ?

But Death replied : ' I choose him.' So he went,  
And there was silence in the summer night ;  
Silence and safety ; and the veils of sleep.  
Then, far away, the thudding of the guns.

## C O U N T E R - A T T A C K

We'd gained our first objective hours before  
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,  
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke.  
Things seemed all right at first. We held their  
line,

With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed,  
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow  
trench.

The place was rotten with dead; green  
clumsy legs

High-booted, sprawled and grovelled along  
the saps;

And trunks, face downward, in the sucking  
mud,

Wallowed like trodden sand-bags loosely  
filled;

And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair,  
Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering  
slime.

And then the rain began,—the jolly old  
rain !  
A yawning soldier knelt against the bank,  
Staring across the morning blear with fog ;  
He wondered when the Allemands would get  
busy ;  
And then, of course, they started with five-nines  
Traversing, sure as fate, and never a dud.  
Mute in the clamour of shells he watched them  
burst,  
Spouting dark earth and wire with gusts from  
hell,  
While posturing giants dissolved in drifts of  
smoke.  
He crouched and flinched, dizzy with galloping  
fear,  
Sick for escape,—loathing the strangled horror  
And butchered, frantic gestures of the dead.

An officer came blundering down the trench :  
“ Stand-to and man the fire-step ! ” On he  
went . . .  
Gasping and bawling, “ Fire-step . . . Counter-  
attack ! ”

Then the haze lifted. Bombing on the right  
Down the old sap : machine-guns on the  
left ;  
And stumbling figures looming out in front.

“ O Christ, they’re coming at us ! ” Bullets  
    spat,  
And he remembered his rifle . . . rapid fire . . .  
And started blazing wildly . . . Then a bang  
Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked him  
    out  
To grunt and wriggle : none heeded him ; he  
    choked  
And fought the flapping veils of smothering  
    gloom,  
Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and  
    groans . . .  
Down, and down, and down, he sank and  
    drowned,  
Bleeding to death. The counter-attack had failed.

## D R E A M E R S

Soldiers are citizens of death's grey land,  
Drawing no dividend from time's to-morrows.  
In the great hour of destiny they stand,  
Each with his feuds, and jealousies, and  
sorrows.

Soldiers are sworn to action ; they must win  
Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.  
Soldiers are dreamers ; when the guns begin  
They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and  
wives.

I see them in foul dug-outs, gnawed by rats,  
And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,  
Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,  
And mocked by hopeless longing to regain  
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,  
And going to the office in the train.

## EVERYONE SANG

Everyone suddenly burst out singing ;  
And I was filled with such delight  
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,  
Winging wildly across the white  
Orchards and dark-green fields ; on—on—and out  
of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted ;  
And beauty came like the setting sun :  
My heart was shaken with tears ; and horror  
Drifted away . . . O, but Everyone  
Was a bird ; and the song was wordless ; the sing-  
ing will never be done.

**EDWARD SHANKS**



## A N I G H T - P I E C E

Come out and walk. The last few drops of light  
Drain silently out of the cloudy blue;  
The trees are full of the dark-stooping night,  
The fields are wet with dew.

All's quiet in the wood but, far away,  
Down the hillside and out across the plain,  
Moves, with long trail of white that marks its  
way,  
The softly panting train.

Come through the clearing. Hardly now we see  
The flowers, save dark or light against the grass,  
Or glimmering silver on a scented tree  
That trembles as we pass.

Hark now! So far, so far...that distant  
song...  
Move not the rustling grasses with your feet.  
The dusk is full of sounds, that all along  
The muttering boughs repeat.

So far, so faint, we lift our heads in doubt.  
Wind, or the blood that beats within our ears,  
Has feigned a dubious and delusive note,  
Such as a dreamer hears.

Again . . . again ! The faint sounds rise and fail.  
So far the enchanted tree, the song so low . . .  
A drowsy thrush ? A waking nightingale ?  
Silence. We do not know.

## THE GLOW-WORM

The pale road winds faintly upward into the  
dark skies,  
And beside it on the rough grass that the wind  
invisibly stirs,  
Sheltered by sharp-speared gorse and the berried  
junipers,  
Shining steadily with a green light, the glow-  
worm lies.

We regard it; and this hill and all the other hills  
That fall in folds to the river, very smooth and  
steep,  
And the hangers and brakes that the darkness  
thickly fills  
Fade like phantoms round the light and night is  
deep, so deep,—

That all the world is emptiness about the still  
flame

And we are small shadows standing lost in the  
huge night.

We gather up the glow-worm, stooping with  
dazzled sight,

And carry it to the little enclosed garden whence  
we came,

And place it on the short grass. Then the  
shadowy flowers fade,

The walls waver and melt and the houses dis-  
appear

And the solid town trembles into insubstantial  
shade

Round the light of the burning glow-worm,  
steady and clear.

## THE HALT

*“ Mark time in front! Rear fours cover!  
Company—halt!  
Order arms! Stand at—ease! Stand easy.”*

A sudden hush :

And then the talk began with a mighty rush—  
“ You weren’t ever in step—The sergeant.—It  
wasn’t my fault—

Well, the Lord be praised at least for a ten  
minutes’ halt.”

We sat on a gate and watched them easing and  
shifting ;

Out of the distance a faint, keen breath came  
drifting,  
From the sea behind the hills, and the hedges  
were salt.

Where do you halt now ? Under what hedge do  
you lie ?

Where the tall poplars are fringing the white  
French roads ?  
And smoke I have not seen discolours the foreign  
sky ?

Is the company resting there as we rested  
together

Stamping its feet and readjusting its loads  
And looking with wary eyes at the drooping  
weather ?

## A H O L L O W E L M

What hast thou not withstood ;  
    Tempest-despising tree,  
Whose bleak and riven wood  
    Gapes now so hollowly,  
What rains have beaten thee through many  
    years,  
What snows from off thy branches dripped like  
    tears ?

Calmly thou standest now  
    Upon thy sunny mound ;  
The first spring breezes flow  
    Past with sweet dizzy sound ;  
Yet on thy pollard top the branches few  
Stand stiffly out, disdain to murmur too.

The children at thy foot  
    Open new-lighted eyes,  
Where, on gnarled bark and root,  
    The soft, warm sunshine lies—

Dost thou, upon thine ancient sides, resent  
The touch of youth, quick and impermanent ?

These, at the beck of spring,  
    Live in the moment still ;  
Thy boughs unquivering,  
    Remembering winter's chill,  
And many other winters past and gone,  
Are mocked, not cheated, by the transient sun.

Hast thou so much withstood,  
    Tempest-despising tree,  
That now thy hollow wood  
    Stiffens disdainfully  
Against the soft spring airs and soft spring rain,  
Knowing too well that winter comes again ?

## THE RETURN

### I

Now into hearts long empty of the sun  
The morning comes again with golden light  
And all the shades of the half-dusk are done  
And all the crevices are suddenly bright.  
So gradually had love lain down to sleep,  
We knew it not; but when we saw his head  
Pillowed and sunken in a trance so deep  
We whispered shuddering that he was dead.  
Then you like Psyche took the light and leant  
Over the monster lying in his place,  
Daring, despairing, trembling as you bent . . .  
But love raised up his new-awakening face  
And into our hearts long empty of the sun  
We felt the sky-distilled bright liquor run.

### II

When love comes back that went in mist and  
cloud  
He comes triumphant in his pomp and power;  
Voices that muttered long are glad and loud  
To mark the sweetness of the sudden hour.

How could we live so long in that half-light?  
That opiate shadow, where the deadened nerves  
So soon forget how hills and winds are bright,  
That drugged and sleepy dusk, that only serves  
With false shades to conceal the emptiness  
Of hearts whence love has stolen unawares,  
Where creeping doubts and dumb, dull sorrows  
press

And weariness with blind eyes gapes and stares.  
This was our state, but now a happy song  
Rings through our inner sunlight all day long.

### III

When that I lay in a mute agony,  
I nothing saw nor heard nor felt nor thought,  
The inner self, the quintessential me,  
In that blind hour beyond all sense was brought  
Hard against pain. I had no body, no mind,  
Nought but the point that suffers joy or loss,  
No eyes in sudden blackness to be blind,  
No brain for swift regrets to run across.  
But when you touched me, when your hot tears  
fell,

The point that had been nothing else but pain  
Changed into rapture by a miracle,  
In which all raptures known before were vain.  
Thus loss which bared the utmost shivering nerve  
For joy's precursor in the heart did serve.

## CLOUDS

Over this hill the high clouds float all day  
And trail their long, soft shadows on the grass,  
And now above the meadows make delay  
And now with regular, swift motion pass.  
Now comes a threatening drift from the south-  
west,

In smoky colours drest,  
That spills far out upon the chequered plain  
Its burden of dark rain ;  
Then hard behind a stately galleon  
Sails onward with its piled and carven towers  
Stiff sculptured like a heap of marble flowers,  
Rigid, unaltering, a miracle  
Of moulded surfaces, whereon the light  
Shines steadily, intolerably bright ;  
Now on a livelier wind a wandering bell  
Of delicate vapour comes, invisibly hung,  
Like feathers from the seeding thistle flung,  
And saunters wantonly far out of sight.  
O God, who fill'st with shifting imagery  
The blue page of the sky,  
Thus writ'st thou also, with as vague a pen,  
In the immenser hearts of dreaming men.

## THE ROCK POOL

This is the Sea. In these uneven walls  
    A wave lies prisoned. Far and far away,  
Outward to ocean, as the slow tide falls,  
    Her sisters, through the capes that hold  
        the bay,  
Dancing in lovely liberty recede.  
    But lovely in captivity she lies,  
Filled with soft colours, where the waving weed  
    Moves gently, and discloses to our eyes  
Blurred shining veins of rock and lucent shells  
    Under the light-shot water, and here repose  
Small quiet fish, and dimly-glowing bells  
    Of sleeping sea-anemones that close  
Their tender fronds and will not now awake  
Till on these rocks the waves returning break.

## THE SWIMMERS

The cove's a shining plate of blue and green,  
With darker belts between  
The trough and crest of the slow-rising swell,  
And the great rocks throw purple shadows down,  
Where transient sun-sparks wink and burst and  
drown

And glimmering pebbles lie too deep to tell,  
Hidden or shining as the shadow wavers.  
And everywhere the restless sun-steeped air  
Trembles and quavers,  
As though it were  
More saturate with light than it could bear.

Now come the swimmers from slow-dripping  
caves,  
Where the shy fern creeps under the veined roof,  
And wading out meet with glad breast the waves.  
One holds aloof,  
Climbing alone the reef with shrinking feet,  
That scarce endure the jagged stones' dull beat

Till on the edge he poises  
And flies to cleave the water, vanishing  
In wreaths of white, with echoing liquid noises,  
And swims beneath, a vague, distorted thing.  
Now all the other swimmers leave behind  
The crystal shallow and the foam-wet shore  
And sliding into deeper water find  
A living coolness in the lifting flood,  
And through their bodies leaps the sparkling  
blood,  
So that they feel the faint earth's drought no  
more.  
There now they float, heads raised above the  
green,  
White bodies cloudily seen,  
Farther and farther from the brazen rock,  
On which the hot air shakes, on which the tide  
Fruitlessly throws with gentle, soundless shock  
The cool and lagging wave. Out, out they go,  
And now upon a mirrored cloud they ride  
Or turning over, with soft strokes and slow,  
Slide on like shadows in a tranquil sky  
Behind them, on the tall, parched cliff, the dry  
And dusty grasses grow  
In shallow ledges of the arid stone,  
Starving for coolness and the touch of rain.  
But, though to earth they must return again,  
Here come the soft sea-air to meet them, blown

Over the surface of the outer deep,  
Scarce moving, staying, falling, straying, gone,  
Light and delightful as the touch of sleep . . .  
One wakes and splashes round,  
And, as by magic, all the others wake  
From that sea-dream, and now with rippling  
    sound  
Their rapid arms the enchanted silence break.  
And now again the crystal shallows take  
The gleaming bodies whose cool hour is done ;  
They pause upon the beach, they pause and sigh  
Then vanish in the caverns one by one.

Soon the wet foot-marks on the stones are dry :  
The cove sleeps on beneath the unwavering sun.

## THE STORM

We wake to hear the storm come down,  
Sudden on roof and pane ;  
The thunder's loud and the hasty wind  
Hurries the beating rain.

The rain slackens, the wind blows gently,  
The gust grows gentle and stills,  
And the thunder, like a breaking stick,  
Stumbles about the hills.

The drops still hang on leaf and thorn,  
The downs stand up more green ;  
The sun comes out again in power  
And the sky is washed and clean.



**C. H. SORLEY**

*Born 1895.*

*Killed in Action 1915.*



## GERMAN RAIN

The heat came down and sapped away my  
powers.

The laden heat came down and drowned my  
brain,  
Till through the weight of overcoming hours  
I felt the rain.

Then suddenly I saw what more to see  
I never thought : old things renewed, retrieved,  
The rain that fell in England fell on me,  
And I believed.

## ALL THE HILLS AND VALES

All the hills and vales along  
Earth is bursting into song,  
And the singers are the chaps  
Who are going to die perhaps.  
    O sing, marching men,  
    Till the valleys ring again.  
    Give your gladness to earth's keeping,  
    So be glad, when you are sleeping.

Cast away regret and rue,  
Think what you are marching to.  
Little live, great pass.  
Jesus Christ and Barabbas  
Were found the same day.  
This died, that went his way.  
    So sing with joyful breath.  
    For why, you are going to death.  
    Teeming earth will surely store  
    All the gladness that you pour.

Earth that never doubts nor fears,  
Earth that knows of death, not tears,  
Earth that bore with joyful ease  
Hemlock for Socrates,  
Earth that blossomed and was glad  
'Neath the cross that Christ had,  
Shall rejoice and blossom too  
When the bullet reaches you.

Wherefore, men marching  
On the road to death, sing !  
Pour your gladness on earth's head,  
So be merry, so be dead.

From the hills and valleys earth  
Shouts back the sound of mirth,  
Tramp of feet and lilt of song  
Ringing all the road along.  
All the music of their going,  
Ringing swinging glad song-throwing,  
Earth will echo still, when foot  
Lies numb and voice mute.

On, marching men, on  
To the gates of death with song.  
Sow your gladness for earth's reaping,  
So you may be glad, though sleeping.  
Strew your gladness on earth's bed,  
So be merry, so be dead.



**JAMES STEPHENS**



## DEIRDRE

Do not let any woman read this verse ;  
It is for men, and after them their sons  
And their sons' sons.

The time comes when our hearts sink utterly ;  
When we remember Deirdre and her tale,  
And that her lips are dust.

Once she did tread the earth : men took her  
    hand ;  
They looked into her eyes and said their say,  
And she replied to them.

More than a thousand years it is since she  
Was beautiful : she trod the waving grass ;  
She saw the clouds.

A thousand years ! The grass is still the same,  
The clouds as lovely as they were that time  
When Deirdre was alive.

But there has never been a woman born  
Who was so beautiful, not one so beautiful  
Of all the women born.

Let all men go apart and mourn together;  
No man can ever love her; not a man  
Can ever be her lover.

No man can bend before her : no man say—  
What could one say to her? There are no words  
That one could say to her !

Now she is but a story that is told  
Beside the fire ! No man can ever be  
The friend of that poor queen.

## THE GOAT PATHS

The crooked paths go every way  
    Upon the hill—they wind about  
    Through the heather in and out  
Of the quiet sunniness.  
And there the goats, day after day,  
    Stray in sunny quietness,  
Cropping here and cropping there,  
    As they pause and turn and pass,  
Now a bit of heather spray  
    Now a mouthful of the grass.

In the deeper sunniness,  
    In the place where nothing stirs,  
Quietly in quietness,  
    In the quiet of the furze,  
For a time they come and lie  
Staring on the roving sky.

If you approach they run away,  
    They leap and stare, away they bound,  
    With a sudden angry sound,  
To the sunny quietude ;

Crouching down where nothing stirs  
In the silence of the furze,  
Crouching down again to brood  
In the sunny solitude.

If I were as wise as they  
I would stray apart and brood,  
I would beat a hidden way  
Through the quiet heather spray  
To a sunny solitude ;  
And should you come I'd run away,  
I would make an angry sound,  
I would stare and turn and bound  
To the deeper quietude,  
To the place where nothing stirs  
In the silence of the furze.

In that airy quietness  
I would think as long as they ;  
Through the quiet sunniness  
I would stray away to brood  
By a hidden beaten way  
In a sunny solitude.

I would think until I found  
Something I can never find,  
Something lying on the ground,  
In the bottom of my mind.

## THE FIFTEEN ACRES

I cling and swing  
On a branch, or sing  
Through the cool, clear hush of  
    Morning, O :  
Or fling my wing  
On the air, and bring  
To sleepier birds a warning, O :  
    That the night's in flight,  
    And the sun's in sight,  
And the dew is the grass adorning, O :  
    And the green leaves swing  
As I sing, sing, sing,  
    Up by the river,  
    Down the dell,  
    To the little wee nest,  
    Where the big tree fell,  
    So early in the morning, O.

I flit and twit  
In the sun for a bit  
When his light so bright is shining, O :  
    Or sit and fit  
    My plumes, or knit  
Straw plaits for the nest's nice lining, O :

And she with glee  
Shows unto me  
Underneath her wings reclining, O :  
And I sing that Peg  
Has an egg, egg, egg,  
Up by the oat-field,  
Round the mill  
Past the meadow  
Down the hill,  
So early in the morning, O.

I stoop and swoop  
On the air, or loop  
Through the trees, and then go soaring, O :  
To group with a troop  
On the gusty poop  
While the wind behind is roaring, O :  
I skim and swim  
By a cloud's red rim  
And up to the azure flooring, O :  
And my wide wings drip  
As I slip, slip, slip  
Down through the rain-drops,  
Back where Peg  
Broods in the nest  
On the little white egg  
So early in the morning, O.

**EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT**

*Born 1895.*

*Killed in Action 1916.*



## HOME THOUGHTS IN LAVENTIE

Green gardens in Laventie !  
Soldiers only know the street  
Where the mud is churned and splashed about  
By battle-wending feet ;  
And yet beside one stricken house there is a  
glimpse of grass,  
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the Church whose pitted spire  
Seems balanced on a strand  
Of swaying stone and tottering brick  
Two roofless ruins stand,  
And here behind the wreckage where the back  
wall should have been  
We found a garden green.        .

The grass was never trodden on,  
The little path of gravel  
Was overgrown with celandine,  
No other folk did travel

Along its weedy surface, but the nimble-footed  
mouse

Running from house to house.

So all among the vivid blades  
Of soft and tender grass  
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels  
That pass and ever pass,  
In noisy continuity until their stony rattle  
Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from this ease  
Of tranquil happy mind,  
And searched the garden's little length  
A fresh pleasaunce to find ;  
And there, some yellow daffodils and jasmine  
hanging high  
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant  
Of the many sweets we found,  
Was a little bush of Daphne flower  
Upon a grassy mound,  
And so thick were the blossoms set and so divine  
the scent  
That we were well content.

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,  
The perfume fanned my face,

And all my soul was dancing,  
In that lovely little place,  
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked and  
shattered towns  
Away . . . . . upon the Downs.

I saw green banks of daffodil,  
Slim poplars in the breeze,  
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March  
A-couching on the leas;  
And meadows with their glittering streams, and  
silver scurrying dace,  
Home—what a perfect place.

*Belgium, March, 1916.*



**EDWARD THOMAS**

*Born 1877.*

*Killed in Action 1917.*



## ASPENS

All day and night, save winter, every weather,  
Above the inn, the smithy, and the shop,  
The aspens at the cross-roads talk together  
Of rain, until their last leaves fall from the top.

Out of the blacksmith's cavern comes the ringing  
Of hammer, shoe, and anvil; out of the inn  
The clink, the hum, the roar, the random singing—  
The sounds that for these fifty years have been.

The whisper of the aspens is not drowned,  
And over lightless pane and footless road,  
Empty as sky, with every other sound  
Not ceasing, calls their ghosts from their abode.

A silent smithy, a silent inn, not fails  
In the bare moonlight or the thick-furred gloom,  
In tempest or the night of nightingales,  
To turn the cross-roads to a ghostly room.

And it would be the same were no house near,  
Over all sorts of weather, men, and times,

Aspens must shake their leaves and men may hear  
But need not listen, more than to my rhymes.

Whatever wind blows, while they and I have  
leaves

We cannot other than an aspen be  
That ceaselessly, unreasonably grieves,  
Or so men think who like a different tree.

## THE BROOK

Seated once by a brook, watching a child  
Chiefly that paddled, I was thus beguiled.  
Mellow the blackbird sang and sharp the thrush  
Not far off in the oak and hazel brush,  
Unseen. There was a scent like honeycomb  
From mugwort dull. And down upon the dome  
Of the stone the cart-horse kicks against so oft  
A butterfly alighted. From aloft  
He took the heat of the sun, and from below,  
On the hot stone he perched contented so,  
As if never a cart would pass again  
That way; as if I were the last of men  
And he the first of insects to have earth  
And sun together and to know their worth.  
I was divided between him and the gleam,  
The motion, and the voices, of the stream,  
The waters running frizzled over gravel,  
That never vanish and for ever travel.  
A grey flycatcher silent on a fence  
And I sat as if we had been there since

The horseman and the horse lying beneath  
The fir-tree-covered barrow on the heath,  
The horseman and the horse with silver shoes,  
Galoped the downs last. All that I could lose  
I lost. And then the child's voice raised the dead.  
"No one's been here before" was what she said  
And what I felt, yet never should have found  
A word for, while I gathered sight and sound.

## THE BRIDGE

I have come a long way to-day :  
On a strange bridge alone,  
Remembering friends, old friends,  
I rest, without smile or moan,  
As they remember me without smile or moan.

All are behind, the kind  
And the unkind too, no more  
To-night than a dream. The stream  
Runs softly yet drowns the Past,  
The dark-lit stream has drowned the Future and  
the Past.

No traveller has rest more blest  
Than this moment brief between  
Two lives, when the Night's first lights  
And shades hide what has never been,  
Things goodlier, lovelier, dearer, than will be or  
have been.

## LIGHTS OUT

I have come to the borders of sleep,  
The unfathomable deep  
Forest where all must lose  
Their way, however straight,  
Or winding, soon or late ;  
They cannot choose.

Many a road and track  
That, since the dawn's first crack,  
Up to the forest brink,  
Deceived the travellers  
Suddenly now blurs,  
And in they sink.

Here love ends,  
Despair, ambition ends,  
All pleasure and all trouble,  
Although most sweet or bitter,  
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter  
Than tasks most noble.

There is not any book  
Or face of dearest look  
That I would not turn from now  
To go into the unknown  
I must enter and leave alone  
I know not how.

The tall forest towers ;  
Its cloudy foliage lowers  
Ahead, shelf above shelf ;  
Its silence I hear and obey  
That I may lose my way  
And myself.

## WORDS

Out of us all  
That make rhymes,  
Will you choose  
Sometimes—  
As the winds use  
A crack in the wall  
Or a drain,  
Their joy or their pain  
To whistle through—  
Choose me,  
You English words ?

I know you :  
You are light as dreams,  
Tough as oak,  
Precious as gold,  
As poppies and corn,  
Or an old cloak :  
Sweet as our birds  
To the ear,

As the linnet note  
In the heat  
Of Midsummer :  
Strange as the races  
Of dead and unborn :  
Strange and sweet  
Equally.  
And familiar,  
To the eye,  
As the dearest faces  
That a man knows,  
And as lost homes are :  
But though older far  
Than oldest yew,—  
As our hills are, old,—  
Worn new  
Again and again :  
Young as our streams  
After rain :  
And as dear  
As the earth which you prove  
That we love.

Make me content  
With some sweetness  
From Wales  
Whose nightingales  
Have no wings,—

From Wiltshire and Kent  
And Herefordshire,  
And the villages there,—  
From the names, and the things,  
No less.  
Let me sometimes dance  
With you,  
Or climb  
Or stand perchance  
In ecstasy,  
Fixed and free  
In a rhyme,  
As poets do.

## TALL NETTLES

Tall nettles cover up, as they have done  
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plough  
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone :  
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.

This corner of the farmyard I like most :  
As well as any bloom upon a flower  
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost  
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.

## THE PATH

Running along a bank, a parapet  
That saves from the precipitous wood below  
The level road, there is a path. It serves  
Children for looking down the long smooth steep,  
Between the legs of beech and yew, to where  
A fallen tree checks the sight: while men and  
women

Content themselves with the road, and what they  
see

Over the bank, and what the children tell.  
The path, winding like silver, trickles on,  
Bordered and ever invaded by thinnest moss  
That tries to cover roots and crumbling chalk  
With gold, olive, and emerald, but in vain.  
The children wear it. They have flattened the  
bank

On top, and silvered it between the moss  
With the current of their feet, year after year.  
But the road is houseless, and leads not to school.  
To see a child is rare there, and the eye  
Has but the road, the wood that overhangs  
And underyawns it, and the path that looks  
As if it led on to some legendary  
Or fancied place where men have wished to go  
And stay; till, sudden, it ends where the wood  
ends.

## S W E D E S

They háve taken the gable from the roof of clay  
On the long swede pile. They have let in the sun  
To the white and gold and purple of curled  
fronds

Unsunned. It is a sight more tender-gorgeous  
At the wood-corner where Winter moans and  
drips

Than when, in the Valley of the Tombs of Kings,  
A boy crawls down into a Pharaoh's tomb  
And, first of Christian men, beholds the mummy,  
God and monkey, chariot and throne and vase,  
Blue pottery, alabaster, and gold.

But dreamless long-dead Amen-hotep lies.  
This is a dream of Winter, sweet as Spring.



**W. J. TURNER**



## R O M A N C E

When I was but thirteen or so  
I went into a golden land,  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,  
They passed like fleeting dreams.  
I stood where Popocatapetl  
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the Master's voice  
And boys far-off at play,  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dre  
To and fro from school--  
Shining Popocatapetl  
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy  
And never a word I'd say,  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
Had taken my speech away :

I gazed entranced upon his face  
Fairer than any flower—  
O shining Popocatapetl  
It was thy magic hour :

The houses, people, traffic seemed  
Thin fading dreams by day,  
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi  
They had stolen my soul away !

## THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

He carved the red deer and the bull  
Upon the smooth cave rock,  
Returned from war with belly full,  
And scarred with many a knock,  
He carved the red deer and the bull  
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,  
The clouds wild trumpets blew,  
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,  
Flowers with dream faces grew  
Up to the sky, and softly hung  
Golden and white and blue.

The woman ground her heap of corn,  
Her heart a guarded fire ;  
The wind played in his trembling soul  
Like a hand upon a lyre,  
The wind drew faintly on the stone  
Symbols of his desire :

The red deer of the forest dark,  
Whose antlers cut the sky,  
That vanishes into the mirk  
And like a dream flits by,  
And by an arrow slain at last  
Is but the wind's dark body.

The bull that stands in marshy lakes  
As motionless and still  
As a dark rock jutting from a plain  
Without a tree or hill;  
The bull that is the sign of life,  
Its sombre, phallic will.

And from the dead, white eyes of them  
The wind springs up anew,  
It blows upon the trembling heart,  
And bull and deer renew  
Their flitting life in the dim past  
When that dead Hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,  
And, fingering his red stone,  
I chase through endless forests dark  
Seeking that thing unknown,  
That which is not red deer or bull,  
But which by them was shown :

By those stiff shapes in which he drew  
His soul's exalted cry,  
When flying down the forest dark  
He slew and knew not why,  
When he was filled with song, and strength  
Flowed to him from the sky.

The wind blows from red deer and bull,  
The clouds wild trumpets blare.  
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,  
Flowers with dream faces stare,  
*O Hunter, your own shadow stands  
Within your forest lair!*

## ECSTASY

I saw a frieze on whitest marble drawn  
Of boys who sought for shells along the shore,  
Their white feet shedding pallor in the sea,  
The shallow sea, the spring-time sea of green  
That faintly creamed against the cold, smooth  
pebbles.

The air was thin, their limbs were delicate,  
The wind had graven their small eager hands  
To feel the forests and the dark nights of Asia  
Behind the purple bloom of the horizon,  
Where sails would float and slowly melt away.

Their naked, pure, and grave, unbroken silence  
Filled the soft air as gleaming, limpid water  
Fills a spring sky those days when rain is lying  
In shattered bright pools on the wind-dried roads,  
And their sweet bodies were wind-purified.

One held a shell unto his shell-like ear  
And there was music carven in his face,



## KENT IN WAR

The pebbly brook is cold to-night,  
Its water soft as air,  
A clear, cold, crystal-bodied wind  
Shadowless and bare,  
Leaping and running in this world  
Where dark-horned cattle stare :

Where dark-horned cattle stare, hoof-firm  
On the dark pavements of the sky,  
And trees are mummies swathed in sleep,  
And small dark hills crowd wearily :  
Soft multitudes of snow-grey clouds  
Without a sound march by.

Down at the bottom of the road  
I smell the woody damp  
Of that cold spirit in the grass,  
And leave my hill-top camp—  
Its long gun pointing in the sky—  
And take the Moon for lamp.

I stop beside the bright cold glint  
Of that thin spirit of the grass,  
So gay it is, so innocent!  
I watch its sparkling footsteps pass  
Lightly from smooth round stone to stone,  
Hid in the dew-hung grass.

My lamp shines in the globes of dew,  
And leaps into that crystal wind  
Running along the shaken grass  
To each dark hole that it can find—  
The crystal wind, the Moon my lamp,  
Have vanished in a wood that's blind.

High lies my small, my shadowy camp,  
Crowded about by small dark hills;  
With sudden small white flowers the sky  
Above the woods' dark greenness fills;  
And hosts of dark-browed, muttering trees  
In trance the white Moon stills.

I move among their tall grey forms,  
A thin moon-glimmering, wandering Ghost,  
Who takes his lantern through the world  
In search of life that he has lost,  
While watching by that long lean gun  
Upon his small hill post.

## D E A T H

When I am dead a few poor souls shall grieve  
As I grieved for my brother long ago.  
Scarce did my eyes grow dim,  
I had forgotten him ;  
I was far-off hearing the spring winds blow,  
And many summers burned  
When, though still reeling with my eyes aflame,  
I heard that faded name  
Whispered one Spring amid the hurrying world  
From which, years gone, he turned.

I looked up at my windows and I saw  
The trees, thin spectres sucked forth by the  
moon.  
The air was very still  
Above a distant hill ;  
It was the hour of night's full silver moon.  
“ O art thou there my brother ? ” my soul  
cried ;

And all the pale stars down bright rivers wept,  
As my heart sadly crept  
About the empty hills, bathed in that light  
That lapped him when he died.

Ah! it was cold, so cold; do I not know  
How dead my heart on that remembered day!  
Clear in a far-away place  
I see his delicate face  
Just as he called me from my solitary play,  
Giving into my hands a tiny tree.  
We planted it in the dark, blossomless ground  
Gravely, without a sound;  
Then back I went and left him standing by  
His birthday gift to me.

In that far land perchance it quietly grows  
Drinking the rain, making a pleasant shade;  
Birds in its branches fly  
Out of the fathomless sky  
Where worlds of circling light arise and fade,  
Blindly it quivers in the bright flood of day,  
Or drowned in multitudinous shouts of rain  
Glooms o'er the dark-veiled plain—  
Buried below, the ghost that's in his bones  
Dreams in the sodden clay.

And, while he faded, drunk with beauty's eyes  
I kissed bright girls and laughed deep in dumb  
trees,

That stared fixt in the air  
Like madmen in despair  
Gaped up from earth with the escaping breeze.  
I saw earth's exaltation slowly creep  
Out of their myriad sky-embracing veins.  
I laughed along the lanes,  
Meeting Death riding in from the hollow seas  
Through black-wreathed woods asleep.

I laughed, I swaggered on the cold, hard ground  
Through the grey air trembled a falling wave—  
“Thou'rt pale, O Death!” I cried,  
Mocking him in my pride;  
And passing I dreamed not of that lonely grave,  
But of leaf-maidens whose pale, moon-like  
hands  
Above the tree-foam waved in the icy air,  
Sweeping with shining hair  
Through the green-tinted sky, one moment fled  
Out of immortal lands.

One windless Autumn night the Moon came out  
In a white sea of cloud, a field of snow;  
In darkness shaped of trees,  
I sank upon my knees  
And watched her shining, from the small wood  
below—  
Faintly Death flickered in an owl's far cry—

We floated soundless in the great gulf of space,  
Her light upon my face—  
Immortal, shining in that dark wood I knelt  
And knew I could not die.

And knew I could not die—O Death did'st thou  
Heed my vain glory, standing pale by thy dead?  
There is a spirit who grieves  
Amid earth's dying leaves;  
Was't thou that wept beside my brother's bed?  
For I did never mourn nor heed at all  
Him passing on his temporal elm-wood bier;  
I never shed a tear.  
The drooping sky spread grey-winged through  
my soul,  
While stones and earth did fall.

That sound rings down the years—I hear it yet—  
All earthly life's a winding funeral—  
And though I never wept,  
But into the dark coach stept,  
Dreaming by night to answer the blood's sweet  
call,  
She who stood there, high breasted, with small  
wise lips,  
And gave me wine to drink and bread to eat,  
Has not more steadfast feet,

But fades from my arms as fade from mariners'  
    eyes  
The sea's most beauteous ships.

The trees and hills of earth were once as close  
As my own brother, they are becoming dreams  
• And shadows in my eyes ;  
    More dimly lies  
Guaya deep in my soul, the coastline gleams  
    Faintly along the darkening crystalline seas.  
Glimmering and lovely still, 'twill one day go ;  
    The surging dark will flow  
Over my hopes and joys, and blot out all  
    Earth's hills and skies and trees.

I shall look up one night and see the Moon  
For the last time shining above the hills,  
    And thou, silent, wilt ride  
    Over the dark hillside.  
'Twill be, perchance, the time of daffodils—  
    “ *How come those bright immortals in the  
        woods?*  
*Their joy being young, did'st thou not drag them*  
    *all*  
    *Into dark graves ere Fall? ”*  
Shall life thus haunt me, wondering, as I go  
    To thy deep solitudes ?

There is a figure with a down-turned torch  
Carved on a pillar in an olden time,  
    A calm and lovely boy  
    Who comes not to destroy  
But to lead age back to its golden prime.  
    Thus did an antique sculptor draw thee,  
    Death,  
With smooth and beauteous brow and faint sweet  
    smile,  
    Nor haggard, gaunt and vile,  
And thou perhaps art Him to whom men may  
    Unvexed, give up their breath.

But in my soul thou sittest like a dream  
Among earth's mountains, by her dim-coloured  
    seas ;  
    A wild unearthly Shape  
    In thy dark-glimmering cape,  
Piping a tune of wavering melodies,  
    Thou sittest, ay, thou sittest at the feast  
Of my brief life among earth's bright-wreathed  
    flowers,  
    Stemming the dancing hours  
With sombre gleams until abrupt, thou risest  
    And all, at once, is ceased.

## SOLDIERS IN A SMALL CAMP

There is a camp upon a rounded hill  
Where men do sleep more closely to the stars,  
And tree-like shapes stand at its entrances,  
Beside the small, dark, shadow-soldiery.

Deep in the gloom of days of isolation,  
Withdrawn, high up from the low, murmuring  
town,  
Those shadows sit, drooping around their fires,  
Or move as winds dark-waving in a wood.

Staring at cattle on a neighbouring hill  
They are oblivious as is stone or grass—  
The clouds passed voiceless over, and the sun  
Rose, and lit trees, and vanished utterly.

Then in the awful beauty of the world,  
When stars are singing in dark ecstasy,  
Those ox-like soldiers sit collected round  
A thin, metallic echo of human song :

And click their feet and clap their hands in time,  
And wag their heads, and make the white ghost  
owl

• Flit from its branch—but still those tree-like  
shapes

Stand like archangels dark-winged in the sky.

And presently the soldiers cease to stir;  
The thin voice sinks and all at once is dead;  
They lie down on their planks and hear the wind,  
And feel the darkness fumbling at their souls.

They lie in rows as stiff as tombs or trees,  
Their eyeballs imageless, like marble still;  
And secretly they feel that roof and walls  
Are gone and that they stare into the sky.

It is so black, so black, so black, so black,  
Those black-winged shapes have stretched across  
the world,  
Have swallowed up the stars, and if the sun  
Rises again, it will be black, black, black.

## A RITUAL DANCE

### I—THE DANCE

IN the black glitter of night the grey vapour  
forest  
Lies a dark Ghost in the water, motionless, dark,  
Like a corpse by the bank fallen, and hopelessly  
rotting  
Where the thin silver soul of the stars silently  
dances.

The flowers are closed, the birds are carved on  
the trees,  
When out of the forest glide hundreds of spear-  
holding shadows,  
In smooth dark ivory bodies their eyeballs  
gleaming  
Forming a gesturing circle beneath the Moon.  
The bright-eyed shadows, the tribe in ritual  
gathered,

Are dancing and howling, the embryo soul of a  
nation :

In loud drum-beating monotonous the tightly  
stretched skins

Of oxen that stared at the stars are singing wild  
pæans :

Wild pæans for food that magically grew in the  
clearings

When he that was slain was buried and is re-  
surrected,

And a green mist arose from the mud and shone  
in the Moon,

A great delirium of faces, a new generation.

The thin wafer Moon it is there, it is there in the  
sky,

The hand-linkèd circle raise faces of mad exal-  
tation—

Dance, O you Hunters, leap madly upon the flung  
shields,

Shoot arrows into the sky, thin moon-seeking  
needles :

Now you shall have a harvest, a belly-full  
rapture,

There shall be many fat women, full grown, and  
smoother than honey,

Their limbs like ivory rounded, and firm as a  
berry,  
Their lips full of food and their eyes full of  
hunger for men !

The heat of the earth arises, a faint love mist  
Wan with over-desiring, and 'in the marshes  
Blindly the mud stirs, clouding the dark shining  
water,  
And troubling the still soft swarms of fallen  
stars.

There is bright sweat upon the bodies of cattle,  
Great vials of life motionless in the moonlight,  
Breathing faint mists over the warm, damp  
ground ;  
And the cry of a dancer rings through the  
shadowy forest.

The tiger is seeking his mate and his glassy eyes  
Are purple and shot with starlight in the grass  
shining,  
The fiery grass tortured out of the mud and  
writhing  
Under the sun, now shivering and pale in the  
Moon.

The shadows are dancing, dancing, dancing,  
dancing :

The grey vapour arms of the forest lie dreaming  
around them ;  
The cold, shining moonlight falls from their  
bodies and faces,  
But caught in their eyes lies prisoned and  
faintly gleaming :

And they return to their dwellings within the grey  
forest,  
Into their dark huts, burying the moonlight with  
them,  
Burying the trees and the stars and the flowing  
river,  
And the glittering spears, and their dark,  
evocative gestures.

## II—SLEEP

Hollow the world in the moonlit hour when the  
birds are shadows small,  
Lost in the swarm of giant leaves and myriad  
branches tall ;  
When vast thick boughs hang across the sky like  
solid limbs of night,  
Dug from still quarries of grey-black air by the  
pale transparent light,

And the purple and golden blooms of the sun,  
    each crimson and spotted flower,  
Are folded up or have faded away, as the still  
    intangible power  
Floats out of the sky, falls shimmering down, a  
    silver-shadowy bloom,  
On the spear-pointed forest a fragile crown, in  
    the soul a soft, bright gloom ;  
Hollow the world when the shadow of man lies  
    prone and still on its floor,  
And the moonlight shut from his empty heart  
    weeps softly against his door,  
And his terror and joy but a little dream in the  
    corner of his house,  
And his voice dead in the darkness 'mid the  
    twittering of a mouse.

### III.

Hollow the world ! hollow the world !  
    And its dancers shadow-grey ;  
And the Moon a silver-shadowy bloom  
    Fading and fading away ;  
And the forest's grey vapour, and all the trees  
    Shadows against the sky ;  
And the soul of man and his ecstasies  
    A night-forgotten cry.  
Hollow the world ! hollow the world !

**IOLO ANEURIN WILLIAMS**



## FROM A FLEMISH GRAVEYARD

JANUARY 1915

A year hence may the grass that waves  
O'er English men in Flemish graves,  
Coating this clay with green of peace  
And softness of a year's increase,  
Be kind and lithe as English grass  
To bend and nod as the winds pass ;  
It was for grass on English hills  
These bore too soon the last of ills.

And may the wind be brisk and clean,  
And singing cheerfully between  
The bents a pleasant-burdened song  
To cheer these English dead along ;  
For English songs and English winds  
Are they that bred these English minds.

And may the circumstantial trees  
Dip, for these dead ones, in the breeze,

And make for them their silver play  
Of spangled boughs each shiny day.  
Thus may these look above, and see  
And hear the wind in grass and tree,  
And watch a lark in heaven stand,  
And think themselves in their own land.

## A MONUMENT

(AFTER AN ANCIENT FASHION)

Traveller, turn a mournful eye  
Where my lady's ashes lie;  
If thou hast a sweet thine own  
Pity me, that am alone;—  
Yet, if thou no lover be,  
Nor hast been, I'll pity thee.



**FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG**



## SONG OF THE DARK AGES

We digged our trenches on the down  
Beside old barrows, and the wet  
White chalk we shovelled from below ;  
It lay like drifts of thawing snow  
On parados and parapet :

Until a pick neither struck flint  
Nor split the yielding chalky soil,  
But only calcined human bone :  
Poor relic of that Age of Stone  
Whose ossuary was our spoil.

Home we marched singing in the rain,  
And all the while, beneath our song,  
I mused how many springs should wane  
And still our trenches scar the plain :  
The monument of an old wrong.

But then, I thought, the fair green sod  
Will wholly cover that white stain,  
And soften, as it clothes the face

Of those old barrows, every trace  
Of violence to the patient plain.

And careless people, passing by  
Will speak of both in casual tone :  
Saying : “ You see the toil they made :  
The age of iron, pick and spade,  
Here jostles with the Age of Stone.”

Yet either from that happier race  
Will merit but a passing glance ;  
And they will leave us both alone :  
Poor savages who wrought in stone—  
Poo. savages who fought in France.

## BÊTE HUMAINE

Riding through Ruwu swamp, about sunrise,  
I saw the world awake; and as the ray  
Touched the tall grasses where they sleeping lay,  
Lo, the bright air alive with dragonflies :  
With brittle wings aquiver, and great eyes  
Piloting crimson bodies, slender and gay.  
I aimed at one, and struck it, and it lay  
Broken and lifeless, with fast-fading dyes . . .  
Then my soul sickened with a sudden pain  
And horror, at my own careless cruelty,  
That in an idle moment I had slain  
A creature whose sweet life it is to fly :  
Like beasts that prey with tooth and claw . . .  
Nay, they  
Must slay to live, but what excuse had I?

## THE GIFT

Marching on Tanga, marching the parch'd plain  
Of wavering spear-grass past Pangani river,  
England came to me—me who had always ta'en  
But never given before—England, the giver,  
In a vision of three poplar-trees that shiver  
On still evenings of summer, after rain,  
By Slapton Ley, where reed-beds start and quiver  
When scarce a ripple moves the upland grain.  
Then I thanked God that now I had suffered pain  
And, as the parch'd plain, thirst, and lain awake  
Shivering all night through till cold daybreak :  
In that I count these sufferings my gain  
And her acknowledgment. Nay, more, would  
fain  
Suffer as many more for her sweet sake.

## THE LEANING ELM

Before my window, in days of winter hoar  
Huddled a mournful wood ;  
Smooth pillars of beech, domed chestnut,  
    sycamore,  
In stony sleep they stood :  
But you, unhappy elm, the angry west  
Had chosen from the rest,  
Flung broken on your brothers' branches bare,  
And left you leaning there  
So dead that when the breath of winter cast  
Wild snow upon the blast,  
The other living branches, downward bowed,  
Shook free their crystal shroud  
And shed upon your blackened trunk beneath  
Their livery of death . . . . .

On windless nights between the beechen bars  
I watched cold stars  
Throb whitely in the sky, and dreamily  
Wondered if any life lay locked in thee :  
If still the hidden sap secretly moved

As water in the icy winterbourne  
Floweth unheard-:  
And half I pitied you your trance forlorn :  
You could not hear, I thought, the voice of any  
bird,  
The shadowy cries of bats in dim twilight  
Or cool voices of owls crying by night . . .  
Hunting by night under the hornèd moon :  
Yet half I envied you your wintry swoon,  
Till, on this morning mild, the sun, new-risen  
Steals from his misty prison ;  
The frozen fallows glow, the black trees shaken  
In a clear flood of sunlight vibrating awaken :  
And lo, your ravaged bole, beyond belief  
Slenderly fledged anew with tender leaf  
As pale as those twin vanes that break at last  
In a tiny fan above the black beech-mast  
Where no blade springeth green  
But pallid bells of the shy helleborine.  
What is this ecstasy that overwhelms  
The dreaming earth? See, the embrownèd  
elms  
Crowding purple distances warm the depths of  
the wood :  
A new-born wind tosses their tassels brown,  
His white clouds dapple the down :  
Into a green flame bursting the hedgerows  
stand.

Soon, with banners flying, Spring will walk the  
land. . . .

There is no day for thee, my soul, like this,  
No spring of lovely words. Nay, even the kiss  
Of mortal love that maketh man divine

This light cannot outshine :

Nay, even poets, they whose frail hands catch  
The shadow of vanishing beauty, may not match  
This leafy ecstasy. Sweet words may cull  
Such magical beauty as time may not destroy ;  
But we, alas, are not more beautiful :

We cannot flower in beauty as in joy.

We sing, our musèd words are sped, and then  
Poets are only men

Who age, and toil, and sicken . . . This maim'd  
tree

May stand in leaf when I have ceased to be.

## P R O T H A L A M I O N

When the evening came my love said to me :  
Let us go into the garden now that the sky is  
cool ;

The garden of black hellebore and rosemary  
Where wild woodruff spills in a milky pool.

Low we passed in the twilight, for the wavering  
heat

Of day had waned ; and round that shaded plot  
Of secret beauty the thickets clustered sweet :  
Here is heaven, our hearts whispered, but our  
lips spake not.

Between that old garden and seas of lazy foam  
Gloomy and beautiful alleys of trees arise  
With spire of cypress and dreamy beechen dome,  
So dark that our enchanted sight knew nothing  
but the skies :

Veiled with a soft air, drench'd in the roses' musk  
Or the dusky, dark carnation's breath of clove :

No stars burned in their deeps, but through the  
dusk

I saw my love's eyes, and they were brimmed  
with love.

No star their secret ravished, no wasting moon  
Mocked the sad transience of those eternal  
hours :

Only the soft unseeing heaven of June,  
The ghosts of great trees, and the sleeping  
flowers.

For doves that crooned in the leafy noonday now  
Were silent; the night-jar sought his secret  
covers,

Nor even a mild sea-whisper moved a creaking  
bough—

Was ever a silence deeper made for lovers ?

Was ever a moment meeter made for love ?

Beautiful are your close lips beneath my kiss ;  
And all your yielding sweetness beautiful—

Oh, never in all the world was such a night as  
this !



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