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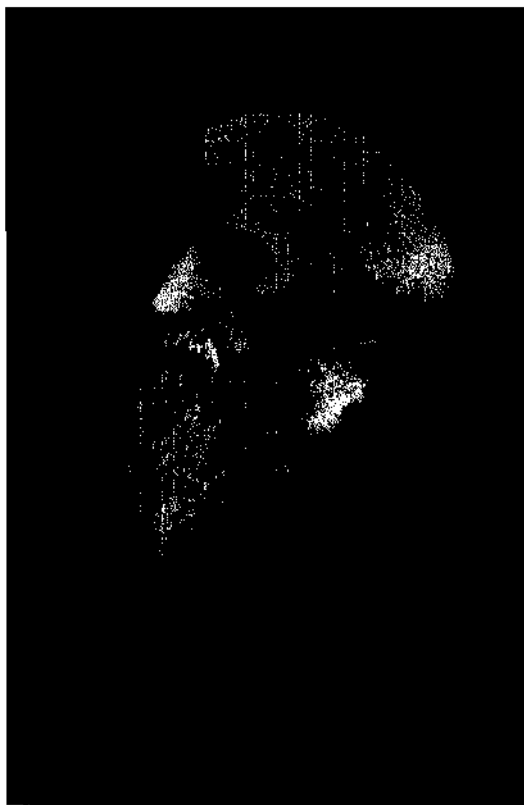
*The Muses' Library*



SELECTED POEMS  
OF  
WILLIAM BARNES







SELECTED POEMS  
OF  
WILLIAM BARNES  
1800-1886

*edited*  
*with an introduction*  
*by*  
GEOFFREY GRIGSON

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1

Recollections we have of William Barnes are mainly of him as a middle-aged, old or dying poet. Many of them are in the *Life* written by his daughter, Lucy Baxter—a book, so few were those who admired Barnes, which sold only 267 copies. William Allingham, Locker Lampson, Coventry Patmore, Tennyson, and later on Edmund Gosse and Thomas Hardy, all knew him in this way as the patriarchal clergyman with the long beard.

Gosse and Hardy went to see Barnes not long before his death: 'We found him in bed in his study, his face turned to the window, where the light came streaming in through flowering plants, his brown books on all sides of him save one, the wall behind him being hung with old green tapestry. He had a scarlet bedgown on, a kind of soft biretta of dark red wool on his head, from which his long white hair escaped on to the pillow; his grey beard, grown very long, upon his breast; his complexion, which you recollect ("you" is Coventry Patmore) as richly bronzed, has become blanched by keeping indoors, and is now waxily white where it is not waxily pink; the blue eyes half shut, restless under languid lids, . . . I wish,' Gosse went on, 'I could paint for you the strange effect of this old, old man, lying in cardinal scarlet in his white bed. . . .' Palgrave also describes him a year before his death, his 'finely cut face', his 'hands fine like a girl's', adding Titian or Tintoret had no nobler, no more highborn looking sitter among the doges of Venice.'

His death came on October 7th, 1886. And on the 11th, as he was carried out, the sun flashed off his

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coffin to Thomas Hardy as, sonic fields away, he was walking across to the funeral—to the funeral of the man from whom he had learned the forms of poetry:

Thus a farewell to me he signalled on his grave-way  
As with a wave of his hand.

William Barnes was eighty-five or eighty-six when he died. There is some doubt whether the year of his birth had been 1800 (as Thomas Hardy believed) or 1801, though certainly he was christened early in 1801. Perhaps because he was small and delicate there may have been some long interval between birth and being taken off to the font. I the son of John and Grace Barnes', his own manuscript *Notes on the Life of William Barnes* begin, 'was born at Rush-hay, a farmhng at Bagber in the Parish of Stiuminster Newton in the Vale of Blackmore<sup>1</sup> and from there on, il is true, we know al least the skeleton of his quiet and isolated life. Fust there was a Dame school, then a school at Stiu minster, and then 'I was taken while yet a boy into the office of Mr. Dashwood, a learned lawyer of Sturmmster, and after a while I went into that of Mr. Coombs at Dorchester, and was just then eighteen vears old, and very kind to me was Mr. Coombs. . . . I was not unfaithful to my desk, but I daily spent a share of my spare time on the study of those higher branches, Latin and Greek and others, which ] had not reached al school, but with my strong love of learning and art ] felt that I was not in my right, or most mind-fitting way of life.' A chief event in his childhood in the Vale of Blackmore had been the death of his mother, a chief event in Dorchester his meeting with Julia Miles, whom he married in 1827. He had first seen her climbing down from the coach in High Street, a child of sixteen with blue eyes, wearing a sky-blue 'spencer<sup>1</sup> or jacket. She was the cause and the centre of his love poems in her life and after her death; from his own boyhood, when he cele-

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brated her 'bright azure eyes' in a poem in his first book printed at Dorchester in 1820, into his old age.

When he married Julia Miles (whose father was in the excise at Dorchester), Barnes was running his own school, just outside his native county, at Mere, in Wiltshire. To his languages he was now adding Italian, French, German, and Persian. He practised wood-engraving —'I had from a love of Art, tried my graver on wood, quickened moreover by Bewick's works, and it was a day-dream of my youth that I might follow Art as my way of life<sup>1</sup>—wrote for the *Dorset County Chronicle* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, concerned himself with etymology, with playing the flute, the violin and the piano, and singing and composing. He kept his diary in Italian; and was visiting Wales, and exploring Welsh poetry and prosody {long in advance of Hopkins). And at Mere he began for the first time to write poems in his native dialect. He had a liking for archaeology (he gave up the study of Russian, since it was 'wanting in old lore<sup>1</sup>). He had a turn for mechanical invention, instrument making, and mathematics. In fact, through all his pursuits, as through his poetry, goes a passion for form and reason. There is an excellent formality about his wood engravings, and throughout his life he felt the desire for visual order within a frame. At twenty-one he had gone so far in his wish to be a professional engraver and artist that approaches were made for him to Rudolph Ackermann in London, but the replies of the art publisher and of the engraver Edward Scriven were discouraging. He remained an amateur, and later in his life became ardent in the collection of paintings and engravings.

Barnes left Mere in 1835 and went back to his own county to open a second school in Dorchester, where he was<sup>k</sup> so lucky, as I have . . . a friend who was a good Oriental scholar, Col. Besant, theretofore of the native Bengal infantry, and author of the Persian and Urdu

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Letterwriter, with whom for some years I read a little Hindustani or Persian once almost every week'. In 1844 he lost the most intimate of his friends, Edward Fuller, who had shared his taste for art and letters. In 1844 Sheridan's grandson invited Barnes over to Frampton Court, to meet his beautiful sisters, the writers Lady Dufferin and Caroline Norton, who were taken by his dialect poems in the *Dorset County Chronicle*. Barnes at first refused to go 'on the grounds that he was unaccustomed to society', but gave way to another letter, went, and enjoyed himself; and in Mrs. Norton made a friend who was the first and for some years the last well-known writer to give him attention. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Salisbury when he was forty-seven, and priest when he was forty-eight; and when he was fifty he took his B.D. at Cambridge. But these things led to no advancement; they were foiled only by trouble and difficulties. Two years after taking his degree Barnes lost his wife, and his six children their mother. Julia Barnes, a woman who had been beautiful, lively, sensible, and full of laughter, but never robust, died on 21st June 1852, and for the days after Barnes wrote nothing in his Italian diary but 'June 22, 23, 24, 26, 27—Giorni d'orrore'. Nearly a year later his diary says: 'Heavy-hearted for my astounding loss'; and until his death he finished his entries, night after night, with the word 'Giulia', written, as his biographer says, like a sigh at the end of each day.

For the rest, his life was, on the whole, even. When his school began to fail [excellent schoolmaster as he was), his friends procured him a Civil List pension of £70 a year; and ten months later, in 1862, he was presented with the living of Winterborne Came, just outside Dorchester. This meant an end of anxiety. It meant a comfortable and a peaceful old age in the rectory through another twenty-four years.

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It was in these last years that Barnes became something of a celebrated poet outside his own county. Alingham had written to him in gratitude for his poems as early as 1850 Coventry Patmore had first cheered him with praise by 1859. Palgrave, Gosse and others came after. Yet in all his early life—and it would not be easy to decide how much of a handicap this really was—Barnes had had no friend or acquaintance, so far as we can tell, of his own stature. He knew, and was helped by older men with some scholarship and ability; but he was past middle age before he had any contact at all with another considerable poet. Most of his writing had been done.

He had not been aggressive; and beyond the approach to Ackermann, he never seems to have had a thought of moving nearer to London than Mere, or of introducing himself to any other writer. He liked Wiltshire. He liked Dorset still more. He liked scything, he liked his wife, his children, his pursuits. 'Mr. Barnes', his young wife would say to him, 'you are burying your talents in this poor out-of-the-way place.' And indeed he had a 'marked shyness of demeanour, an awkwardness in his gait and mien, and a certain indifference to his personal appearance', He was 'morbidly modest'; and 'so uniformly mild were his manners and language that he was often suspected of being deficient in determination and spirit; a suspicion which in reality had no very solid justification; but Barnes was such a decided advocate of peace at any price that he would never, except when driven by sheer necessity, enter any arena as a probable disputant." He kept good discipline in his school, never used the cane, and always wore (in the class-room) 'a long, light-blue, rough-faced, flannel-textured dressing-gown'.

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That was Barnes in his twenties and thirties—an odd scholar and schoolmaster, bald-headed before his time, and content with the peaceful obscurity of Merc or Dorchester. The pupil—a relation by marriage—who recorded these recollections added that he was 'nearly isolated' socially, and was looked down upon in Merc, and in Dorchester as well. He had his few friends; but whether that 'nearly isolated' is an exaggeration or no, certainly all his richest years of creation were passed in a loneliness of spirit and intellect. Barnes, like his neighbours, was unaware of the comparative standing of his own genius, and the world was unaware of it until Coventry Palmorc began to review him and praise him when he was nearly sixty. And then the world quickly returned to its old indifference. After his death, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Patmore and others signed a memorial praying the First Lord of the Treasury to continue Barnes's Civil List pension to the daughter who had nursed him. They state that in the last years of his life Barnes's income from his poems was 'about £7 only'.

Patmore wrote of him: 'He is of no school but that of nature', which is true, so long as you do not interpret it to mean that he was a naive, or unlearned writer. 'Mr. Barnes, in his poems, is nothing but a poet. He does not there protest against anything in religion, politics, or the arrangements of society; nor has he the advantage of being able to demand the admiration of the sympathizing public on the score that he is a chimney-sweep, or a rat-catcher, and has never learned to read.' But for all his meticulous, highly professional knowledge of writing, and his rare gift of sustaining his sensibility and skill through life, I doubt if Barnes ever quite looked upon himself as a 'poet'<sup>1</sup> in our conscious European way. He was fulfilled. He was much more like a plant, which does not exist for its flowers; and such a lack of vanity and ambition coupled with so

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much expert skill may be unique. If he had moved among men of letters, he might have gained much; but he might equally have stained the clear run of his talent. Landor might have companioned him well, and invigorated him, but who else? He was narrowed by Dorset; yet Dorset, for all its indifference, kept him safe, as Clare was kept safe in his asylum.

### III

His first book was *Poetical Pieces*, printed for him in Dorchester in 1820—ten poems in ordinary English. He was then twenty years old, and there is nothing much to mark in these conventional album verses but their neatness, and the fact that he began to write in normal English, and for many years continued to do so. *Orra. A Lapland Tale*, Dorchester-printed in 1822, is worth more. It stands to his later writing like *Gebir* to the rest of Landor, or *Midnight* and *A Vision of the Mermaids* to the rest of Crabbe and Hopkins. The subject is Orra's search for her lover, a night she spends in a rugged cave, and the loss of her boat, so that the result (undescribed) must be Orra's death; and it comes partly out of his reading of Acsrbi's *Travels through Sweden, Fin/and and Lap/and to the North Cape*, a travel book published twenty years before, partly from that recurrent vision in eighteenth-century verse of a frozen sea. Barnes's unending love of clear, contrasting colour is now put down for the first time:

Her bosom seemed, beneath her long black hair,  
Like snowy hills beneath the clouds of night. . . .

As graceful as the silvery cloud  
That glides upon the summer air.. ..

And softly now her snowy eyelids close,  
Weighed down by slumber, o'er her bright blue  
eyes. . . .

## INTRODUCTION

There are three seedlings which develop in his later poetry. In *A Vision of the Mermaids* Hopkins's way of making a detailed jewellery out of his observation shows itself already lusciously and thickly. In Barnes's *Orra*, naïve as it is, you see already with how much care he is going to select; and how sparsely, and so how brightly, he is going to use colours for emotion.

Twenty-two years went by before Barnes brought out another book of poems—his *Forms of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect* (1844)—though in between he wrote much on languages and antiquarianism and published several school books of a slender size. Yet first it will be as well, out of its order, to look into the *Poems partly of Rural Life, in National English*, which followed in 1846. It is a book almost as little known as *Orra*, in which the sonnets, and probably several of the other poems, were written earlier—the sonnets, or most of them, in 1830, when, swayed by Petrarch's spell, he was also writing sonnets in Italian. Barnes's poems never develop an emotional, or rather a psychological subtlety. Simple elemental feelings are made to pull upon our hearts by an intricate subtlety of rhythm and pattern. That subtlety he had not made perfect by 1830, so that the simplicity of statement stands out a bit too much. Yet I do not see why so classical and serene a poem as the sonnet *on Leaves* should stay obscured:

... Whether ye wave above the early flow'rs  
In lively green; or whether, rustling sere,  
Ye fly on playful winds, around my feet,  
  
In dying autumn; lovely are your bow'rs,  
Ye early-dying children of the year;  
Holy the silence of your calm retreat.

And other poems to be remarked in this book are *A Winter Night*, *Rustic Childhood*, *The Lane*, and *Burncombe Hollow*. Two stanzas from *Rustic Childhood* will

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show Barnes's eye for light and for objects. Many nineteenth-century poets observed exquisitely, but not many could order this observation so well as Barnes, and space it out with such an infallible effect:

... Or in the grassy drove by ranks  
Of white-stemm'd ashes, or by banks  
Of narrow lanes, in-winding round  
The hedgy sides of shelving ground;  
Where low-shot light struck in to end  
Again at some cool-shaded bend,  
Where we might see through darklcav'd boughs  
The evening light on green hill-brows.  
I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

Or on the hillock where I lay  
At rest on some bright holyday;  
When short noon-shadows lay below  
The thorn in blossom white as snow;  
And warm air bent the glist'ning tops  
Of bushes in the lowland copse,  
Before the blue hills swelling high  
And far against the southern sky.  
I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

The same qualities, not yet finally intensified and refined, you can read in 'The Lane', one of the poems Barnes had written on the alliterative principles of Old English poetry—again an anticipation by many years of Hopkins's concern with Old English. (Barnes had much else to import into the nineteenth century, out of the wide reaches of his scholarship and his curiosity.)

## IV

Barnes's poems in normal English up to, and after

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this 1846 volume, are more numerous and more accomplished than is realized, but in the Dorset dialect, in the three dialect books of 1844 and 1858 [*Homely Rhymes*] and 1863 (*Poems in the Dorset Dialect*, *Third Collection*) he certainly did come to the top of his classical perfection. Thomas Hardy had quoted from Barnes's statement that he wrote in dialect because he could not help it: 'To write in what some may seem a fast out-wearing speech form, may seem as idle as writing one's name in the snow of a spring day. I cannot help it. It is my mother tongue, and is to my mind the only true speech of the life that I draw.' That always struck me as rather a puzzling statement. It is true that having spoken in dialect as a child, for some time he probably kept a Dorset accent (as Coleridge kept something of a Devonshire accent). As a man, he could no doubt slip from English into Dorset English; but his first promptings were to write poems in plain English, which he did until he was thirty-four, and continued to do, at intervals, all through his life. It was in plain English that he wrote a poem to Julia Barnes after her death in 1852; and after 1867, for his last nineteen years, he reverted to English and wrote, we are told, only one poem in dialect. In other words he could perfectly well help it, and often did. Had Barnes made a statement which was obviously untrue? In his fragment of his own life he wrote a little differently: 'As to my Dorset Poems and others, I wrote them so to say, as if I could not well help it, the writing of them was not work but like the playing of music, the refreshment of the mind from care or irksomeness.'

*And others*—that is to say, it was a general statement about all his poems, and perhaps a deliberate qualifying of his earlier statement that he could not help it—as if he felt that if nearly true, it was not quite true enough.

Writing in dialect began as a preference, a choice

## INTRODUCTION

which Barnes made out of his philological drivings. His daughter Lucy confirms so much in her *Life of William Barnes*, and says 'when he began, it was as much the spirit of the philologist as the poet which moved him'. She quotes his statement that 'the Dorset dialect is a broad and bold shape of the English language, as the Doric was of the Greek, It is rich in humour, strong in raillery and hyperbole; and altogether as fit a vehicle of rustic feeling and thought, as the Doric is found in the *Idylls* of Theocritus'; and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1840, several years after his first Dorset poems were written, but several years before the first book of them came out, he affirmed that the Dorset dialect was "purer and more regular than that which has been adopted as the national speech'. So, far from being a spontaneous act, this choice of dialect was a learned perversity, which he was able to carry through, since dialect had been his first speech, without the defects of being perverse. Once he began, he found he could do it by nature. Then, no doubt, he could not help continuing.

What)mean will be clarified by thinking of Doughty, who also set out to revitalize English, but by reviving, with an early dictionary always alongside his writing hand, the dead, unspoken language of the sixteenth century. Doughty is unreadable, Barnes is a delight. Barnes is genuine, Doughty a monster, and perverse with all the defects of perversity.

Gerard Hopkins recognized the truth about both of these poets. Doughty (whom Bridges admired) Hopkins dismissed. Barnes (whom Bridges despised, partly for his celebration of 'the supposed emotion of peasants') Hopkins had already appreciated for a good many years when Coventry Patmore sent him the three dialect volumes in 1885. He had some sharp words with Bridges: 'I hold your contemptuous opinion an unhappy mistake: he is a perfect artist and of a most

## INTRODUCTION

spontaneous inspiration; it is as if Dorset life and Dorset landscape had taken flesh and tongue in the man\*; and writing earlier to Bridges, he makes a comparison, the rightness of which I will not argue about, between Barnes and Robert Burns. Burns, he says, does not translate: take away the Scotchness and something ordinary remains, but Barnes does translate, and without a great loss. That at least is true. Indeed, a lack of knowledge of the euphony of Dorset dialect does not, to my ear, make it impossible to enjoy Barnes's poems clearly and intensely. There are two lines I keep among the furniture of memory, and keep in this form:

The cuckoo over white-waved seas  
Do come to sing in thy green trees.

Barnes wrote:

The gookoo over white-weav'd seas  
Do come to zing in thy green trees.

The translation I make, more or less without meaning to, is much nearer Barnes's writing than, shall I say, Barnes's, or anyone else's reading of the Idyls of Theocritus was ever near to the original sound of Theocritus; and though I have no suspicion that Barnes ever wrote any of his Dorset poems first in ordinary English—in the English he habitually used in his reading, in his letters, and, I suppose, in his thoughts—the English versions that he did make of some of the Dorset poems are lively and authentic. The English version of *The Mother's Dream*, for instance, is not less good than the Dorset original,

## V

There is a remark in Llewellyn Powys's letters that Barnes never writes about the sea. That is nearly, if not quite, true. He had no taste for the sea, one of many

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facts which mark him off from other poets and painters and writers of his time—Darley, Tennyson, Swinburne, Patmore, Courbet, Melville, Emily Bronte, for example. And there is a deeper explanation for it than a land-locked childhood, and Barnes's intense cultivation of his inland, rural imagery. He had no use for the swell and turbulence and endless width of the sea—for its lack of form. He is not a poet for expansive mystery, for crossing the bar, for the infinite in any way. Tennyson has to cross the bar. Tennyson in death has to put out to sea. That was typical of the anxieties of the nineteenth century, whereas the attitude of the eighteenth century had been to sail calmly along to death or to put in from life's sea into death's harbour, So Matthew Green wrote that he made

... (may heav'n propitious send  
Such wind and weather to the end)  
Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,  
Life's voyage to the world unknown.

And so might Barnes have written. Barnes, on the whole, does not feel lost, or overwhelmed, or bound to fight against a universal ocean. He accepts, and does not interrogate, the universe. His form matches that feeling. However narrow Barnes may have been, the form and its variation in his verse is one of its qualities by which we may profit. He was not a fragmentary poet, or a Samuel Palmer with eight or nine years of lyrical vision and explosion. *White art Blue* and other lyrics with such airy vitality and youthfulness were written when Barnes was nearly seventy years old. And often it is not easy, *so* much are his poems conceived or carried out as a unit, to isolate a stanza, a line, or a phrase for admiration. Coventry Patmore well remarked that 'often there is not a single line worth remembering in what is, nevertheless, upon the whole a very memorable poem'<sup>9</sup>. The poems are rhythmically

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united with the most delicate skill, and then tied together still more tightly by refrains which, while they may be identical, yet sometimes advance the sense stanza by stanza, as in *My Love's Guardian Angel*, where the refrain is worked up to the wonderful emotional weight of its last use.

Judging from the one volume in the Museum at Dorchester, Barnes in his Italian journal seldom put down any more detail about the poems he was engaged on than a laconic 'scrivendo versi' or 'versl scritti'. It would not be easy to date their exact evolution or to follow in date and in detail all his complicated experiments in form, which he worked out mainly in the dialect. Yet through all his books, from *Orra* to the *Poems of Rural Life in Common English* of 1858 and the small *Selection from Unpublished Poems* produced by Winterborne Monkton School in 1870, with what remarkable persistence does he keep up his sheer skill! Hardy noticed that 'on some occasions he would allow art to overpower spontaneity, and to cripple inspiration'; but he allows that rarely enough, and his art is so fine and certain that he seldom seems monotonous through mannered repetition, or overworking, of successful effects. If I read Clare's poems, so deficient was Clare in this cultivated strength of Barnes, I find myself overfed with the visionary substance of poetry, which has simply been put down in the readiest, easiest and most obvious jog-trot form. Barnes was less completely *in* the world of nature than Clare. He does not achieve Clare's absolute hits—he is not a seer—but he does not come down to Clare's dribble of absolute misses.

Form to him was fitness: he wrote several things about it, and he explored as well the origin and simplest nature of poetry. 'Matters most interesting to me are those belonging to man, in his life of body, mind and

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soul, so in his speech, manners, laws and works.<sup>1</sup> As for man, 'The natural man is unfinish'd man, as he was finished by the hand of God, when He saw all that He had made to be very good'.<sup>2</sup> And whatever fallen man may be, 'the beautiful in nature is the unmarred result of God's first creative or forming will... the beautiful in art is the result of an unmistaken working in man in accordance with the beautiful in nature'.<sup>3</sup> He maintained 'there is no high aim but the beautiful. Follow nature: work to her truth'.<sup>4</sup> But 'the beautiful is also the good by reason of a fitness of harmony which it possesses'.<sup>5</sup> He admired 'the beauty and truth of colour and action in the Dutch school; and'—since he is anything but Dutch—'the harmony, tone, and effect of colour, even with bad drawing, and, in some cases, it maybe with a want of depth, in a work of Turner'. In all the beautiful things of a landscape, he discovered fitness—'fitness of water to irrigate growth, and to run for all lips to the sea; fitness of land to take and send onward the stream; fitness of strength to weight, as of the stem to the head of a tree; fitness of elasticity to force, as that of the poplar, and the bough whose very name is bending, and the bulrush and grass to the wind; fitness of protection to life, as in the armed holly and thorn, and the bush, or ditch-guarded epilobium; and a harmony of the whole with the good of man'.<sup>7</sup>

Harmony was a favourite word, and harmonic proportion a favourite topic, with Barnes. He wanted harmonic proportion in churches—'that too little understood and wonderfully neglected principle of harmony in form as well as in sound'<sup>8</sup> ought to be applied, so he

<sup>1</sup> Transcript of MS. 'Notes on the Life of William Barnes' by himself, in possession of the Barnes family.

<sup>2</sup> Review 'Patmore's Poems', in *Prater's Magazine*, July 1863, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', *Marmf Han's Magazine*, vol. IV, May-Oct. 1861, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126. 'Ibid., p. 128. 'Ibid., p. 137. 'Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> Letter on harmonic proportion as applied to churches in *Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1843.

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maintained, to the relative heights of the tower, the nave and the chancel. He framed his pictures and bound his books in harmonic proportion. He held that poetry must keep in with the fitness of nature and must conform to the nature of speech and the natural cause of poetry among men. 'Speech was shapen of the breath-sound of speakers, for the ear of hearers, and not from speech-tokens [letters] in books';<sup>1</sup> and discovering what he could about the origins of poetry from books of travel and philology and his own study of European and Oriental literature, he believed that poetry did not spring from cultivation or refinement, but from elemental necessity: 'there has never been a full-shaped tongue that has sounded from the lips of generations of any tribe without the voice of song; and ... to a bookless and unwriting people verse is rather a need than a joy.'<sup>2</sup> It is curious to find him down in his Dorset isolation writing that 'the measures of song ... may themselves be measured, not only by the steps of the dramatic dance, but by the steps of a march, or by the strokes of oars, as in the Tonga songs of the kind called Towalo or paddle songs, which Mariner says are never accompanied with instrumental music, but which are short songs sung in canoes while paddling, the strokes of the paddles being coincident with the cadence of the tune'.<sup>8</sup>

**In English poetry, his own practice was based on the Enlightenment; and no doubt he owed that salutary basis, in part, to being out of the swim, to being brought up in a countryside where the eighteenth century was still alive in the nineteenth; and to associating early with old-fashioned men for whom the Augustans were more important, still, than Wordsworth, or**

<sup>1</sup> From the 'Foresay' in *An Outline of English Speech-Craft*, 1878.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Did Bardic Poetry', *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol XVI, 1867, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> 'On the Credibility of Old Song, History and Tradition', *Fraser's Magazine*, September 1863.

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Keats, or Shelley. Such is the viable advantage of not always being modern, or up to date. He was little touched with an Elizabethan or a Miltonic romanticism, much as he studied the structure and prosody of Milton and the Elizabethans. Spontaneity, singing because you must, 'like the playing of music, the refreshment of the mind from care or irksomeness'—yes. But he read Dryden and Pope, and he quoted Mrs. Cooper on Waller's poetry, that Waller 'rode the Pegasus of wit with the curb of good manners'.<sup>1</sup> It would be interesting to know when he first read and absorbed the Earl of Mulgrave's *Essay Upon Poctry* with its emphatic praise of Homer and its emphasis on 'exactPropriety of Words and Thought'<sup>1</sup> in the writing of songs:

*Expression* easie, and the *Fancy* high,  
Yet *that* not seem to *creep*, nor *this* to *fly* ;  
No Words transpir'd, but in such *order* all,  
As, tho' by *Care*, may seem by *Chance* to *fall*.

Mulgrave, said Barnes, 'writes to fancy or genius

... I am fain

To check thy course, and use the needful rein.'

'Without *judgement*, fancy is but mad', he quoted, and he went on, 'A Welsh bardic canon says: the three qualifications of poetry are endowment of *genius*, *judgement* from experience, and *happiness of mind*.<sup>^</sup> Paraphrasing Mulgrave, he liked lines which are written 'with a skill that conceals skill', that 'keep all the strait rules of verse, yet flow as freely as if they were wholly untied'. Then, 'we cannot but feel that kind of pleasure which is afforded by the easy doing of a high feat, besides that which is afforded by good writing'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Plagiarism and Coincidence', *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. XV, November 1886, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Old Bardic Poetry', *MacmillanCs Magazine*, vol. XVI, 1867, p. 307.

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After all that, neither the complexity of his lyric dodges and formalities, nor his care (how different from much in Tennyson) to pick over his observation and select from it, and never or seldom to overcrowd, continue to be surprising, however rare they are in other men's poetry between 1830 and 1870.

To analyse Barnes's skill exactly, one would need some degree of his own knowledge of Italian, of Persian [Petrarch and Sa'di were his favourites] and of Welsh, and other languages as well. On his eighteenth-century basis of 'exact propriety of word and thought' he heightened his verse in every way he could, by setting himself tasks of every kind. There are clues to this heightening, and to his mind, in the elaborate exemplification of rhyme in his *Philological Grammar* (1854), a book which he 'formed from a comparison of more than sixty languages'. He sympathizes with all rhyming tasks which can be alloyed into the structure of a poem. 'A poet may impose upon himself any task—as that he will introduce some forechosen word into every distich or line, or exclude it from his poem; or that every line shall end with a noun; or that his poem shall take a chosen form to the sight; or he may bind himself to work out any unusual fancy.' He mentions George Herbert's poems in the form of wings or an altar, reproves Addison for calling Milton's matching of words of the same root 'poor and trifling', as in

That brought into this world a world of woe  
Which tempted our attempt.

'However poor and trifling this figure might have seemed to Addison, it is sometimes very striking, as shown in the spontaneous language of mental emotion<sup>1</sup>, and he gives other examples of this root-matching, 'called by the Persians . . . derivation', from Virgil, Sophocles, Crabbe, Tennyson, Cowper, Coleridge, George Herbert, Shakespeare and other Elizabethans.

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Other poets of his age had taken from Elizabethans only an attitude, or fairy nothings (compare much of Darley or Hood), or insubstantial horrors. Barnes looked at the way they wrote, their word-repetitions, their collocation of two words alike in sound, unlike in meaning, their acrostics, their elaborate alliterations, and so on, which are paralleled by the elaborations and conventions of the Persian medieval poetry he so much enjoyed. The Persian poets and the Elizabethan lyric writers (and, for that matter the English poets of the Enlightenment whom Barnes learned from first of all) concerned themselves more with virtuosity of language than with originality of ideas. Beside the Augustan uniformity of common sense and a commonly held stock of knowledge, one could place the statement of the Arab historian, Ibn Khaldun, that 'the Art of Discourse, whether in verse or prose, lies only in words, not in ideas . . . ideas are common to all, and are at the disposal of every understanding, to employ as it will, needing no art.' That certainly was how Barnes thought of poetry, elaborate in art, simple in ideas, and straightforward in effect. And he transfers much of the elaboration he discusses to his own verse — for example, from Eastern poetry the 'kind of word rhyming, or word-matching' called *adorning*, 'in which every word of a line is answered by another of the same measure and rhyme in the other line of the distich':

As trees be bright  
Wi' bees in flight.

The Persians, he says, use an ornamental punning or 'full-matching . . .' a full likeness in sound, of words which differ in meaning. He used it in *The Wold Wall*:

Ah! well-a-dae! O wall adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by E. G. Browne *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. II, 1905, p. 85.

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He used the peculiar parallelism of Hebrew poetry—the principle of Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askalon' — in *Melhill Feast*, for example:

The road she had come by then was soon  
The one of my paths that best I knew,  
By glittering gossamer and dew,  
*Evening by evening moon by moon* —

or in *Troubles of the Day*.

As there, along the elmy hedge, I go  
By banksides white with parsley — parsley-bloom.

Welsh and Irish poetry were sources for him. For instance, in Irish poetry, 'there is a kind of under-rhyme called *union*, which is the under-rhyming or rhyming of the last word or breath-sound in one line, with one in the middle of the following one'. Here it is in *Times o' Year*:

**Here** did sway the *dtrolflow*'rs  
When the *hours* o' night wer vew,  
An' the zun, wi' early *beams*  
Brighten'd *streams*, an' dried the dew . . .

But his most pronounced Celtic borrowing is the *cyng-hanccdd*, the Welsh repetition of consonantal sounds in the two parts of a line, divided by a caesura, which is better known in English through its use by Gerard Hopkins. The familiar instance comes as a refrain in the poem so celebrated through its musical setting, *My Orchard in Linden Lea*, in which the apple tree

Do lean down low in Linden Lea,

where the *cynganedd* consonants are DLNDNL/NLNDNL; but there are plenty more, such as 'In our abode in Arby Wood', or 'An' Jove to roost, where tlyw can live at rest'.

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Hopkins was made a bit uneasy about this particular borrowing. He found his rhythms 'charming and characteristic', as they are, certainly. But Barnes's use of *cynghanedd* he did not think successful. 'To tell the truth, I think I could do that better', and he added that it was 'an artificial thing and not much in his line'. I believe Hopkins was half true, and half-wrong in not realizing how much Barnes's line was at once conscious and unconscious art—half-true, because although Barnes's most perfect poems are sometimes elaborate tasks, they are usually ones influenced by his borrowings from world prosody, but not embodying them pure and direct.

Barnes's soul was not lit by sulphur, he did not, like Melville, measure himself against fate or walk on the sea-bottom, 'left bare by faith's receding wave', or wrestle with God, or hang, as Hupkms hung, desperately, on the dreadful cliffs of the mind; he may, as Hopkins agreed with Bridges in saying, have 'lacked fire' (though that is not always so, in my judgment), but he *knew* and felt as much about the function in human life, the origins, nature, and adornment of lyrical poetry, and its form, as any poet who has written in English. To paraphrase a valuable remark of Auden's, he disciplined himself and proved the power of his creative impulses by accepting the limitations of form. He created a system of poetry for his own use.

## VI

I have quoted Barnes's view of nature, though not completely: man has fallen, and nature as well is not unmarred, but 'the beautiful in nature'—that is 'the unmarred result of God's first creative or forming will' and 'the beautiful in art is the mistaken working of man' in accordance with this unmarred result, which is good also by its fitness or harmony. The fallen working

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to the unfallen.<sup>1</sup> 'Look for pleasure', Barnes wrote, 'at the line of beauty, and other curves of charming grace in the wind-blown stems of grass, and bowing barley or wheat; in the water-shaken bulrush, in the leaves of plants, and in the petals of flowers; in the outlines of birds, and even their feathers and eggs; in the flowing lines of the greyhound, the horse and cat, and other animals; in the shell of the mollusc, and in the wings and markings of insects; in the swell of the downy cheek, the rounded chin, the flowing bendings of the pole and back, and the outswelling and inwinding lines from the head to the leg of woman stepping onward in the pride of youthful grace; and tell us whether nature does not show us graceful curves enough to win us from ugliness, even in a porringer.'<sup>2</sup> And 'fitness' made him an enemy of veneers and shams: 'does nature make you a handsome tree or flower near your town, and slight her work in the world? or light up your water for a crowd-sought park, and not for the wanderers in the wilds? No. Nature and true art are faithful. . . . We have churches with a fine, high-wrought street end, and brick walls behind, out of man's sight (poor Pugin's eyesore!) as if the builders worked not for good, but for man; and so a low aim has wrought a low work of art. Of such a sham some writer speaks somewhat in the following strain—for I quote from memory:

They built the front, upon my word,  
As fine as any abbey:  
But thinking they might cheat the Lord,  
**They made the back part shabby.**<sup>3</sup>

**Nature must therefore be sifted for the authentic, for the beautiful in nature; and the heavy grain of this,**

<sup>1</sup> "Thoughts on Beauty and Art", *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. IV, 1961, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

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sifting, its force, is concentrated into Barnes's epithets—'green-treed':

As evenen air, in green-treed spring,  
Do sheake the new-sprung pa'sley bed—

or 'sweet-breath'd':

An' sweet-breath<sup>1</sup>d childern's hangen heads  
Be laid wi' kisses, on their beds—

DI 'dim-roaded' night, or 'blue-hill'd' as an epithet for the world, or 'sky-back'd', for the flight of clouds, and many more—epithets which are impressed with the force of experience. He told Palgrave that 'he had taken Homer, and him only, as his model in aiming at the one proper epithet in describing'. And this sifting gives his epithets a serenity and wide truth that one misses in the particular detail of much Preraphaelite description, from Tennyson to the passionate observation of Hopkins. Read, or broadcast to an audience who have not the texts in front of them and do not know them, Dyer's eighteenth-century *Grongar Hill* and Tennyson's over-embroidered *Progress of Spring* (an early poem, it is true), and one poem is fuddling, the other comes to the audience clear through the simplicity and sparingness of its effects. Barnes's poems are, for effects, half-way between the two; but riding his Pegasus on the rein, he would never go so far from the wide truth as Tennyson peering unfamiliarly into the inside of a horse-chestnut flower:

a but less vivid hue  
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom  
Flamed in his cheek—

Barnes holds the rein at some such limit as 'where the black-spotted bean-bloom is out' or 'thatch-brow'd windows'<sup>1</sup>.

**He keeps in with this restraint in preferring the**

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quickly-taken truth *of* descriptions of states of light, states of air, and states of colour—sometimes all three in one. For instance, in *My Love's Guardian Angel*:

As in the cool-arl'd road I come by,  
—in the night...

or

High over head the white-rimm'd clouds went on,  
Wi' woone a-comen up, vor woone a-gone;  
An' feiir they floated in their sky-back'd flight,  
But still they never meade a sound to me—

or

I'm out when snow's a-Iyen white  
In keen-air<sup>1</sup> d vields that I do pass,  
An' moonbeams, vrom above, do smite  
On ice an' sleeper's window-glass—

or in three stanzas from *In the Spring*:

. . . O grey-leafy pinks o' the gearden,  
Now bear her sweet blossoms;  
Now deck wi' a rrose bud, O briar,  
Her head in the Spring.

O light-rollen wind, blow me hither  
The vafce ov her talken,  
O bring vrom her veet the light doust  
She do tread in the Spring.

O zun, meake the gil' cups all glitter  
In goold all around her,  
An' meake o' the deaisys' white flowers  
A bed in the Spring . . .

But Barnes's use of colour is often, as I have said, the setting of one colour sharp against another one, a visual antithesis, like two halves of a line in Pope balanced against each other. Long after he had begun this, he began to look deliberately for its counterpart and

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warrant in nature, making a list of 'the contacts of sundry pairs of colours *on* natural bodies', such as white and black in the bean blossom, or yellow and orange in toadflax or the brimstone butterfly. 'Nature is very sparing of showy contrasts of warm and cold colours. Red and blue are very rare, and of yellow and blue the cases are but few; and black and blue are found in lepidoptera more often than white and blue are seen in our Flora and Fauna.'<sup>1</sup>

Blue and white, Fill the same, was the coupling he most often repeated, though frequently he set yellow against black:

There near the wheatrick's yellow back,  
That shone like gold before the sky,  
Some rooks with wings of glossy black  
Came on down wheeling From on high  
And lightly pitched upon their feet  
Among the stubble of the wheat—

White sometimes against red, elder flowers against red campion, or

Oh! the cherry-tree blossom'd all while  
And again with its cherries was red—

Or white against green as in the cuckoo lines *or* *Zummer Thoughts in Winter Time*:

When white sleev'd mowers' whetted blades  
Rung sh'ill along the green-bough'd ghades.

But blue and white began with *Orra* (and even before that in a poem in his first book of 1820):

And softly now her snowy eyelids close.

Weighed down by slumber, o'er her bright blue eyes,  
As bound beneath the cold and wintry snows,  
The azure wave of ocean frozen lies—

<sup>1</sup> 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. IV, 1861, p. 132.

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and they were observed together again and again, in his wife, in skies, in butterflies, in flowers against sky or reflected sky. Examples are in *White and Blue*, where the colours are the substance of the poem, in *The Water Crowfoot*:

Thy beds o' snow-white buds do gleam  
So fair upon the sky-blue stream.

—in *Ztummer Stream*:

There by the path in grass knee-high,  
Were butterflies in giddy flight,  
All white above the daisies white,  
Or blue below the deep blue sky.

—in *Not Sing at Night*:

Or where below the clear blue sky  
The snow white linen hung to dry.

And blue and white well express the mathematics, the clear, the serene, and the harmonious in Barnes's make. Blue and white are the serenity of nature—the naturr, said Barnes, which 'is the best school of art', adding 'and of schools of art among men those are best that are nature's best interpreters'.<sup>1</sup>

## VII

We have too much of a habit of reflecting our discontent with an author's political convictions, or his political indifference, or his inconsistency, back on to all of his work, as though the issues of the sadness of our time were immeasurably greater than ever before in human history. We forget that there are still for each of us what we must regard as constant transcending verities, that what appears to be 'reaction' may be much more vitalizing than the thirty-shilling suit of

<sup>1</sup> 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art', *Macmillan Magazine*, vol. IV, 1881, p. 132

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modernity or *avanti'gardc*, or immediate politics, that being a trimmer need not imply a lack of inward truth, whether the trimmers are Dryden, or Turgcnev, or a good many living European aulhois who have had touches of Munich about them. Barnes may, in a very good sense, be a mmur poet; but not in the sense that his writing is a mess of words occasionally hL by a sparkle of pure intuition. And I may have suggested, wrongly, if you recall the quotation from Patmore, that Barnes was indifferent to the times, or separated from them entirely. As far as not being indifferent possesses value, that was nut so. The anxious bewilderment between faith and scient scarcely reached him, and scarcely ripples in his poetry. I can only recall one open reference to it in his poem, *The Happy Days when I wer Young*:

Vroin where wer all this venom brought  
To kill our hope an' taint our thought?  
Clrar brook<sup>1</sup> thy water coulden bring  
Sich venom vrom thy rocky spring—

—the venom being 'what's a-talk"d about. By many now—that to despise The laws o<sup>1</sup> God an' man is wise'; and he affirmed in another poem

My peace is rest, my faith is hope  
An' freedom's my unbounded scope.

'That is a subject connected with politics, not with poetry', he said to his son when he reminded him of a request that he should write a Dorset recruiting poem. 'I have never written any of my poems but one with a drift. I write pictures which I see in my mind'. The one poem, the early Dorset Eclogue, *The Times*, with its fable of the pig and the crow, he had written against the Chartists. He felt that the Chartists would unsettle the Dorset labourer without remedying his condition; and, with his views of God, nature, man, harmony and

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fitness, what did disturb him, deeply, was the unfitness he saw in the social development of the nineteenth century, and in the consequent decay of freedom; the unfitness which caused him to write the curious amalgam of wisdom and simplicity he culled *Views of Labour and Gold* (1859), in which, not in the least, no doubt by the Christian Socialist writing of the fifties, Barnes was concerned 'to show the possible effect of the increase of great working-capital and monopolies on the labourer's freedom or welfare'. Two extracts will give its tenor:

The kindness which is done by capital when it affords employment to people from whom, by a monopoly, it has taken their little business, is such as one might do to a cock by adorning his head with a plume made of feathers pulled out of its own tail.'

'It is more healthy to rack one's mind in effectual devices to win a skilful end, than to work as a machine without a free aim or thought: and so, as a Hindoo poet says, to be like a smith's bellows, breathing without life.'

But Barnes's social views, simply consistent with his views of the world of life and art, are only a stroke in the drawing of a full portrait of Barnes. They are less important than the wavy, mazy, slow, river-like rhythm of his poem *The Clote* (clote is the yellow water-lily):

O zummer clote, when the brook's a-sliden  
So slow an' smooth down his zedgy bed,  
Upon thy brode leaves so siafe a-riden  
The water's top wi' thy yoiler head,  
By black-fin'd allers,  
An' weedy shatters,  
Thee then dost float, goolden zummer clote.

—less important than the rhythm with which he patterned his life and his impulses to describe and sing.

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There are poems which are slightly embarrassing, in which Barnes tails—I hesitate to describe it so—into a provincialism of sentiment; but his tailings are more innocent and slighter than the monstrous wallowing falls into the same weakness—not confined to Dorset—of some of Barnes's greatest coevals. And even his weakest poems are strengthened by their pattern and dexterity. In the narrow sense, there are not art-and-society reasons for urging that Barnes should be read, urging that he should have the status given to him ungrudgingly by Patmore, Hopkins, and Thomas Hardy. He may—and I think he did—give to English writing more than has ever been suggested or allowed. Hardy he very much influenced, and Hardy's rhetoric and pattern were the first to strike the authentic note in Auden's life: 'He was both my Keats and my Carl Sandburg<sup>1</sup>—the note and the Contemporary Scene. And how much effect did he have on Gerard Hopkins, who read Barnes when he was an undergraduate, complimented him by critical admiration, and put some of his poems to music? Both Hopkins and Barnes were after a revitalized language for poetry. Were Barnes's poems—to name only a little thing—the seeds of Hopkins's own concern for Welsh and for Anglo-Saxon? Is it entirely a coincidence of period and a consequence of identical aims that 'or as a short-stand-night-watch quick foreflown' and 'which at early morn with blowing-green-blithe bloom' are not lines by Hopkins, but translations from Old Friesian<sup>1</sup> by Barnes? Or that both invented their own critical terms rather than take them ready-made and devitalized from philologists and prosody? Or was Barnes not the instigator of much which has come down through Hardy and through Hopkins as well?

Yet these questions are only, again, the more trivial baits to reading him—to reading one of the few nine-

<sup>1</sup> *Early England and the Saxon English* (1B 59).

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teenth-century poets who 'conceived of art, like life, as being a self-discipline rather than a self-expression<sup>1</sup>. Barnes, if he were more read, could become one of the healthy, if lesser, antidotes to the Romantic disease. He is not a rustic aberration; but just as Barnes kept in Dorset during his life, so he has been kept in Dorset ever since. The point is to deliver him—to extract him from his rather snobbishly affixed integument of mud; to exhibit his mind's cool-aired quality.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

## A NOTE ON TEXT AND SELECTION

The text of the previously collected poems in dialect is that of the final edition of 1879, in which both the dialect and dialectical notation have been modified. Occasionally in the poems from the first collection of 1844 and from *Hwomely Rfynws* I have preferred the earliest version in whole or in detail (though Barnes's care did not often mislead him in his revisions).

All those poems are included which in my judgment are Barnes's happiest and most pleasurable. Added to these are a few, such as the *Julia* of 1820, the first poem by Barnes ever to be printed, which clarify his poetic origins, or explain his development. It seemed as well to reprint *Orra* for the first time, from the large pamphlet in the Museum at Dorchester. The *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* doubted whether a copy was known.

For the poems and fragments uncollected till now I have put through the sieve more than a hundred pieces which belong to his old age, are mostly in common English, and were contributed mostly to the *Dorset County Chronicle*.

For help in preparing this selection I am grateful to Col. Barnes and the Rev. Canon Barnes, the poet's grandchildren, to the officials of the Museum at Dorchester, where Barnes's books and manuscripts are preserved, and to my friend Aneurin Talfan Davies, who identified for me the Welsh poems which Barnes translated.



## WILLIAM BARNES ON POETRY

### WRITING IN DIALECT

To write in what some may deem a fast out-wearing speech-form may seem as idle as the writing one's name in the snow of a spring day. I cannot help it. It is my mother tongue, and is to my mind the only true speech of the life that I draw.

*From the preface: 'Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect, Third Collection', 1862.*

### SPONTANEITY

As to my Dorset poems and others, I wrote them so to say, as if I could not well help it, the writing of them was not work but like the playing of music, the refreshment of the mind from care or irksomeness.

*From liis unpublished 'Notex on the Life of William Barnes.'*

### THE RULES AND CONTROL OF VERSE

When ... a man writes with a skill that conceals skill, and his lines while they keep all the strait rules of verse, yet flow as freely as if they were wholly untied ... we cannot but feel that kind of pleasure which is afforded by the easy doing of a high feat, besides that which is afforded by good writing.

*From 'The Old Bardic Poetry' in 'Macmillarfs Magazine', 1867.*

Without *judgement*, fancy is but mad. A Welsh bardic canon says: the three qualifications of poetry are

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endowment of genius, *judgement* from experience, and *happiness of mind*.

*From 'Plagiarism and Coincidence'  
in 'Macmillan's Magazine,' 1866.*

The keeping of many of the straiter rules of verse with clipping and breath-sound rhyme have been considered, by some, to be learned triflings, idle prettiness, or childish tasks; though we think that, in early historical and didactic verse, they were most useful as memorial locks, and, as far as they were at the same time pretty, they were more worthy of use.

*From 'On the Credibility of Old  
Song-History and Tradition', in  
'Fraser's Magazine,' 1863.*

Root-matching is not likely to hold its ground in corrupt languages, where the forming of words from its roots is no longer much if at all followed, and where words formed from its own roots are given up for borrowed ones.

Addison says of root-matching by Milton: 'A second fault in his language is, that he often affects a kind of jingle in his words, as in the following passages and many others:

That brought into this *worlds world* of wne,  
Which *tempted* our *attempt*.

I know there are figures for this kind of speech, that some of the greatest ancients have been guilty of it, and that Aristotle himself has given it a place in his *Rhetoric* among the beauties of that art; but as it is in itself poor and trifling, it is, I think, at present universally exploded by all the masters of polite writing.' — *Addison's Critique on 'Paradise Lost'*.

However poor and trifling this figure might have seemed to Addison, it is sometimes very striking, as shown in the spontaneous language of mental emotion;

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whilst some of the greatest antients who have been guilty of it, are the prophets and writers of the Bible.

*From 'A Philological Grammar'. 1854.*

## NATURE AND ART

.. . The beautiful in nature is the unmarred result of God's first creative or forming will . . . the beautiful in art is the result of an unmissaken working of man in accordance with the beautiful in nature.

The beautiful is also the good by reason of a fitness or harmony which it possesses

Nature is the best school of art, and of schools of art among men those are best that are nature's best interpreters.

Does nature make you a hunsomL<sup>1</sup> Lice O1 flown near your town, and slight her work in Ihc wold'? O1 light up your water for a crowd-sought park, and not for the wanderers in the wilds? No Nature and true art are faithful.

There is no high aim but the beautiful. Follow nature: work to her truth.

From 'Thoughts on Beauty and Art',  
in 'Macmillan's Magazine', 1861.

## SCIENCE, RELIGION AND BELIEF

Matters most interesting to me are those belonging to man, in his life of body, mind, and soul, so in his speech, manners, laws and works.

From his unpublished 'Notes on  
the Life of William Barnes,'

It seems to us that we should always keep asunder outward world-truth (natural philosophy), which is rightly the end of inductive reason; and inward soul-

## WILLIAM BARNES ON POETRY

truth (religion), which is the end of faith; and that if we set inductive reason to work in the dominion of faith, soul-truth, we may become unbelievers; and if we send out faith, in the place of reason, to seek world-truth, we may be superstitious.

Our writers may deem that from our wide field of particular truths, and our tracking of general ones by inductive reasoning, they have a greater right than their forefathers to generalize particular truths, and that their hanging of them on a general one may help their readers to knowledge.

But whenever a proposition, which is given for a constant truth is too hastily taken, and untrue, it may mislead a reader into untruth; and may so far vitiate a history that a great frequency of such ones would make men little willing to seek the particular truths with which they are mingled; while a history of pure and well-arranged single truths would be good for ever.

*From 'The Pyrrhonism of Joseph Glanvill, in the 'Retrospective Review', February, 1853.*

## LANGUAGE

I am ... a 'lingual conservative'; and it is therefore that I wish to see the English a purer, and more self-enriched tongue, instead of being a jargon made up of four or five others.

*From 'A Letter on the Formation of the English Language', in the 'Gentleman's Magazine', June, 1833.*

English has become a more mongrel speech by the needless inbringing of words from Latin, Greek, and French, instead of words which might have been found in its older form, or in the speech of Iandfoik over all England, or might have been formed from its own

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roots and stems, as wanting words have been formed in German and other purer tongues.

Thence English has become so much harder to learn, that, in its foreign-worded fullness, it is a speech only for the more learned, and foreign to unschooled men, so that the sermon and book are halflost to their minds: whereas in Tuscany and in the west of Ireland, or in Wales, the speech of the upper ranks is that of the cottage, and the well-worded book of the higher mind needs no list of hard words to open its meaning to the lower.

Some of the mongrel form of our English has arisen from the slighting of Saxon-English, and other Teutonic tongues at our universities and in our schools, where Latin and Greek have been, to barely Latin and Greek scholars, the only sources of wanted, or at least new, words. . . .

. . . the foreign words were not of great need, inasmuch, as words for things that came newly under speech, might have been taken from the word-stores of our landfolk over the kingdom, or have been made from our roots and stems.

Luckily our tramways and railways were first made by working men who used for things under hand, English words of their own, as rail, railway, sleeper, ballast, tram, truck, trolley, shunt, and a siding; but, when the railway was taken into the hands of more learned men we had *the permanent* way for the full-settled way, and the *terminus* instead of the rail-end, or way-end, or out-ending.

The Latin and Greek mingled-speech of the pulpit is often one ground on which the poor leave their church, where the preaching is, as they call it, too high for them.

Mr. Boyd, in his *Common-Place Philosopher*, says:

'Many a clergyman, who would not think of giving orders to his manservant in terms which that person

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could not understand, is yet accustomed every Sunday to address a rustic congregation *in* discourses which would be just as intelligible to it if they were pleaded in Hebrew.<sup>1</sup>

What we want for the pulpit, as well as for the book, and the platform, for the people, is a pure, homely, strong Saxon-English of English stems, such as would be understood by common English minds and touch English hearts.

The wording of one of our collects, 'By reason of our frailty we cannot always stand upright', is as welcome to the poor as the finer one which was once uttered in a church, 'We cannot always maintain an erect position'.

In the *Recollections of Oxford*, by G. V. Coxe, M.A., late Esquire Bedel, at Oxford, 1868, we find, as a passage of an Oxford sermon, 'A system thus hypothetically elaborated is, after all, but an inexplicable concatenation of hyperbolical incongruity'.

We should not reach the English mind or heart the more icadily by turning 'He scattered his foes' into 'He dissipated his inimical forces', nor by making 'I have no proud looks' into 'I exhibit no superciliousness'. Nor would an officer gain much by crying, 'Dcxtral rotation' for 'Right wheel'.

It may be thought that Latin-and-Greek-English is more refined and lofty than pure Saxon-English; but refinement and loftythoughtedness must be in the thoughts, and it is idle to put words for wit.

*From 'Early England and the Saxon English', 1869,*

Speech was shapen of the breath-sounds of speakers, for the ear of hearers, and not from speech-tokens (letters) in books ... and therefore 'I have shapen my teaching as that of a speech of breath-sounded words, and not of lettered ones.

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Some of Barnes's 'speech-craft' coinings for corrupt words:

For Preface.	Fore-say
Abstract:	Unmatterly
Accelerate:	Quicken
Accusative.	End-case
Atmosphere:	Welkin-air
Depilatory:	Hairbane
Deteriorate:	Worsen
Perambulator	Push-wamlmg
Posterity:	Afterkin
Telegram:	Wire-spell

*From 'An Outline of English Speech-Craft'. 1878.*



## COMMENTS AND APPRECIATIONS

COVENTRY PATMORE

Some of our readers may ask, How is it, then, that the world knows so little of this poet? The reply is, first, that his poems are written in a dialect which, while it is almost as different from ordinary English as that of Burns, is spoken by a much smaller section of the British population; so that the number of persons who can take up his books for the first time, and read them off with immediate satisfaction, is not large enough to constitute anything like a public capable of impressing its views upon the larger public beyond it. If Mr. Barnes had enjoyed the advantage, for example, of being a Scotchman, our present duty would have been done long ago by others, and 'Homelcy Rhymes' would have been household words in every cottage in England. As it is, this remarkable poet has been condemned to many years of obscurity as the penalty of having written in a language to which an ordinary English reader cannot become well accustomed without something like half an hour's reading—a labour to which it is not to be expected that such a reader should submit, in the absence of compulsion from some critical authority.

In the second place, the most essential character of Mr. Barnes's poetry, though precisely that which renders his ultimate position, as a poet, most secure, is little calculated to win immediate admiration from any but the perfectly unsophisticated in taste and the perfectly cultivated. The improved condition of taste, in respect of poetry, is a very common belief and boast. It must be remembered, however, that, though time and disuse have made obvious the faults of our prede-

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cessurs, our own corruptions of taste, if different in kind, may be quite as great in degree; that exploded exorbitances and conventionalities of language may have been succeeded by other exorbitances and conventionalities; and that, a hundred years hence, the shortcomings and aberrations of the school of Keats and of that of Pope may be equally sinking to the mind of the then easily impartial reader. That, at all events, the popular taste in poetry is not better now than it was a hundred years ago is a fact on which the really cultivated and carefully judging few are probably agreed; and this fact, we repeat, is strongly against the immediate acceptance of a poet of whom it is singularly true that he is of no school but that of nature.

In the third place, Mr. Barnes, in his poems is nothing but a poet. He does not there protest against anything in religion, politics, or the arrangements of society; nor has he the advantage of being able to demand the admiration of the sympathizing public on the score that he is a chimney-sweep, or a rat-catcher, and has never learned to read.

In the often-revived discussion of the relative merits of 'objective' and 'subjective' poetry, both parties have been equally at fault; the half-truth held by each being indispensable to the constitution of the whole truth which they have missed. 'Objective' poetry, in the full sense intended by the one party, and as involving no transcendental or subjective element, is not poetry at all, as anyone with the slightest tincture of poetic feeling must admit. On the other hand, purely 'subjective' poetry is an equally impossible thing, though Wordsworth and Shelley have approached the impossibility, in some of their pieces, almost as nearly as various modern writers in the 'old-ballad' style have approximated to the opposite poetic negation. The divine

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spirit of love and light is, imbed, the subject of all poetry, rightly so culled; but this spirit is not in itself capable of being contemplated by the human mind as a separate entity. It can only be manifested by being directed upon other and external things. 'Light', says this Spirit, speaking by a plenary-inspired tongue, 'is that which maketh manifest.' Sensible events and objects, then, manifested in their divine relations by the divine light, and expressed in verse, are poetry; and, whenever the poet enables us to see common and otherwise 'commonplace' objects and events with a sense of uncommon reality and life, then we may be sure that this divine light is present.

That 'slight but perpetual novelty', which a great critical authority has declared to be the main characteristic of poetic language, and which is only to be obtained by the perpetual presence, in the poet's heart, of this all-renewing light is, however, also the character of the subjects which the true poet will generally choose; and, if we carefully analyse any very successful lyric or idyll which at first strikes us as being simply a glorification of the 'commonplace', we shall most often discover that it has some "motif", as the French well express it, which has this double quality of novelty and slightness, although the events and ideas which are set in play by that 'motif' are of the most simple and ordinary kind.

In choice of subject, as well as in that of language, the rule above indicated is obeyed with rare felicity and uniformity by Mr. Barnes. All true poets obey it sometimes—that is to say, when the tide of poetical feeling runs high; but most poets, in the greater part of their writings, hide the absence of the feeling which inspires this delicate poetic novelty by 'striking ideas', 'magnificent images', or, at best, by imitations and repetitions of themselves in their few inspired moods. We warn the thorough-going admirers of the modern school that

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there is absolutely no finery in Mr. Barnes's poetry, and that often there is not a single line worth remembering in what is, nevertheless, upon the whole a very memorable poem.

By this time, we trust that many of our readers are satisfied that Mr. Barnes is not only one of the few living poets of England, but that, in one respect, he stands out, in a remarkable way, from other living English poets. Between all the other poets there are more or less intimate and visible relationships. They might have written poetry, but not the poetry they have written, had none of their contemporaries or predecessors existed. But, had Mr. Barnes been himself the first inventor of the art of writing in verse, he could scarcely have written verses less indebted to any other poet. This is the more strange inasmuch as Mr. Barnes is a scholar in many languages, and has, as we have understood, his enthusiastic preferences for particular poets. Seldom before has the precept 'look in thy heart and write' been followed with such integrity and simplicity; and seldom before have rural nature and humanity in its simpler aspects been expressed in verse with fidelity so charming. We breathe the morning air while we are reading. Each little poem is as good for the spirits as a ramble through an unexplored lane in the early spring. The faith we soon acquire in the writer's sincerity is such, that words and sentences, which would pass for nothing in another poet, please us. 'A wise sentence in the mouth of a fool is despised', but a commonplace in the verses of Mr. Barnes is respected, because we are sure that it was penned by him with no commonplace feeling.

Judged by the laws according to which the high-pressure poetry of the present day is, for the most part, written, many of Mr. Barnes's 'Homely Rhymes' would not rank very high; but, if that is good writing

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which does us good, this poet may compare with the best—and, after all has been said, we know of no better general test of the merit of prose or verse than that.

*From 'William Barnes, the Dorsetshire Poet', in 'Macmillan's Magazine', June, 1862.*

His language has the continual slight novelty which Aristotle inculcates as proper to true poetic expression, and something much higher than the *curiosafelittas*, which has been absurdly rendered 'curious felicity', but which means the 'careful luck' of him who tries many words and has the wit to know when memory, or the necessity of metre or rhyme, has supplied him unexpectedly with those which are perhaps even better than he knew how to desire. The words of Barnes are not the carefully made clothes but the body of his thoughts and feelings. Another still rarer praise of his work is that he never stops in it till he has said all that should be said, and never exceeds that measure by a syllable; and about this art there is not the slightest apparent consciousness either of its abundant fullness or its delicate reticence. He seems, in fact, never to have written except under the sense of a subject that makes its own form and of feelings which form their own words; that is to say, he is always classic both in form and substance.

*From 'An English Classic, William Barnes', in the 'Fortnightly Review', November, 1886 [reprinted in Patmore's 'Religio Poetae', 1893].*

## COMMENTS AND APPRECIATION

He has done a small thing well, while his contemporaries have mostly been engaged in doing big things ill.

*In a letter to Edmund Gosse, 1886, printed in Champneys' 'Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore', 1900.*

I am the only poet of this generation, except Barnes, who has steadily maintained a literary conscience.

*In a letter to an unnamed correspondent ibid.*

## TENNYSON

*(In October 1863 William Allingham drove Barnes over in a fly to Farringford to stay the night with the Tennysons. Among the company was Julia Cameron, the photographer, who refused Tennyson's request to photograph Barnes, because 'she objected to the top of his head', which was indeed—see the frontispiece—peculiar.)*

Tennyson and Barnes at once on easy terms, having simple poetic minds and mutual good-will. Talk of 'Ancient Britons, barrows, roads', etc. . . . Dinner: stories of Ghosts and Dreams. To drawing-room as usual, where Tennyson had his port. Barnes no wine, Tennyson said, 'Modern fame is nothing: I'd rather have an acre of land. I shall go down, down! I'm up now. Action and reaction.'<sup>1</sup> . . . Tennyson now took Barnes and me to his top room. 'Darwinism, Man from Ape, would that really make any difference?' Time is nothing (said T.): are we not all part of Deity?' 'Pantheism', hinted Barnes, who was not at ease in this sort of speculation. 'Well,' says Tennyson, 'I think I believe in Pantheism, of a sort,' Barnes to

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bed, Tennyson and I up kukler to the roof and looked ;it Orinn; then to my room, where more talk. He liked Barnes, he said, 'bul he is not accustomed to strong views theologic."

*William Allingham's diary,  
quoted in Hallam Tennyson's  
' Alfred Lord Tennyson", 1897.*

### GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

*[Writing to Robert Bridges, 14th August, 1879)*

I was almost a great admirer of Barnes's Dorset (not Devon) poems. I agree with Gosse, not with you. A proof of their excellence is that you may translate them and they are nearly as good—' say nearly, because if the dialect plays any lawful part in the effect they ought to lose something in losing that. Now Burns loses prodigiously by translation. I have never however read them since my undergraduate days except the one quoted in Gossc's paper, the beauty of which you must allow. I think the use of dialect a sort of unfair play, giving, as you say, 'a peculiar but shortlived charm', setting off for instance a Scotch or Lancashire joke which in standard English comes to nothing. But its lawful charm and use I take to be this, that it sort of guarantees the spontancousness of the thought and puts you in the position to appraise it on its merits as coming from nature and not books and education. It heightens one's admiration for a phrase just as in architecture it heightens one's admiration of a design to know that it is old work, not new: in itself the design is the same but taken together with the designer and his merit this circumstance makes a world of difference. Now the use of dialect to a man like Barnes is to tie him down to the things that he or another Dorset man has said or might say, which though it narrows his

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field, heightens his effects. His poems used *to* charm me also by their Westcountry 'instress', a most peculiar product of England, which I associate with airs like Weeping Winifred, Polly Oliver, or Poor Mary Ann, with Herrick and Herbert, with the Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and Welsh landscape, and above all with the smell of oxeyes and applelofts: this instress is helped by particular rhythms and these Barnes employs; as, I remember in 'Linden Ore' and a thing with a refrain like 'Alive in the Spring'.

*From 'The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges', ed. C. C. Abbott, 1935.*

I hold your contemptuous opinion an unhappy mistake: he is a perfect artist and of a most spontaneous inspiration; it is as if Dorset life and Dorset landscape had taken flesh and tongue in the man. I feel the defect or limitation or whatever we are to call it that offended you: he lacks fire; but who is perfect all round? If one defect is fatal, what writer could we read?

(1st September, 1885)

*From the same.*

*(Writing to Coventry Patmore, 6th October, 1886)*

You are not to think I now begin to admire Barnes: I always did so, but it was long since I had read him (Bridges is quite wrong about him, and off his orthodoxy). I scarcely understand you about reflected light: every true poet, I thought, must be original and originality a condition of poetic genius; so that each poet is like a species in nature (*not an individuum genericum or specificum*) and can never recur. That nothing shld. be old or borrowed however cannot be, and that I am sure you never meant.

Still I grant in Barnes an unusual independence and originality, due partly to his circumstances. It is his

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naturalness that strikes me most; he is like an embodiment or incarnation or man muse of the country, of Dorset, of rustic life and humanity. He comes, like Homer and all poets of native epir, provided with epithets, images, and so on which seem to have been tested and digested for a long while in their native air and circumstances and to have a *keeping* which nothing else could give; but in fact they are rather all of his own finding and first throwing off. This seems to me very high praise. It is true they are not far-fetched or exquisite (I mean for instance his mentions of rooks or of brooks) but they are: straight from nature and quite fresh. His rhythms are charming and most characteristic: these too smack of the soil. However his employment of the Welsh *cynghanedd* or chime I do not look on as quite successful. To tell the truth, I think I could do that better, and it is an artificial thing and not much in his line. (I mean like *Paladore* and *Polly dear*, which is in my judgement more of a miss than a hit.) I have set tunes to two of them which appear to me very suitable to the words and as if drawn out of them.

*From 'Further Letters of  
Gerard Manley Hopkins',  
ed. T. C. Abbott, 1938.*

### F. T. PALGRAVE

Working for love of his art, and for love of his fellow country-folk, he has never tried to fall in with the literary current of the day, In a 'subjective age', as Goethe described it sixty years since, Barnes has been obstinate in his objectivity. He is indifferent to coloured diction, to sensuous metaphor, to allusions and ornaments added for decoration's sake. Politics, religion, ethics, are only implied. He avoids all display of personal feeling, all self-conscious confession, all inward conflict, and, keeping his eye always on his ob-

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ject, leaves the reader to be moved or not by its simple presentation. . . . If his plain, ancient, objective manner appeals less to the sympathy of contemporaries, it has in itself certain sure signs of duration.

On our long mil I find no poet who has more persistently and smgle-mindedly aimed at the true end of Poetry, high and durable pleasure, who has striven more earnestly in the interest of healthy happiness. To no one does the phrase "holy simplicity", *sancta simplicitas*, apply more accurately. His song is as fresh and spontaneous as the bird's; as an old poet [Henry More] expresses il beautifully, it was to Barnes

No pains, but pleasure, to do the dictates dear  
Of inward living nature,—what doth move  
The Nightingale tD sing so sweet and clear,  
The Thrush, or Lark that, mounting high above,  
Chants her shrill notes to heedless ears of corn,  
Heavily hanging in the dewy morn.

*From "William Barnes and his Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect", in the 'National Review', February 1887,*

He talked . . . of his own work saying he had taken Homer, and him only, as his model in aiming at the one proper epithet when describing.

*From Palstave's journal in 'Francis Turner Palgrave', by GwenllianPalgrave, 1899.*

## THOMAS HARDY

Unlike Burns, Beranger, and other poets of the people, Mr. Barnes never assumed the high conventional style; and he entirely leaves alone ambition.

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pride, despair, defiance, and other of the grander passions which move mankind great and small. His rustics are, as a rule, happy people, and very seldom feel the sting of the rest of modern mankind—the disproportion between the desire for serenity and the power of obtaining it. One naturally thinks of Crabbe in this connexion; but though they touch at points, Crabbe goes much further than Barnes in questioning the justice of circumstance. Their pathos, after all, is the attribute upon which the poems must depend for their endurance; and the incidents which embody it are those of everyday cottage life, tinged throughout with that 'light that never was', which the emotional art of the lyrist can project upon the commonest things.

*From "The Rev. William Barnes, B.D.",  
in the 'Athenaeum', 16th October  
1886 (reprinted in Lionel Johnson's  
'Art of Thorns Hardy', 1894)*

Primarily spontaneous, he was academic closely after; and we find him warbling his native wood-notes with a watchful eye on the predeternined score, a far remove from the popular impression of him as the half and rude bard who sings only because he must, and who submits the uncouth lines of his page to us without knowing how they come there. Goethe never knew better of his; nor Milton; nor, in their rhymes, Foe; nor, in their whimsical alliterations here and there, Langland and the versifiers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In his aim at closeness of phrase to his vision he strained at times the capacities of dialect, and went wilfully outside the dramatization of peasant talk. Such a lover of the art of expression was this penman of a dialect that had no literature, that on some occasions he would allow art to overpower spontaneity and to cripple inspiration; though, be it remembered, he never

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tampered with the dialect itself. His ingenious internal rhymes, his subtle juxtaposition of kindred lippings and vowel-sounds, show a fastidiousness in word-selection that is surprising in verse which professes to represent the habitual modes of language among the western peasantry. We do not find in the dialect balladists of the seventeenth century, or in Burns (with whom he has sometimes been measured), such careful finish, such verbal dexterities, such searchings for the most cunning syllables, such satisfaction with the best phrase. Had he not begun with dialect, and seen himself recognized as an adept in it before he had quite found himself as a poet, who knows that, he might not have brought upon his muse the disaster that has befallen so many earnest versifiers of recent time, have become a slave to the passion for form, and have wasted all his substance in whittling at its shape.

From such, however, he was saved by the conditions of his scene, characters, and vocabulary. It may have been, indeed, that he saw this tendency in himself, and retained the dialect as a connective to the tendency. Whether or no, by a felicitous instinct he does at times break into sudden irregularities in the midst of his subtle rhythms and measures, as if feeling rebelled against further drill. Then his self-consciousness ends, and his naturalness is saved.

*From Hardy's preface to  
the 'Select Poems of  
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**FROM  
POETICAL PIECES**

1821)



## *Julia*

When moonlight is spread on those meadows so  
green  
Which the Frome's limpid current glides by,  
To mark its calm progress, to gaze on the scene,  
May delight the poetical eye.

To one who in some remote climate has pass'd  
A long absence from all he loved here,  
How sweet the first glance of the land, as at last  
To his own native isle he draws near.

But by far more delightful and sweet 'tis to gaze  
On thy bright azure eyes as they dart  
From under those tremulous lids their bright rays  
And glances for glances impart.

The smile of the Muse may the poet beguile,  
Or the smile of gay Nature in spring;  
To others Dame Fortune's precarious smile  
Its many enjoyments may bring.

I would envy no poet with thy smile if blest,  
Nor at Fortune's dire frown e'er repine,  
For Muse's nor Fortune's smile ne'er yet possess'd  
Aught to rival the sweetness of thine.



DRRA:  
A LAPLAND TALE  
1822



## *Orra: A Lapland Tale*

### INTRODUCTION

There are who scorn the Muse's soothing power,  
And deem the rhyming art an idle thing  
To please the wealthy in a tedious hour,  
And will not deign to hear its vot'ries sing;—  
Though Pegasus, they say, be swift of wing,  
'Tis but a woful waste of time to ride it,  
And that, to want it seldom fails to bring  
Each vain and hapless bard that doth bestride it.

Weighed down by worldly cares, and fruitless sighs  
To scenes of pleasure, and a happier clime,  
Borne by the Muse, at eve my spirit flies:  
Nor do I think that this can be a crime:  
I never trespass on the sacred time  
DUB to the worldly toil by which I live,  
Nor hope to gather from my humble rhyme  
The meed which nought but honest toil can give.

There is a land whose solitary coast  
Looks out upon the frozen Arctic sea;  
Though few the arts her simple sons can boast,  
Enough that they are virtuous and free:  
Oh! thither let the weary spirit flee  
Whose only hope in solitude is placed,  
Who would desert the busy world, and be  
The lonely resiant of some gloomy waste,  
And there that soul its wished-for peace may taste.

For many a weary wretch is doomed to prove  
The anguish of an ever-aching breast,

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

And coveteth the *pinions of the dove*  
That he may *flee away and be at rest*;  
But he, alas! who wanders forth in quest  
Of lands unvisited by human woe,  
Shall wander over all the world unblest:  
For perfect bliss no man on earth can know.

O land of darkness, and of wintry storms,  
Oft do I wish, although I know not why,  
To see those hills that stretch their snowy forms  
Aloft beneath thy cold and sunless sky,  
While deadly chilliness is in the sigh  
Of gentlest airs thy frigid winter knows;  
Nor wood nor stream relieves the weary eye  
But all is shrouded in accumulating snows.

They boast not there of conquests they have made,  
Nor mourn the deeds their enemies have done;  
The shining helmet, or the warrior's blade,  
Has never glittered in that pallid sun;  
They boast no trophies from the foeman won,  
And none have yielded to his mightier hand:  
"No riches covet they—and they have none,  
To lure the spoilers from a foreign land.

There in the fleet Pulkha, along the plain  
They glide, exulting in the rein-deer's speed,  
Nor dream of happier regions, where the rein  
Controuls the gallant and the mighty steed,  
Where flocks around the verdant mountains feed,  
And yellow corn embrowns the fading year.  
Nor are they less content, than those who lead  
A life of luxury and splendor here.

Warm glows their summer, while the sky displays  
The solar orb, but soon that summer flies;

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

The wintry air soon chills the shortening days,  
And suddenly the blasted verdure dies;  
Then gathering clouds, and wintry storms arise,  
And the pale sun withdraws his feeble light,  
No longer striving with the gloomy skies,  
But leaves the land to winter and to night.

I sing the sorrow of a faithful pair,  
The hapless children of that chilly clime,  
For youth and beauty are not wanting there;  
Nor is ingenuous passion deemed a crime,  
Although that sweet companion of our prime  
To them occasioned many a bitter hour,  
And lovely ORRA, in an evil time,  
First gave her simple bosom to its power.

Young ORRA was a Lapland maid, and fair,  
But doomed to wither by an early blight:  
Her bosom seemed, beneath her long black hair,  
Like snowy hills beneath the clouds of night  
Alas! that ever misery should alight  
On one so beautiful, on one so young!  
Alas! that all the woe Fate must recite,  
Should, from ingenuous love, have ever sprung.

### CANTO I

The heavens are again serene,  
The summer sun on high is glowing,  
Again the woods and vales are green,  
And flowers bloom, and streams are flowing.  
But whither is young LAWO going,  
That thus, beneath the noontide heat,  
We see him up the river rowing  
His little bark so fleet.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Onward he looks, the waters roll,  
Still winding through the gloomy waste.  
And many a cataract and shoal  
He yet shall meet to mock his haste:  
But though his bark were even-paced  
With thought, alas! his speed were vain:  
The pleasure that he flies to taste  
His soul shall never feel again.

To-night young ORRA'S father gives,  
In yonder vale, a gay repast;  
For there the beauteous maiden lives,  
And thither LA wo goes so fast;  
Now see how bends his flexile mast,  
And how his bark strikes up the spray!  
Oh! heaven grant the breeze may last,  
For he but ill can brook delay.

Yet no repast shall LAWD share,  
Far other hopes inflame his breast;  
He seeks alone young ORRA there,  
Nor looks for pleasure from the rest.  
And though no welcome be expressed  
So near her reverend father's ear,  
The maid has smiled on many a guest  
By far less welcome, and less dear.

And now he sees the destined vale  
Before him wide and far expand,  
And furls at last his drooping sail,  
And moors his bark upon the sand:  
Impatient from his weary hand,  
The youth has flung the dripping oar,  
And gladly now has gained the land,  
And trembling stands at ORRA'S door.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

At intervals his ORRA'S name  
He hears, with many a tend'rer word;  
He knocks, but no one to him came;  
Again he knocks, but no one stirr'd.  
But now young ORRA'S voice is heard  
Far sweeter than the sweetest lay  
That e'er the many-tongued bird  
Chants in the woods on summer's day. (*a*)

She sings—but not as erst she sung;  
For, though it be a lively strain,  
It falters on her trembling tongue,  
And speaks a soul oppressed with pain;  
But her distress would never gain  
The pity of that noisy throng;  
And ORRA, scorning to complain,  
Thus cloaks her woe in lively song.

## ORRA'S SONG

I stood by the ocean at break of day!  
My deer in the pasture keeping;  
And low on the greensward a youth there lay  
In the shade of a willow sleeping.

His beautiful limbs they were dripping with dew,  
On the thistle he rested his head;  
But deep was his slumber, and little he knew,  
That I bent o'er his flowery bed.

Then smiling, the stranger arose from the ground,  
And he shewed me the glittering sea;  
Far over those waters my shallop is bound,  
He said, wilt thou wander with me?

## DRRA I A LAPLAND TALE

O no, I replied, though I knew thee most true  
Of lovers beneath the fair sun,  
Believe me, young stranger, in vain wouldst thou sue  
My heart is not thus to be won.

Then he looked in my face, 'twas a piteous look,  
And my hand he began to wring;  
I know, he rejoined, thy young soul could not brook  
The woes that from poverty spring.

The sun glows on high, and the weather is fair,  
I will fly to the desert e'er winter begins;  
The ermine I'll take, and the fox from his lair,  
And my bark will be laden with choicest skins:

And my bed shall be made of the dusky fern,  
Where the thistle is waving its purple flower;  
And no more to my dwelling will I return  
Till I gain for my ORRA a wedding dower.

But still, I replied, though I knew Ihee most true  
Of lovers beneath the fair sun,  
Believe me, young stranger, in vain wouldst thou sue—  
For my heart is not thus to be won.

Those notes had scarcely died away—  
The cadence yet was on her tongue—  
When thus responsive to her lay  
YoungLAWDsung—

'And tell me then, ORRA, was that the day  
When last we met by the ocean side?  
And was it that coldness which made thee say  
Thou ne'er would'st be any but LAWOS' bride?'

## DRRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Her name young ORRA trembling heard,  
And, blushing, turned her head aside;  
Her sire, too, caught the fatal word,  
And saw the blush she strove to hide.  
That blush by which thy cheek is dyed,—  
Thy voice so tremulous and broken,—  
Betray thy love,' the old man cried,  
'Nor need I any other token.'

Then fast from ORRA'S azure eyes  
Full many a bitter tear there fell,  
And her breast—as to the watery skies  
The sea will rise—began to swell,  
For ORRA loved her sire full well,  
And love she knew to him was due;  
But then she felt a nameless spell  
That bound her to her lover too.

Her sire with kind paternal eye,  
Relenting, marked his daughter's woe,  
And sighed, and almost wondered why  
He should have frowned upon her so.  
Ah! who is he that does not know  
How sweetly woman's tears beguile?  
Or if his anger made them flow,  
Who could withhold the healing smile?

Thus did the tears of that loved maid  
Her father's anger soon subdue,  
But, ere his feelings were betrayed,  
Young LAWO, ent'ring, met his view:  
'Vain youth," said he, "and who are you?  
Come you to mar our evening cheer?  
Or will you join these fav'rite few?  
Whence come you? and what would you here?'

### ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Thus LAWD: 'pr'ythee, Sir, unbend  
Thy brow, nor harbour idle fear;  
I come not here but as a friend,  
Though not to taste your evening cheer:  
I am a wand'ring mountaineer,  
Nor do I fear to own the name; (6)  
I've left my roving tribe, and here  
Am come my promised bride to claim.

'While the mild summer yet was young,  
When last we to the ocean strayed, (c)  
Ere yet the summer birds had sung  
Their thrilling notes in the woodland shade,  
My wand'ring tribe awhile delayed  
Their erring course by the ocean side,  
TD feed their deer upon the glade,  
And fish in the now unfrozen tide.

'Once as I watched the grazing herd,  
Where trees a gloomy shadow threw  
Around; as blithesome as a bird,  
I whibi my time with the sweet harpu; (d)  
There first that maiden met my view,  
Who at thy side in anguish weeps,  
And there that passion first I knew,  
Which still my heart in thraldom keeps.

'As graceful as the silvery cloud  
That glides upon the summer air,  
She moved, a monarch might be proud,  
The love of such a form to share;  
I marked her shape, her flowing hair,  
And eyes of bright ethereal blue,  
And Oh! I thought, a form so fair  
The liveliest fancy never drew.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

'The lovely maiden went her way,  
There passed few words between us then,  
But on the next propitious day,  
Again we met within the glen,  
Again, again, and yet again  
She smiling came to meet me there:  
Oh bliss beyond the bliss of men,  
To share the smile of one so fair!

'I need not tell how warm a flame  
Her beauty kindled in my breast;  
And why was ORRA much to blame  
If she a mutual love confessed?  
But see, this Cup will tell the rests (*e*)  
O'erflowing with the nuptial wine:  
Receive it—and thou mak'st me blest,  
Refuse it—misery is mine.'

Young LAWO watched the old man's eyes  
And read his doom ere he began,  
Quick from his cheek the colour flies,  
And through his frame a tremor ran;  
'Youth,' said the venerable man,  
'I cannot take the proffered wine,—  
Thy suit alas! is vain, nor can  
The maid thou askest e're be thine.

'Though not in her esteem hast thou  
A rival—yet thou hast in mine;  
And here his tribe are sitting now,  
Rejoicing o'er th' accepted wine;  
Thick as the stars in heaven that shine,  
Are the deer his native fields display,  
And boats to glide through ocean brine,  
And sledges for the snowy way.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

'He hath—though these alone, 'tis true,  
Can never make us blest,' he said;  
'But thou art of the wand'ring crew,  
And hast not where to lay thy head.  
Then can that tender maiden wed  
To join thy rude and roving band,  
Perhaps to beg her daily bread,  
A vagrant in her native land?'

The crisis of his doom is past:  
From his full heart he gave a sigh  
As if his soul would breathe its last;  
And downward turned his tearful eye;  
Nor could he utter a reply,  
But muttered forth a faint farewell,  
And quickly turned for e'er to fly  
From ORRA and her native dell.

And he again has spread his sail  
And, like an eagle on the wind,  
He glides along before the gale,  
And leaves his ORRA far behind:  
But still in his perturbed mind  
Her image dwells, though out of sight;  
Nor can the charms of womankind  
Again afford his soul delight.

## CANTO II

Devoid is he of real tenderness,  
Who, though the blessings of this world denied,—  
Would wish the maid he loves to be his bride,  
To pine with him in mis'ry and distress;  
For she can never break the sacred tie  
By which her fortune is with his entwined,  
Nor leave the scene of misery, to fly  
To the loved home she first for him resigned.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Unhappy is the fond ingenuous heart,  
That, in adversity, admires the fair,  
Yet would not they his misery should share,  
But loves too well, by far, to live apart:  
Angelic forms he sees around him glide,  
Whose smiles, alas, he cannot hope to gain,  
Like Tantalus who lingered in the tide  
Which he for e'er essayed to taste in vain.

'Till now, young LAWD never mourned his fate,  
Though scarce a worldly blessing did he share;  
But now he saw his rude and vagrant state,  
The beauteous DRRA was not foimed to bear  
'Oh! then T ne'er will ask that hand again—  
Nor never build my pleasure on her pain—  
'Farewell,' he said, 'farewell, my ORRA fair!'

His ORRA'S name he murmured yet again:  
'Farewell,' he said, and trembled as he spake,  
'I ne'er will lead thy spirit into pain—  
Oh no! my aching heart shall sooner break;  
And yet, heart-rending thought! must I forsake  
A maid so heav'nly fair, a maid so true?  
Ah poverty! ah DRRA! yes, adieu!'

Now thrice around the heav'ns the moon has rolled,  
And yet he comes not to his promised bride,  
'Oh, is his love,' she said, 'so early cold,  
Who erst such vows of love to ORRA sighed?  
And does he leave his ORRA thus to weep?  
Or does—but heav'n forbid!—my lover sleep  
Beneath the billows of the ocean tide?

'He oft has told me of a little Isle  
High from the ocean, rising in the west,  
Where, in the transient summer, for a while,  
His vagrant family are wont to rest;

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

And there perhaps my love is lingering now,  
Ling'ring alas! unmindful of his vow,  
    Beneath the smile of lovelier maiden blest.'

The Sun—for summer now is nearly past—  
    Rolls half extinguished in the northern deep,  
And o'er the land a twilight shade is cast,  
    And singing winds around the vallies sweep;  
The gloomy pine that shades the lowly shed,  
In sullen murmurs waves its lofty head,  
    And lulls the peaceful Laplander to sleep.

'Tis night—but darkness scarcely night resembling:  
    Upon the lofty hills the sun still sheds  
His midnight beams, in yellow spangles trembling  
    Upon the snows that crown their airy heads;  
And DRRA now has trimmed her little bark,  
And on the heaving waves of ocean dark,  
    Her swelling sail to midnight winds she spreads.

And she is gone to seek her wand'ring love—  
    Ah! my fair readers! be ye not inclined  
The maiden's artless passion to reprove,  
    Nor say I make my heroine too kind,  
For ye have arts—and eke I ween ye use 'em—  
To hide the warmer feelings of the bosom,  
    And vex, with long suspense, a lover's mind.

But ORRA loves, nor would conceal the truth,  
    Nor cruelly an unfelt coldness feign;  
And she would share the fortune of that youth,  
    As now she meets the dangers of the main;  
Where still to cheer her dark and wat'ry way  
She sings, as on she sails, this artless lay:  
    Oh listen to the Lapland Maiden's strain:

ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

ORRA'S SONG

Oh many a time when tempests rose  
I've looked upon the troubled wave;  
And wept as I have thought on those  
Who in the ocean find their grave.

And now were LAwo at my side,  
I'd sail for e'er from isle to isle,  
Without a star to be our guide,  
And meet the tempest with a smile.

But may the tempest yet be still,  
The sun be beaming in the sky,  
And be my lovci where he will,  
To him I'll fly, to him I'll fly.

That I might think of him—he bound  
This glitt'ring zone around my waist,  
And, till my lover I have found,  
It ne'er again shall be displaced.

The breezes failed, and ORRA'S sail was furled,  
On the still sea the light unbroken lay,  
Save when around her oar the waters curled,  
Or when her boat struck up the dancing spray;  
The breezes failed, and ORRA'S weary hand  
Must fail ere she can reach the distant land  
Where she a while for fav'ring winds may stay.

Huge, rising from the sea, not far away,—  
And crown'd with glitt'ring and eternal snows—  
A rock is seen, that in the solar ray,  
Far o'er the waves a gloomy shadow throws;  
Its lofty head, as if rebuked by heaven,  
Into a thousand shapeless peaks was riven:  
Nor flow'r nor plant upon its surface grows.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Its northern side displays a rugged cave,  
And the wild waters in the tempest, break  
O'er lesser fragments now above the wave,  
That to the cave an easy access make;  
Here, rising from their weedy bed of green,  
The sea-nymphs, though by mortals seldom seen,  
Their watery locks in midnight sun-shine shake.

Here to the rock, her boat young DRRA ties,  
And gains the cavern, with as light a tread  
As e'er those sea-nymphs from the ocean rise:  
And there her weary form to rest is laid.  
Did one so fair e'er grace a cell so rude!  
Or linger in so wild a solitude!  
Or slumber on so comfortless a bed!

And softly now her snowy eyelids close,  
Weighed down by slumber, o'er her bright blue eyes  
As bound beneath the cold and wintry snows,  
The azure wave of ocean frozen lies:  
Sleep on, sleep on, thou miserable fair,  
Oh slumber on, nor wake again to share  
The woes that wait thee, when thou shalt arise.

Fresh blows the wind—and hissing on the main,  
Like snowy serpents, curls the glittering spray,  
Wrapped in sweet sleep, the beauteous maid is lain,  
And smiles o'er her unconscious features play.  
The heavens with gloomy clouds are overspread—  
Her wandering soul, in dreams delusive led,  
In sunny fields with LA wo seems to stray.

Loud raves the wind, the sky with thunder rings,  
And all is dark, save where the light'ning flies  
Through the white foam that angry ocean flings  
Indignant to the dark and cruel skies—

## ORRA . ' A LAPLAND TALE

From its frail mooring ORRA'S boat is lorn,  
And far away upon the waves is borne  
For ever and for ever from her eyes.

Waked by the wild tempestuous war around,  
The Lapland maiden started from her sleep,  
And pale and trembling, rising from the ground,  
Looked out upon the wild and troubled deep.  
There glides a gleam of lightning through the dark;  
And in its light she missed her little bark  
That erst was moored to the rocky sleep.

She gave one shriek, while tremblingly she laid  
Upon her breaking heart, her hand so fair,  
And pallid as the surf that round her played,  
She senseless fell with horror and despair,  
Nor can she gain her boat if she could leap  
Down from the rocky height into the deep:  
Oh! no! 'tis death to go, 'tis death *to* linger there.

### NOTES

#### Note (a)

*'Far sweeter than the sweetest lay,  
That e'er- the many tongued bird  
Chants in the wood on summer's day.'*

This bird is the *Motacilla Suecica* or Scandinavian Wagtail, which, according to Mr. Acerbi (who travelled through Lapland in 1798—99), surpasses all other birds found in that country, by the beauty of its plumage and the sweetness of its voice. The natives call it *Saddan Keillinen*, signifying the *Bird of a Hundred Tongues*, and (it) is expressive of the nature of its song, which continually varies, and is an imitation of the voices of almost all other birds.

## ORRA : A LAPLAND TALE

Note (b)

*'I am a wandering mountaineer  
Nor do I fear to own the name'*

Mr. Acerbi describes the inhabitants of Lapland as consisting of two distinct classes, the Maritime Laplanders, and the Mountain Laplanders: the former have settled habitations on the sea coast, and the Mountain tribes, like the Tartars and Arabs, are continually wandering from place to place, but generally move toward the sea in summer for the convenience of fishing.

Note (c)

*"When last we to the ocean strayed"*

This alludes to the Mountain Laplanders going towards the sea-coast in summer.

Note (d)

*'I whiled my time with the sweet harpu'*

The harpu is the national instrument of the Finlanders.

Note (e)

*"But see, this cup will tell the rest"*

'When a Laplander', says Acerbi, 'has an inclination to marry a young female of his nation, he communicates his wish to his own family, who then repair in a body to the dwelling of the parents of the girl. When they are come to the door of the hut in which she lives, the principal spokesman enters first, followed by the rest of the kindred. As soon as they are come in, the orator fills out a bumper of spirits, which he offers to the girl's father, who, if he accepts of it, shows thereby that he approves of the match about to be moved for.' As LAWO goes to ORRA'S residence unaccompanied by his kindred, he is represented as performing this ceremony himself.

FROM  
POEMS OF RURAL LIFE  
IN THE DORSET DIALECT  
1844

'Vita rustica sine dubitatione proxima et quasi  
consanguinea sapientiae.'—*Columella*, I, I.



## *The Woodlands*

O spread agean your leaves an' flow'rs,  
Lwonesome woodlands! zunny woodlands  
Here underneath the dewy show'rs  
O' warm-air'd spring-time, zunny woodlands!  
As when, in drong or open ground,  
Wi' happy bwoyish heait I vound  
The twitt'ren birds a-builden round  
Your high-bough'd hedges, zunny woodlands!

You gie'd me life, you gie'd me jay,  
Lwonesome woodlands! zunny woodlands  
You gie'd me health, as in my play  
I rambled through ye, zunny woodlands!  
You gie'd me freedom, vor to rove  
In airy mead or sheiddy grove;  
You gie'd me smilen Fanney's love,  
The best ov all o't, zunny woodlands!

My vu'st shill skylark whiver'd high,  
Lwonesomc woodlands! zunny woodlands!  
To zing below your deep-blue sky  
An' white spring-clouds, O zunny woodlands!  
An' boughs o' trees that woonce stood here,  
Wer glossy green the happy year  
That gie'd me woone I lov'd so dear,  
An' now ha' lost, O zunny woodlands!

D let me rove agean unspied,  
Lwonesome woodlands! zunny woodlands!  
Along your green-bough'd hedges' zide,  
As then I rambled, zunny woodlands!  
An<sup>1</sup> where the missen trees woonce stood,  
Or tongues woonce rung among the wood,  
My memory shall meake em good,  
Though you've a-lost em, zunny woodlands!

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

*Leady-Day, an" Ridden House*

Aye, back at Leady-Day, you know,  
I come vrom Gullybrook to Stows;  
At Leady-Day I took my pack  
O' rottletraps, an' turn'd my back  
Upon the weather-beaten door,  
That had a-screen'd, so lone avore,  
The mwost that thease zide o' the greave,  
I'd live to have, or die to seave!  
My childern, an' my vier-pleace,  
Where Molly wi' her cheerful feace,  
When I'd a-trod my wat'ry road  
Vrom night-bcdarken'd viclds abrodc,  
Wi' nimble hands, at cvenen, blest  
Wi' virc an' vood my hard-won rest;  
The while the little woones did clim',  
So scek-skinnd, up from lim' to lim',  
Till, strugglen hard an' clingen tight,  
They reach'd at last my feace's height.  
All tryen which could soonest hold  
My mind wi' little teales they twold.  
An' ridden house is such a caddle,  
I shan't be over keen vor mwore o't,  
Not yet a while, you mid be sure o't,—  
I'd rather keep to woone wold staddle.

Well, zoo, avore the east begun  
To redden wi' the comen zun,  
We left the beds our mossy thatch  
Wer never mwore to overstretch,  
An' borrow'd uncle's wold hoss *Dragon*,  
To bring the slowly lumbren waggon,  
An' when he come, we veil a-packen  
The bedsteads, wi' their rwopes an' zacken;

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' then put up the wold earm-chair,  
An' cwoffer vull ov e'then-ware,  
An' vier-dogs, an' copper kittle,  
Wi' crocks an' saucepans, big an' little;  
An' fryen-pan, vor aggs to slide  
In butter round his hissén zide,  
An' gridire's even bars, to bear  
The drippen steake above the gleare  
O' brightly-glowen coals. An' then,  
All up o' top o' them agean  
The woaken bboard, where we did eat  
Our croust o' bread or bit o' meat,—  
An' when the bboard wer up, we tied  
Upon the reaves, along the zide,  
The weaken stools, his glossy meates,  
Bwoth when he's bearc, or when the pleates  
Do clatter loud wi' knives, below  
Our merry feiices in a row.  
An' put between his lags, turn'd up'ard,  
The zalt-box an' the corner cupb'ard.  
An' then we laid the wold clock-cease,  
All dumb, athirt upon his feace,  
Vor we'd a-left, I nee den tell ye,  
NOD works 'ithin his head or belly.  
An' then we put upon the pack  
The settle, flat upon his back;  
An' after that, a-tied in pairs  
In woone another, all the chairs,  
An' bits o' lumber wo'th a ride,  
An' at the very top a-tied,  
The childern's little stools did lie,  
Wi' lags a-turn'd toward the sky:  
Zoo there we Iwoaded up our scruff,  
An' tied it vast, an' started off.  
An',—as the waggon cooden car all  
We had to teake,—the butter-barrel  
An' cheese-wring, wi' his twinèn screw,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' all the pails an' veats, an' blue  
Wold milk leads, and a vew things mwore,  
Wer all a-carr'd the day nvore.  
And when the mmost DV our wold stuff  
Wer brought outside D' thik brown ruf,  
I rambled roun' wi' narrow looks,  
In fusty holes an' darksome nooks,  
To gather all I still mid vind,  
O' rags or sticks a-left behind.  
An' there the unlatch'd doors did creak,  
A-swung by winds, a-streamen weak  
Drough empty rooms, an' meakdn sad  
My heart, where me'th woonce meade me glad.  
Vor when a man do leave the he'th  
An' ruf where vu'st he drew his breath,  
Or where he had his bwoyhood's fun,  
An' things wer woonce a-zaid an' done  
That took his mind, do touch his heart  
A little bit, I'll answer vor't.  
Zoo ridden house is such a caddie,  
That I would rather keep my staddle.

### *Woodcom' Feast*

Come, Fanny, come! put on thy white,  
'Tis Woodcom' feast, good now! to-night.  
Come! think noo mwore, you silly maid,  
O' chicken drown'd, or ducks a-stray'd;  
Nor mwope to vind thy new frock's tail  
A-tore by hitchen in a nail;  
Nor grieve an' hang thy head azide,  
A-thinken o' thy lam' that died.  
The flag's a-vleèn wide an' high,  
An' ringen bells do sheake the sky;  
The fifes do play, the horns do roar

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' boughs be up at ev'ry door:  
They'll be a-dancen soon,—the drum  
'S a-rumblen now. Come, Fanny, come!  
Why father's gone, an' mother too.  
They went up leane an hour agoo;  
An' at the green the young and wold  
Do stan' so thick as sheep in vwold:  
The men do laugh, the bwoys do shout,-  
Come out you niwopen wench, come out,  
An' go wi' me, an' show at least  
Bright eyes an' smiles at Woodcom' feast.

Come, let's goo out, an' fling our heels  
About in jigs an' vow'r-han' reels;  
While all the stiff-lagg'd wolder vo'k,  
A-zitten roun', do talk an' joke  
An' smile to zee their own wold rigs  
A-show'd by our wild geames an'jigs.  
Vor ever since the wold church speer  
Vu'st prick'd the clouds, vrom year to year,  
When grass in mead did reach woone's knees,  
An' blooth did kern in apple-trees,  
Zome merry day 'v' a-broke to sheen  
Above the dance at Woodcom' green,  
An' all o' they that now do lie  
So low all roun' the speer so high,  
Woonce, vrom the biggest to the least,  
Had merry hearts at Woodcom' feiist.

Zoo keep it up, an' gi'e it on  
To other vo'k when we be gone.  
Come out; vor when the zetten zun  
Do leave in sheade our harmless fun,  
The moon wall rise up in the east  
To gi'e us light at Woodcom' feast.  
Come, Fanny, come! put on thy white,  
Tis merry Wood com' feast to-night:

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

There's nothen vor to mwope about,—  
Come out, you leazy jeade, come out!  
An' thou wult be, to woone at least,  
The pirtiest maid at Woodconm' feast.

### *Evenen in the Village*

Now the light o' the west is a-turn'd to gloom,  
An' the men be at hwome vrom ground;  
An' the bells be a-zenden all down the Coombe  
From tower, their mwoansome sound.  
An' the wind is still,  
An' the house-dogs do bark,  
An' the rooks be a-vled to the elems high an' dark,  
An' the water do roar at mill.

An' the flickeren light drough the window-peane  
Vrom the candle's dull fieame do shoot,  
An' young Jemmy the smith is a-gone down leane,  
A-playen his shrill-vaiced flute.  
An' the miller's man  
Do zit down at his ease  
On the seat that is under the cluster D' trees,  
Wi' his pipe an' his cider can. '

### *May*

Come out o' door, 'tis Spring! 'tis May  
The trees be green, the vields be gay;  
The weather's warm, the winter blast,  
Wi' all his train o' clouds, is past;  
The zun do rise while vo'k do sleep,  
To teake a higher daily zweep,

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

Wi' cloudless feace a-flingen down  
His sparklen light upon the groun'.

The air's a-streamen soft,—come drew  
The windor open; let it blow  
In drough the house, where vire, an' door  
A-shut, kept out the cwold avore.  
Come, let the vew dull embers die,  
An' come below the open sky;  
An' wear your best, vor fear the groun'  
In colours gay mid sheame your gown:  
An' goo an' rig wi' me a mile  
Or two up over geate an' stile,  
Drough zunny parrocks that do lead,  
Wi' crooked hedges, to the mead,  
Where elems high, in steately ranks,  
Do rise vrom yoller cowslip-banks,  
An' birds do twitter vrom the spray  
O' bushes deck'd wi' snow-white may;  
An' gil'cups, wi' the deaisy bed,  
Be under ev'ry step you tread.

We'll wind up roun' the hill, an' look  
All down the thickly-limber'd nook,  
Out where the squier's house do show  
His grey-wall'd peaks up drough the raw  
O' sheady elems, where the rook  
Do build her nest; an' where the brook  
Do creep along the meads, an' lie  
To catch the brightness O' the sky;  
An' cows, in water to their knees,  
Do stan' a-whisken off the vleys.

Mother D' blossoms, and ov all  
That's feair a-vield vrom Spring till Fall,  
The gookoo over white-weav'd seas  
Do come to zing in thy green trees,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' butternveels, in giddy flight,  
Do gleam the mmost by thy gay light.  
Dh! when, at last, my fleshly eyes  
Shall shut upon the yields an' skies,  
Mid zummer's zunny days be gone,  
An' winter's cbuds be comen on:  
Nor mid I draw upon the e'th,  
O' thy sweet air my leatest breath;  
Alasscn I mid want to stay  
Behine' for thee, O flow'ry May!

### *The White Road up athirt the Hill*

When hat-beam'd zuns do strik right down,  
An' burn our zwcaty feazen brown;  
An' zunny slopes, a-lyen nigh,  
Be back'd by hills so blue's the sky;  
Then, while the bells do sweetly cheem  
Upon the champen high-neck'd team,  
How lively, wi' a friend, do seem  
    The white road up athirt the hill.

The zwellen downs, wi' chalky tracks  
A-climmen up their zunny backs,  
Do hide green meads an' zedgy brooks,  
An' clumps o' trees wi' glossy rooks,  
An' hearty vo'k to laugh an' zing,  
An' parish-churches in a string,  
Wi' tow'rs o' merry bells to ring,  
    An' white roads up athirt the hills.

At feast, when uncle's vo'k do come  
To spend the day wi' us at hwome,  
An' we do lay upon the bboard  
The very best we can avvword,  
The wolder woones do talk an' smoke,  
An' younger woones do play an' joke,

IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' in the evenen all our vo'k  
Do bring em gwain athirt the hill.

An' while the green do zwarm wi' wold  
An' young, so thick as sheep in vwold,  
The bellows in the blacksmith<sup>5</sup>!/? shop,  
An' miller's moss-green wheel do stop,  
An' Iwonesome in the wheelwright's shed  
'S a-left the wheelless waggon-bed;  
While zwarms o' comen friends do tread  
The white road down athirt the hill.

An' when the winden load so white,  
A-climmen up the hills in zight,  
Do lead to pleazen, cast or west,  
The vu'st a-knownn, an' lov'd the best,  
How touch6n in the zunsheen's glow,  
Or in the sheades that clouds do drow  
Upon the zunburnt downs below,  
'S the white road up athirt the hill.

What peaceful hollows here the long  
White roads do windy round among!  
Wi' deairy cows in woody nooks,  
An' haymeakeis among their pooks,  
An' housen that the trees do screen  
From zun an' zight by boughs o' green!  
Young blushen beauty's hwomes between  
The white roads up athirt the hills.

*The Shepherd o' the Farm*

Oh! I be Shepherd o' the farm,  
Wi' tinklen bells an' sheep-dog's bark,  
**An' wi' my crook athirt my earm,**  
**Here I do rove below the lark.**

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' I do bide all day among  
The bleaten sheep, an' pitch their vwold;  
An' when the evenen sheades be long,  
Do zee em all a-penn'd an' twold.

An'I do zee the frisken lam's,  
Wi' swingen tails an' woolly lags,  
A-playen roun' their veeden dams,  
An' pullen o' their milky bags.

An' I bezide a hawthorn tree,  
Do' zit upon the zunny down,  
While sheades o' zummer clouds do vice  
Wi' silent flight along the groun'.

An' there, among the many cries  
O' sheep an' lambs, my dog do pass  
A zultry hour, wi' bJinken eyes,  
An' nose a-stratch'd upon the grass;

But, in a twinklen, at my word,  
He's all awake, an' up, an' gone  
Out roun' the sheep lik' any bird,  
To do what he's a-zent upon.

An' I do goo to washen pool,  
A-sousen over head an' ears  
The shaggy sheep, to clean their wool  
An' meake em ready vor the shears.

An' when the shearen time do come,  
Then we do work vrom dawn till dark;  
Where zome do shear the sheep, and zome  
Do mark their zides wi' measter's mark.

An' when the shearen's all a-done,  
Then we do eat, an' drink, an' zing,

IN THE DORSET DIALECT

In measter's kitchen till the tun  
Wi' merry sounds do sheake an' ring.

Oh! I be Shepherd o' the farm,  
Wi' tinklen bells an' sheep dog's bark  
An' wi' my crook athirt my earm,  
Here I do rove below the lark.

*Woodley*

Sweet Woodley! oh! how fresh an' gay  
Thy leanes an' yields be now in May,  
The while the broad-leav'd clotes do zwim  
In brooks wi' gil-cups at the brim;  
An' yoiler cowslip-beds do grow  
By thorns in blooth so while as snow;  
An' win' do come vrom copse wi' smells  
O' graegles wi' their hangen bells!

Though time do dreve me on, my mind  
Do turn in love to thee behind,  
The seame's a bulrush that's a-shook  
By wind a-blown up the brook:  
The curlen stream would dreve en down,  
But playsome air do turn en roun',  
An' meake en seem to bend wi' love  
To zunny hollows up above.

Thy tower still do overlook  
The woody knaps an' wind en brook,  
An' leane's wi' here an' there a hatch,  
An' house wi' elem-sheaded thatch,  
An' yields where chaps do vur outdo  
The Zunday sky, wi' cwoats o' blue;  
An<sup>1</sup> maidens' frocks do vur surpass  
The whitest deasies in the grass.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

What peals to-day from thy wold tow'r  
Do strike upon the zummer flow'r,  
As all the club, wi' dousty lags,  
Do walk wi' poles an' flappen flags,  
An' wind, to music, roun' between  
A zwarm P' v'ok upon the green!  
Though time do dreve me on, my mind  
Do turn wi' love to thee behind.

### *Sleep did come wi' the Dew*

O when our zun's a-zinken low,  
How soft's the light his fface do drow  
Upon the backward road our mind  
Do turn an' zee a-left behind;  
When we, in childhood's days did vind  
Our jay among the gil'cup flow'rs,  
All drough the zummer's zunny hours;  
    An' sleep did come wi' the dew.

An' afterwards, when we did zweet  
A tweilen in the zummer het,  
An' when our daily work wer done  
Did meet to have our evenen fun:  
Till up above the zetten zun  
The sky wer blusben in the west,  
An' we laid down in peace to rest,  
    An' sleep did come wi' the dew.

Ah! zome do turn—but tidden right—  
The night to day, an' day to night;  
But we do zee the vu'st red streak  
O' mornen, when the day do break;  
Zoo we don't grow up peale an' weak,  
But we do work wi' health an' strength,  
Vrom m o r n e n drough the whole day's length,  
    An' sleep do come wi' the dew.

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' when, at last, t'nir e'thly light  
Is jist a-drawen in to night,  
We mid be sure that God above,  
If we be true when he do prove  
Our stedvast faith an' thankvul love,  
Wull do vor us what mid be best,  
An' teake us into endless rest,  
As sleep do come wi' the dew.

### *Rivers don't gi'e Out*

The brook I left below the rank  
Ov alders that do shcade his bank,  
A-runnen down to dreve the mill  
Below the knap, 's a runnen still;  
The creepcn days an' weeks do vill  
Up years, an' meike wold things o' new,  
An' vok' do come, an' live, an' goo,  
But rivers don't gi'e out, John.

The leaves that in the spring do shoot  
Zo green, in fall be under voot;  
May flow'rs do grow vor June to bum,  
An' milk-white blooth o' trees do kern,  
An' ripen on, an' vail in turn;  
The miller's moss-green wheel mid rot,  
An' he mid die an' be vorgot,  
But rivers don't gi'e out, John.

A vew short years do bring an' rear  
A maid—as Jeane wer—young an' fear,  
An' vewer zummer-ribbons, tied  
In Zunday knots, do feade beside  
Her cheak avore her bloom ha' died:  
Her youth won't stay,—her rwozy look  
'S a feaden flow'r, but time's a brook  
To run an' not gi'e out, John.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' yet, while things do come an' goo,  
God's love is steadvast, John, an' true;  
If winter vrost do chill the ground,  
    'Tis but to bring the zummer round,  
All's well a-lost where He's a-vound,  
    Vor if'tis right, vor Christes seake  
    He'll gi'e us mwore than he do teake,—  
    His goodness don't gi'e out, John.

### *Hay-meaken*

'Tis merry ov a zummer's day,  
Where vo'k be out a-meaken hay;  
Where men an' women, in a string,  
Do ted or turn the grass, an' zing,  
Wi' cheemen valces, merry zongs,  
A-tossen o' their shecnen prongs  
Wi' earms a-zwangen left an' right,  
In colour'd gowns an' shirtsleeves white;  
Or, wider spread, a reaken round  
The rwozy hedges o' the ground,  
Where Sam do zee the speckled sneake,  
An' try to kill en wi' his reake;  
Art' Poll do jump about an' squall,  
To zee the twisten sloo worm crawl.

'Tis merry where a gaytongued lot  
Ov hay-meakers be all a-squot,  
On lightly-russlen hay, a-spread  
Below an elem's lofty head,  
To rest their weary limbs an' munch  
Their bit o' dinner, or their nunch;  
Where teethy reakes do lie all round  
By picks a-stuck up into ground.  
An' wi' their vittles in their laps,

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' in their hornen cups their draps  
O' rider sweet, or frothy eale,  
Their tongues do run wi' joke an' teale.  
An' when the zun, so low an' red,  
Do sheen above the leafy head  
O' zome broad tree, a-rizcn high  
Avore the vi'ry western sky,  
Tis merry where all han's do goo  
Athirt the groun', by two an' two,  
A-reaken, over humps an' hollors,  
The russlen grass up into rollers.  
An' woone do row it into line,  
An' woone do clwose it up behine;  
An' after them the little bwoys  
Do stride an' fling their earms all woyes,  
Wi' busy picks, an' proud young looks  
A-meaken up their tiny pocks.  
An' zoo 'tis merry out among  
The vo'k in hay-vield all day long.

### *Hay-carren*

'Tis merry ov a zummer's day,  
When vo'k be out a-halen hay,  
Where boughs, a-spread upon the ground,  
Do meake the staddle big an' round;  
An' grass do stand in pook, or lie  
In long-back'd weales or parsels, dry.  
There I do vind it stir my heart  
To hear the frothen bosses snort,  
A-halen on, wi' sleek-heair'd hides,  
The red-wheel'd waggon's deep-blue zides.  
Aye; let me have woone cup o' drink,  
An' hear the linky harness clink,  
An' then my blood do run so warm,  
An' put si eh strangth within my earm,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

That I do long to toss a pick,  
A-pitchen or a-meaken rick.

The bwoy is at the hosse's head,  
An' up upon the waggon bed  
The Iwoadeis, strong o' carm do blan',  
At head, an' back at tail, a man,  
Wi' skill to build the Iwoad upright  
An' bind the vwolded corners tight;  
An' at each zide o'm, sprack an' strong,  
, pitcher wi' his long-stem'd prong,  
Avore the best two women now  
A-call'd to reaky after plough.

When I do pitchy, 'tis my pride  
Vor Jenny Hine to reake my zide,  
An' zee her fling her reake, an' reach  
So vur, an' teake in sich a streech;  
An' I don't shatter hay, an' meake  
Mwore work than needs vor Jenny's reake.  
I'd sooner zee the weales' high rows  
Lik' hedges up above my nose,  
Than have light work myzelf, an' vind  
Poor Jeane a-beat an' left behind;  
Vor she would sooner drop down dead.  
Than let the pitchers get a-head.

Tis merry at the rick to zee  
How picks do wag, an' hay do vlee.  
While woone's unlwoaden, woone do teake  
The pitches in; an<sup>1</sup> zome do meake  
The lofty rick upright an<sup>1</sup> roun<sup>1</sup>,  
An' tread en hard, an<sup>1</sup> reake en down,  
An' tip en, when the zun do zet,  
To shoot a sudden vail o<sup>1</sup> wet.  
An' zoo 'tis merry any day  
Where vo'k be out a-carrin hay.

IN THE DORSET DIALECT

*Where we bid keep our Flagon*

When we in mornen had a-drow'd  
The grass or russlen hay abrode,  
The lit'some maidens an<sup>1</sup> the chaps,  
Wi' bits o' nunchens in their laps,  
Did all zit down upon the knaps  
    Up there, in under hedge, below  
    The highest clem o' the row,  
    Where we did keep our flagon.

There we could zee green vields at hand,  
Avore a hunderd on beyand,  
An<sup>1</sup> rows o' trees in hedges roun'  
Green meads, an' zimmerleazes brown,  
An' thorns upon the zunny down,  
    While aier, vrom the rocken zedge  
    In brook, did come along the hedge,  
    Where we did keep our flagon.

There laughen chaps did try in play  
To bury maidens up in hay,  
As gigglen maidens tried to roll  
The chaps down into zome deep hole,  
Or sting wi' nettles woone o'm's poll;  
    While John did hele out each his drap  
    O' eale or cider, in his lap  
    Where he did keep the flagon.

Woone day there spun a whirlwind by  
Where Jenny's clothes wer out to dry;  
An' off vied frocks, a'most a-catch'd  
By smock-frocks wi' their sleeves outstratch'd,  
An' caps a-frill'd an' eapcrns patch'd;  
    An' she a-stearen in a fright,  
    Wer glad enough to zee em light  
    Where we did keep our flagon.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' when white clover wer a-sprung  
Among the eegrass, green an' young,  
An' elder-flowers wera-spread  
Among the rwozen white an' red,  
An' honeyzucks wi' hangen head,—  
    O' Zunday evenens we did zit  
    To look all roun' the grounds a bit,  
    Where we'd a-kept our flagon.

### *The Sky a-Clearen*

The dreven seud that overcast  
The zummer sky is all a-past,  
An' softer air, a-blownen drough  
The quiv'ren boughs, do sheake the vew  
Last rain drops off the leaves lik' dew;  
    An' peaviers, now a-getten dry,  
    Do steam below the zunny sky  
    That's now so vast a-clearen.

The sheades that wer a-lost below  
The stormy cloud, agean do show  
Their mocken sheapes below the light;  
An' house-walls be a-looken white,  
An' vo'k do stir woonce mwore in zight,  
    An' busy birds upon the wing  
    Do whiver roun' the boughs an' zing,  
    To zee the sky a-clearen.

Below the hill's an ash; below  
The ash, white elder-flow'rs do blow;  
Below the elder is a bed  
O' robinhoods o' blushen red;  
An' there, wi' nunches all a-spread,  
    The hay-meakers, wi' each a cup  
    O' drink, do smile to zee hold up  
    The ram, an'sky a-clearen.

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

'Mid blushen maidens, wi' their zong,  
Still draw their white-stemm'd reakes among  
The long-back'd weales an' new-meade pooks,  
By biown-stemm'd trees an' cloty brooks;  
But have noo call to spwcil their looks  
By work, that God could never meake  
Their weaker han's to undcrteake,  
Though skies mid be a-clearen.

'Tis wrong vor women's Iran's to clips  
The zull an' reap-hook, speades an' whips;  
An' men abroad, should leave, by right,  
Woone faithful heart at hwome to light  
Their bit o' vier up at night,  
An' hang upon the hedge to dry  
Their snow-white linen, when the sky  
In winter is a-clearen.

### *The Evenen Star o' Zummer*

When vu'sl along thease road vrom mill,  
I zeed ye hwome all up the hill,  
The poplar tree, so straight an' tall,  
Did rustle by the watervall;  
An' in the leaze the cows wer all  
A-lyen down to teake theii rest.  
An' slowly zunk toward the west  
The evenen star o' zummer.

In parroock there the hay did lie  
In weale below the clemes, dry;  
An' up in hwome-groun' Jim, that know'd  
We all should come along thik road,  
'D a-tied the grass in knots that drow'd  
Poor Poll, a-watchen in the West  
Woone brighter star than all the rest,—  
The evenen star o' zummer.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

The stars that still do zet an' rise,  
Did sheen in our forefather's eyes;  
They glitt'd ID the vu'st men's zighl,  
The last will have em in their night;  
But who can vind em half so bright  
As I thought thik puale star above  
Mv smilen Jeane, my zwcet vu'st love,  
The evenen star o' zummer.

How sweet's the morncn fresh an' new,  
WY sparklen brooks an' glitt'ren dew;  
How sweet's the noon wi' sheades a-drow'd  
Upon the groun' but Icatciy mow'd.  
An' bloomen flowers all abrode;  
But sweeter still, as I do dim',  
Thease woody hill in evencn dim  
'S the evenen stai o' zummer.

### *The Clote*

(WATER-LILY)

O zummei clote! when the brook's a-sliden  
So slow an' smooth down his zedgy bed,  
Upon thy broad leaves so seafe a-riden  
The water's top wi' thy yoller head.  
By black rin'd allers,  
An' weedy shallers  
Thee then dost float, goolden zummer clote!

The grey-bough'd withy's a-leanen lowly  
Above the water thy leaves do hide;  
The benden bulrush, a-swayen slowly,  
Do skirt in zummer thy river's zide;  
An' perch in shoals, O,  
Do vill the holes, O,  
**Where thee dost float, goolden zummer clote!**

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

Oh, when thy brook-drinken flow'r 's a-blown,  
The burnen zummer's a-zetten in;  
The time o' greenness, the time o' mowen,  
When in the hay-vield, wi' zunburnt skin,  
The vo'k do drink, O,  
Upon the brink, O,  
Where thec dost float, goolden zummer clote!

Wi' earms a-spreadn, an' cheaks a-blown,  
How proud wer I when I vu'st could zwim  
Athirt the deep pleace where thou hist growen,  
Wi' thy long more vrom the bottom dim;  
While cows, knee-high, O,  
In brook, wer nigh, O,  
Where thee dost float, goolden zummer dote!

Ov all the brooks drough the meads a-winden,  
Ov all the meads by a river's brim,  
There's nwone so feair o' my own heart's vinden,  
As where the maidens do zee thee swim,  
An' stan' to teake, O,  
Wj' long-stemm'd reake, O,  
Thy flow'r afloat, goolden zummer clote!

### *I got two Vields*

I got two vields, an' I don't ceare  
What squire mid have a bigger sheare.  
My little zummerleaze do stratch  
All down the hangen, to a patch  
O' mead between a hedge an' rank  
Ov elems, an' a river bank.  
Where yoller clotes, in spreaden beds  
O' floaten leaves, do lift their heads  
By benden bulrushes an' zedge

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

A-swayen at the water's edge,  
Below the withy that do spread  
Athirt the brook his grey-leav'd head.  
An' eltrot flowers, milky white,  
Do catch the slanten evenen light;  
An' in the meaple boughs, along  
The hedge, do ring the blackbird's zong;  
Dr in the day, a-vhen drough  
The leafy trees, the whoa'se gookoo  
Do zing to mowers that do zet  
Their zives on end, an' stan' to whel.  
From my wold house among the trees  
A leane do goo along the leaze  
O' yoller gravel, down between  
Two mossy banks vor ever green.  
An' trees, a-hangen overhead,  
Do hide a trinklen gully-bed,  
A-cover'd by a bridge vor hoss  
Or man a-voot to come across.  
Zoo wi' my hwomestead, I don't ceire  
What squire mid have a bigger sheare!

### *Bemi'ster*

Sweet Be'mi'ster, that bist a-bound  
By green an' woody hills all round,  
Wi' hedges, reachen up between  
A thousan' yields o' zummer green,  
Where elems' lofty heads do drow  
Their sheades vor hay-meakers below,  
An' wild hedge flow'rs do charm the souls  
O' maidens in their evenen strolls.

When I o' Zunday nights wi' Jeane  
Do saunter drough a vield or leane,  
Where elder-blossoms be a-spread  
Above the eltrot's milk-white head,

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

An' flow'rs o' blackberries do blow  
Upon the brembles, white as snow,  
To be outdone avore my zight  
By Jean's gay frock o' dazzlen white;

Oh! then there's nothen that's 'ithout  
Thy hills that I do ho about,—  
Noo bigger plcace, noo gayer town,  
Beyond thy sweet bells' dyen soun',  
As they do ring, or strike the hour,  
At evenen vrom thy wold red tow'r.  
No; shelter still my head, an' keep  
My bwones when I do vail asleep.

### *Jenny out vrom Hwome*

O wild-reaven west winds, as you do roar on,  
The clems do rock an' the poplars do ply,  
An' weave do dreve weave in the dark-water'd pon',—  
Oh! where do ye rise vrom, an' where do ye die?

D wild-reaven winds, I do wish I could vice  
Wi' you, lik' a bird o' the clouds, up above  
The rudge o' the hill an' the top o' the tree,  
To where I do long vor, an' vo'kes I do love.

Or else that in under thease rock I could hear,  
In the soft-zwellen sounds you do leave in your road,  
Zome words you mid bring me, vrom tongues that be  
dear,  
Vrom friends that do love me, all scatter'd abrode.

O wild-reaven winds! if you ever do roar  
By the house an' the elems vrom where I'm a-come,  
Breathe up at the window, or call at the door,  
An' tell you've a-voun' me a-thinken o' hwome.

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

*Night a-Zetten In*

When leazers wi' their laps o' corn  
Noo longer be a-stoopen,  
An' in the stubble, all vorlorn,  
Noo poppies be a-droopen;  
When thease young harvest-moon do weane,  
That now've his horns so thin, O,  
We'll leave off walken in the leane,  
While night's a zetten in, O.

When zummer doust is all a-laid  
Below our litty shoes, O;  
When all the raifn-chill'd flow'rs be dead,  
That now do drink the dews, O;  
When beauty's neck, that's now a-show'd,  
's a-muffled to the chin, O;  
We'll leave off walken in the road,  
When night's a-zetten in, O.

But now, while barley by the road  
Do hang upon the bough, O,  
A-pull'd by branches off the Iwood  
A-riden hwome to mow, O;  
While spiders roun' the flower-stalks  
Ha' cobwebs yet to spin, O,  
We'll cool ourzelves in out-door walks,  
When night's a-zetten in, O.

While down at vword the brook so small,  
That leately wer so high, O,  
Wi' little tinklen sounds do vall  
In roun' the stwones half dry, O;  
While twilight ha' sich air in store,  
To cool our zunburnt skin, O,  
We'll have a ramble out o' door,  
When night's a-zetten in, O.

IN THE DORSET DIALECT

*Eclogue*

*The Common a-Took In*

Thomas and John

THOMAS

Good morn t'ye, John. How b'ye? how b'yc?  
Zoo you be gwain to market, I do zee.  
Why, you be quite a-lwoaded wi' your geese.

JOHN

Ees, Thomas, ees.  
Why, I'm a-getten rid ov ev'ry goose  
An' goslen I've a-got: an' what is woose,  
I fear that I must zell my little cow.

THOMAS

How zoo, then, John? Why, what's the matter now  
What, can't ye get along? B'ye run a-ground?  
An' can't pay twenty shillens vor a pound?  
What, can't ye put a Iwoaf on shelf?

JOHN

Ees, now;

But I do fear I shan't 'ithout my cow.  
No; they do mean to teake the moor in, I do hear,  
An' 'twill be soon begun upon;  
Zoo I must zell my bit o' stock to-year,  
Because they woon'l have any groun' to run upon.

THOMAS

Why, what d'ye tell o'? I be very zorry  
To hear what they be gwain about;  
But yet I s'pose there'll be a 'lotment vor ye,  
When they do come to mark it out.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

JOHN

No; not vor me, I fear. An' if there should,  
Why, 'twoulden be so handy as 'tis now;  
Vor 'tis the common that do do me good,  
The run for my vew geese, or vor my cow.

THOMAS

Ees, that's the job; why 'tis a handy thing  
To have a bit o' common, I do know,  
To put a little cow upon in Spring,  
The while woone's bit ov orcha'd grass do grow.

JOHN

Aye, that's the thing, you zee. Now I do mow  
My bit o' grass, an' meake a little rick;  
An' in the zummer, while do grow,  
My cow do run in common vor to pick  
A bleade or two o' grass, if she can vind em,  
Vor tother cattle don't leave much behind em  
Zoo in the evenen, we do put a lock  
O' nice fresh grass avorc the wicket;  
An' she do come at vive or zix o'clock,  
As constant as the zun, to pick it.  
An' then, bezides the cow, why we do let  
Our geese run out among the emmet hills;  
An' then when we do pluck em, we do get  
Vor zeale zome veathers an' zome quills;  
An' in the winter we do fat em well,  
An' car em to the market vor to zell  
To gentlevo'ks, vor we don't oft avvword  
To put a goose a-top ov ouer bboard;  
But we do get our feast,—vor we be eable  
To clap the giblets up a-top o' teable.

THOMAS

An' I don't know o' many better things,  
Than geese's heads and gizzards, lags an' wings.

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

JOHN

An' then, when I ha' nothen else to do,  
Why I can teake my hook an' gloves, an' goo  
To cut a lot o' vuzz and briars  
Vor heten ovens, or vor lighten viers.  
An' when the childern be too young to earn  
A penny, they can g'out in zunny weather,  
An' run about, an' get together  
A bag o' cow-dung vor to burn.

THOMAS

'Tis handy to live near a common;  
But I've a-zecd, an' I've a-zaid,  
That if a poor man got a bit o' bread,  
They'll try to teake it vrom en.  
But I wer twold back tother day,  
That they be got into a way  
O' letten bits o' groun' out to the poor.

JOHN

Well, I do hope 'tis true, I'm sure;  
An' I do hope that they will do it here,  
Or I must goo to workhouse, I do fear.

### *The Happy Days when I wer Young*

In happy days when I wer young,  
An' had noo ho, an' laugh'd an' zung,  
The maid wer merry by her cow,  
An' men wer merry wi' the plough;  
But never talk'd, at hwome or out  
O' dears, o' what's a-talk'd about  
By many now,—that to despise  
The laws o' God an' man is wise.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Wi' daily health, an' daily bread,  
An' thatch above their shelter'd head,  
They felt noo fear, an' had noo spite,  
To keep their eyes awake at night;  
But slept in peace wi' God on high  
An' man below, an' fit to die.

O' grassy mead an' woody nook,  
An' waters o' the winden brook,  
That sprung below the vu'st dark sky  
That rai'n'd, to run till seas be dry;  
An' hills a-stannen on while all  
The works o' man do rise an' vail;  
An' trees the toddlen child do vind  
At vu'st, an' leave at last behind;  
I wish that you could now unwuld  
The peace an' jay o' times o' wold;  
An' tell, when death do still my tongue,  
O' happy days when I wer young.  
Vrom where wer all this venom brought,  
To kill our hope an' taint our thought?  
Clear brook! thy water coulden bring  
Such venom vrom thy rocky spring;  
Nor could it come in zummer blights,  
Or reaven storms o' winter nights,  
Or in the cloud an' viry stroke  
O' thunder that do split the wuak.

O valley dear! I wish that I  
'D a-liv'd in former times, lo die  
Wi' all the happy souls that trod  
Thy turf in peace, an' died to God;  
Or gone wi' them that laugh'd an' zung  
In happy days when I wer young!

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

### *The Carter*

O, I be carter, wi' my whip  
A-smacken loud, as by my zide,  
Up over hill, an' down the dip,  
The heavy Iwoad do slowly ride.

An' I do hal in all the crops,  
An' I do bring in vuzz vrom down;  
An' I do goo vor wood to copse,  
An' car the corn an' straw to town.

An' I do goo vor lime, an' bring  
Hwome cider wi' my sleek-heair'd team,  
An' smack my limber whip an' zing.  
While all their bells do gaily checme.

An' I do always know the pleace  
To gi'e the hosses breath, or drug;  
An' ev'ry hoss do know my feace,  
An' mind my '*mether ho!* an' *whog!*

An' merry hay-meakers do ride  
Vrom vield in zummer wi' their prongs,  
In my blue waggon, zide by zide  
Upon the reaves, a-zingen zongs.

An' when the vrost do catch the stream,  
An' oves wi' icicles be hung,  
My panten bosses' breath do steam  
In white-grass'd vields, a-haulen dung.

An' mine's the waggon fit vor Iwoads,  
An' mine be Iwoads to cut a rout;  
An' mine's a team, in routy rwoads,  
To pull a Iwoaded waggon out.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

A zull is nothen when do come  
Behind their lags; an' they do teake  
A roller as they would a drum,  
An' harrow as they would a reake.

Of I be a carter, wi' my whip  
A-smacken loud, as by my zide.  
Up over hill, an' down the dip,  
The heavy Iwoad do slowly ride.

### *Lullaby*

The rook's nest do rock on the tree-top  
Where vew foes can stand;  
The martin's is high, an' is deep  
In the steep cliff o' zand.  
But thou, love, a-sleepen where vootsteps  
Mid come to thy bed,  
Hast father an' mother to watch thee  
An' shelter thy head.  
Lullaby, Lilybrow. Lie asleep;  
Blest be thy rest.

An' zome birds do keep under ruffen  
Then: young vrom the storm,  
An' zome wi' nesthoodens o' moss  
And o<sup>1</sup> wool, do lie warm.  
An' we wull look well to the houseruf  
That o'er thee mid leak,  
An<sup>1</sup> the blast that mid beat on thy winder  
Shall not smite thy cheek.  
Lullaby, Lilibrow. Lie asleep;  
Blest be thy rest.

## IN THE DORSET DIALECT

### *The Common a-Took In*

Oh! no, Poll, no! Since they've a-took  
The common in, our lew wold nook  
Don't seem a-bit as used to look  
    When we had runnen room;  
Girt banks do shut up ev'ry drong,  
An' stratch wi' thorny backs along  
Where we did use to run among  
The vuzzen an' the broom.

Ees; while the ragged colts did crop  
The nibbled grass, I used to hop  
The emmetbuts, vrom top to top,  
    So proud D' my spry jumps:  
Wi' thee behind or at my zide,  
A-skippen on so light an' wide  
'S thy little frock would let thee stride,  
    Among the vuzzy humps.

An' while the lark up auver head  
Did twitter, I did sarch the red  
Thick bunch o' broom, or yoller bed  
    O' vuzzen vor a nest;  
An' them di'st hunt about, to meet  
Wi' strawberries so red an' sweet,  
Or clogs or shoes off hosses veet,  
    Or wild thyme vor thy breast;

Or when the cows did run about  
A-stung, in zummer, by the stout,  
Or when they play'd, or when they fought,  
    Di'st stand a-looken on:  
An' where white geese, wi' long red bills,  
Did veed among the emmet-hills,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

There we did *goo to* vind their quills  
Alongzids o' the pon'.

What fun there wer among us, when  
The hayward come, wi' all his men,  
To dreve the common, an' to pen  
    Strange cattle in the pound;  
The cows did bleare, the men did shout  
An' toss their earns an<sup>l</sup> sticks about,  
An' vo'ks, to own their stock, come out  
    Vrom all the houscn round.

FROM  
POEMS  
PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE  
(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)  
1845



## *Easter Bells*

The shrunken waters, lately high,  
Have left the white-slim'd withies dry,  
And pilewort on the bank, holds up  
Before the sun its golden cup,  
And lightsome-hearted young folk stray  
With glossy shoes by ev'ry way,  
AH happy with their holyday,  
    While Easter bells are ringing.

The eastern clouds all fled away  
To let the sun rise clear to-day,  
And make the high-sky<sup>1</sup>d world look fair  
For joys they meet to-day to share.  
So ev'ry youth has gone to find  
The maid that's fairest to his mind,  
And left his daily work behind  
    While Easter bells are ringing.

Our hearts are dull when dark mist flies  
Below the gloom of sunless skies,  
And beats through leafless trees that yield  
No shelter in the wat'ry field;  
But gladness stirs our souls at sight  
Of gay larks floating in the light  
Of blue-sky'd morning, at their height,  
    While Easter bells are ringing,—

And blue-wing'd vi'lets lighty shake  
In sunny air beside the brake;—  
And April's coming on to shed  
Her dews upon the cowslip's head;  
But this year's flow'rs will all have died  
With some now hopeful souls beside,

## PDIMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

Before another Easter tide  
Shall come with bells a-ninging.

### *Rustic Childhood*

No city primness train'd my feet  
To strut in childhood through the street,  
But freedom let them loose to tread  
The yellow cowslip's downcast head;  
Or climb, above the twining hop  
And ivy, to the elm-tree's top;  
Where southern airs of blue-sky'd day  
Breathed o'er the daisy and the may.

I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

Far off from town, where splendour tries  
To draw the looks of gather'd eyes,  
And clocks, unheeded, fail to warn  
The loud-tongued party of the morn,  
I spent in woodland shades my day  
In cheerful work or happy play,  
And slept at night where rustling leaves  
Threw moonlight shadows o'er my eaves.

I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

Or in the grassy drove by ranks  
Of white-stemm'd ashes or by banks  
Of narrow lanes, in-winding round  
The hedgy sides of shelving ground;  
Where low-shot light struck in to end  
Again at some cool-shaded bend,  
Where we might see through darkleav'd boughs  
The evening light on green hill-brows.

I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

Or on the hillock where I lay  
At rest on some bright holyday;  
When short noon-shadows lay below  
The thorn in blossom white as snow;  
And warm air bent the glist'ning tops  
Of bushes in the lowland copse,  
Before the blue hills swelling high  
And far against the southern sky.

I knew you young, and love you now,  
O shining grass, and shady bough.

*Sonnet: Leaves*

Leaves of the summer, lovely summer's pride,  
Sweet is the shudu below your silent tree,  
Whether in waving copses, where ye hide  
My roamings, or in fields that let me see  
The open sky; and whether ye may be  
Around the low-stemm'd oak, robust and wide;  
Or taper ash upon the mountain side;  
Or lowland elm; your shade is sweet to me.

Whether ye wave above the early flow'rs  
In lively green; or whether, rustling sere,  
Ye fly on playful winds, around my feet,

In dying autumn; lovely are your bow'rs,  
Ye early-dying children of the year;  
Holy the silence of your calm retreat.

*Sonnet: Rural Nature*

Ye airs of sunny spring that softly blow  
With whisp'ry breathings o'er the grasses' blade,  
Ye grass-bespangling flow'rs—too soon to fade—

## POEMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

That now in gemlike brightness round me grow:  
Ye saplings, and ye greenbough'd tress, that throw  
Your waving shadows on the sunny glade;  
Thou lowland stream, whose winding waters flow,  
Like molten silver, to the hoarse cascade:  
Give vice the noisy town; and let the great  
Ride mighty o'er the earth with pride and pow'r,  
Give avarice his gold; but let me flee  
Where cold and selfish hearts live not to hate  
And scorn. Oh take me to thy lonely bow'r,  
Sweet rural nature! Life is dear for thee.

### *Whitburn's Green and White*

How fresh the air, how soft the light,  
That fann'd the cheeks and fill'd the sight,  
When *Robert'*, in the evening, met  
His *Jane* before the sun had set,  
Or gathering dews had fall'n to wet  
The jasmine by the house's aide,  
Or darkening twilight came to hide  
From his fond sight,  
In airy night,  
Sweet Whitburn water's green and white.  
For climbing plants with flow'rs and leaves  
Hid all the wall from ground to eaves;  
And stems of snow-white Lilies plied,  
Wind-shaken, by the lawn spread wide  
And long before the house's side;  
And snow-white geese, with quiv'ring tails,  
Were cackling by the snow-white rails,  
And filled the sight,  
In summer light,  
With lively hues of green and white.

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

A snow-white bridge of trusty planks  
Bore Robert o'er the brook's green banks,  
Above the ribbon'd sedge's stalk,  
And water sparkling on the chalk;  
And when young Jenny took her walk  
On Sunday evenings, in the height  
Of summer, she was all in white;  
    And walk'd in mien  
    A stately queen,  
In Whitburn water's white and green.

The appletrees with snow-white bloom  
D'erspread the grassy orchard's gloom,  
And hawthorns open'd to the heat  
In ev'ry hedge, their snow-white sheet;  
And where she walk'd with light-shod feet,  
The daisy-buds, not yet conceal'd  
By grass, bespangled all the field;  
    While May's warm light,  
    Had thus bedight,  
All Whitburn with its green and white.

But Robert had to go away  
From Jenny, on from June till May;  
And coming back he found her wati,  
With black instead of white put on  
For both the old folk that were gone,  
And underneath their grassy heap  
And chalk-white headstone lay asleep;  
    Betok'ning right,  
    To others' sight,  
Their love of Whitburn's green and white.

But they, poor souls, could only save  
Enough to take them to the grave,  
And so left Jane, with tearful pray'r,  
Behind, to God's unfailling care.

POEMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

But Robert took her soon to share  
The joys and trials of his life,  
His everfaithful-hearted wife,  
    So dear's the light,  
    To his fond sight,  
For olden days of green and white.

And so he went away and took  
The little farm at Whitburn brook;  
And train'd the jasmine round the door,  
And kept the green as 'twas before,  
With all the railings painted o'er  
Snow-white, and red-legg'd gcese to swim  
The stream, or tread its weedy brim;  
    That so the light,  
    May give his sight,  
Dear Whitburn's hues of green and white.

*'How Sweet's the Love that meets Return'*

One glowing evening, when shades were dark'ning  
    Below the elm trees before her door,  
I pass'd with light lingering footsteps, hark'niig  
    To sounds that struck through my fond heart's core.  
For there, with soul-touching turn and swell,  
An unknown voice sweetly rose and fell,  
And sang, as far as I then could learn,  
'How sweet's the love that meets return'.

There in the hall by the evening lighted  
    Within a casement set open wide,  
And tired with work that she never slighted,  
    She sat at rest by her brother's side;  
And, as the tune wound so high and low,  
Beneath his light string-awak'ning bow,  
She sang the old song she wish'd to learn,  
'How sweet's the love that meets return',

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

And once I saw her so light's a fairy,  
    With glowing cheeks under glossy locks,  
With busy hands cutting down rosemary,  
    And blue-car'd spike for her snow-white frocks  
And felt that no one of womankind  
Could take like her my bewildered mind,  
I lov'd her fondly, but had to learn  
'How sweet's the love that meets return'.

But when at Maypole we young folk parted  
    Below the garlands with dying leaves,  
And I took her off, so happy-hearted  
    To see her home to her house's eaves;  
Then by the kind words she spoke so fast,  
And by her looks and her smiles at last,  
I found that night, by the moon-bright durn,  
'Hpw sweet's the love that meets return'.

And when for my sake, in wedlock holy,  
    She left the old folks to sit alone,  
While through the evening the clock tick'd slowly,  
    And crickets chirp'd by the warm hearth-stone;  
They lov'd to talk of their daughter gone,  
And wondered how we were going on;  
For in their hearts never ceased to burn  
For her, the love that met return.

And when, soon after, again I drove her  
    Back home to see them, a welcome child,  
She laugh'd to see how her flow'rs ran over  
    The place, forsaken and rambling wild.  
Within her room one had dared to peep,  
As though *to* see if she lay asleep,  
And some climbed over the pales and dum,  
As if in love that sought return.

*Thy Lane*

I love the narrow lane's dark bows,  
 When summer glows or winter blows;  
 Or when the hedge-born primrose Aides  
 its head upon the dry bankside,  
 By ribby-rmded maple shoots,  
 Or round the dark-stemn Yd Jia7eFs roots:  
 Where weather-beaten ivy winds  
 Umvithfring o'er the elms' brown rinds,  
 And where the ash's while bough whips  
 The whinstling air with coal-black tips,  
 And where the grassy ground, beside  
 The gravel-washing brook, lies wide.  
 And leaping lambs, with shrill-toned throats,  
 Bleat londly in their first white coats,  
 And rooks through clear air cleave, in black  
 And cloud-high flocks, their unmark'd track,  
 And merry larks are whistling lond,  
 Aloft, unshaded by a cloud

I like the narrow lane's dark bows,  
 When winter blows or summer glows;  
 Where under .summer.puns, between  
 The sappy boughs of lively green,  
 The playful shadows mutely *mock*  
 The moving trees that breezes rock,  
 And robinhoods bloom red below  
 The rough-stemni'd bramble's flow'ry bow,  
 And stitchwort's bending ,stalks upbear  
 Their warlike cups to sultry air,  
 Where I may hear the wind-brought words  
 Of workfolk, with the songs of birds,  
 And rubb'd scythes reared upon their sneads,  
 And ringing in the roadside meads.

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

I love the narrow lane's dark bows,  
When summer glows or winter blows;  
Or in the fall, when leaves all fade,  
Yet fhitt' ring in the airy shade,  
And in the shelter'd *shaw*, the blast  
Has *shaken* down the green-cupp'd mast.  
And time is black'ning blue-skmn'd sloes,  
And blackberries on bramble bows,  
And ripening haws me growing red  
Abound the grey-rin'd hawthorn's head,  
And hazel branches, brokentipp'd  
And brown, of all their nuts are stnpp'd,  
And in the leazes, whiffing white,,  
The whirling thistle seeds alight  
In sunshine, *struck* from bents" brown stalks  
By trolling girls in Sunday walks.

I love the narrow lane's dark bows,  
When summer glows or winter blows,  
And wildly driven wet is east  
Through windy gates upon the blast,  
And trickling down the trees, around  
Their trunks, the rain drops fall to ground,  
And wither'd leaves, too wet to ride  
The winds, line ev'ry ditches side,  
Nor jongs of birds, nor merry .ounds,  
Ofjouls at work arc in the grounds:  
O then the lane affords its lee  
Oflimber bough, and sturdy tree,  
And so I love its winding bows  
When summer glows or winter blows.

*A Winter Night*

It was a chilly winter's night;  
And frost was glitt'ring on the ground,  
And evening stars were twinkling bright;  
And from the gloomy plain around  
Came no sound,  
But where, within the wood-girt tow'r,  
The churchbell slowly struck the hour;

As if that all of human birth  
Had risen to the final day,  
And soaring from the worn out earth  
Were called in hurry and dismay,  
Far away;  
And I alone of all mankind  
Were left in loneliness behind.

*Moss*

O rain-bred moss that now dost hide  
The timber's bark and wet rock's side,  
Upshining to the sun, between  
The darksome storms, in lively green,  
And wash'd by pearly rain drops clean,  
Steal o'er my lonely path, and climb  
My wall, dear child of silent time.  
O winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

Green child of winter, bora to take  
Whate'er the hands of man forsake,  
That makest dull, in rainy air,

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

His labour-brighten'd works; so fair  
While newly left in summer's glare;  
And stealest o'er the stone that keeps  
His name in mem'ry where he sleeps.  
O winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn us of the time that's gone.

Come, lowly plant that lov'st, like me,  
The shadow of the woodland tree,  
And waterfall where echo mocks  
The milkmaid's song by dripping rocks,  
And sunny turf for roving flocks,  
And ribby elms extending wide  
Their roots within the hillock's side.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

Come, meet me wandering, and call  
My mind to some green mould'ring hall  
That once stood high, the fair-wall'd pride  
Of hearts that lov'd, and hoped, and died,  
Ere thou hadst climb'd around its side:  
Where blooming faces once were gay  
For eyes no more to know the day.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

While there in youth,—the sweetest part  
Of life,—with joy-believing heart,  
They liv'd their own dear days, all fraught  
With incidents for after-thought  
In later life, when fancy brought  
The outline of some faded face  
Again to its forsaken place.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

## POEMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

Come where thou climbedst, fresh and free,  
The grass-beglooming apple-tree,  
That, hardly shaken with my small  
Boy's strength, with quivering head, let fall  
The apples we lik'd most of all,  
Or elm I climb'd, with clasping legs,  
To reach the crow's high-nested eggs.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

Or where I found thy yellow bed  
Below the hill-borne fir-tree's head,  
And heard the whistling cast wind blow  
Above, while wood-screen'd down below  
I rambled in the spring-day's glow,  
And watch'd the low-car'd hares upspring  
From cover, and the birds take wing.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

Or where the bluebells bent their tops  
In windless shadows of the copse;  
Or where the misty westwind blew  
O'er primroses that peef'd out through  
Thy bankside bed, and scalter'd dew  
O'er grey spring grass I watch'd alone  
Where thou hadst grown o'er some old stone.  
Come, winter moss, creep on, creep on,  
And warn me of the time that's gone.

### *Burncombe Hollow*

While snowy nightwinds, blowing bleak  
Up hill, made rock-borne fir-trees creak,  
And drove the snow-flakes, feather-light,

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

O'er icy streams in playsome flight,  
And while the roof was snowy white,  
    There blazing cleftwood threw its heat  
    With ruddy light, to chilly feet,  
    In lonely Burncombe hollow.

And Jenny, that had just put down  
Her load of errands brought from town,  
Sat leaning backward in her chair,  
Cheek-warm, with weather-loosen'd hair;  
And told, with smiles 'twas bliss to share,  
    Her news; while putting out for heat,  
    Down side by side, her comely feet,  
    At home in Burncombe hollow.

And while the children ran to pull  
Her errands from her basket full,  
Her friends and I, all wordless, hung  
Upon the words of her gay tongue;  
But they with old love, I with young,  
    For all my soul, with all my sight,  
    Were given up that happy night,  
    To Jane of Burncombe hollow.

And where did first her sweet voice own  
Her love for me and me alone,  
But climbing up the eastern side  
Of Burncombe hollow, that did hide  
The western sunset, crimson-dyed,  
    O'er leaves that rustled on the ground,  
    Below the ivy twining round  
    The trees of Burncombe hollow.

And now her careful friends that bred,  
Her up so fair and good, are dead;  
And she, a woman mild and staid,  
Is keeping house where once she play'd

## POEMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

And won my love, a blooming maid;  
And all the joy my soul can know  
With her will stay, with her must go  
From me in Burncombe hollow.

And so 'tis sweet with her my wife  
To look back o'er our wedded life,  
Which she, e'er smiling in my sight,  
Has made a cloudless day, still bright,  
But waning slowly into night;  
And if I had my time once more  
To choose, I'd choose no maid before  
The maid of Burncombe hollow.

So winter darkness come to brood  
O'er sullen moans of waving wood,  
Come hov'ring snow, so lightly cast  
Upon the ground where ice seals fast  
The water from the cutting blast.  
I heed you not, while shelter'd where  
Love lights me up the ruddy glare  
Of fire in Burncombe hollow.

### *Mary comes not to the Tree*

Ye clouds that Aide, with hasty flight,  
The higrigone moon's inconstant light;  
Ye roaring nightwinds, flitting round  
The rocking tree with hollow sound,  
While hashing down the scatter'd drops  
Of driven rain from high boughtops,  
A darksome night ye make for me,  
For Mary comes not to the tree.

For wat'ry grass now waves its head  
Too wet for her light feet to tread

(IN NATIONAL ENGLISH)

And brimful brooks, that wildly roll  
Outbreking from their banks' controul,  
In ruffled sheets, are washing wide  
The willows by the water side,  
In floods o'erflowing, like a sea,  
Her footway over to the tree.

I saw her soft looks out before  
The *sun* this morning at the door,  
To see the flail, with flying staff,  
Swing fleetly round, and fan-blown chaff  
Sink feather light in hov'ring falls  
Before the old barn's moss-green walls.  
And fook her token she would be  
In time to night below the tree.

So *spend*, ye raving storms, your spite  
In *speed* upon the earth to night;  
Ye wavy waters roll away  
Ere wanes another longsome day,  
That moonsprcad light may lure once more  
My lovely Mary from her door,  
And softly shine to let her see  
Her safest footway to the tree.

*Sonnet: To a Garden, on leaving it*

Sweet garden! peaceful spot! no more in thee  
Shall I e'er while away the sunny hour.  
Farewell each blooming shrub, and lofty tree;  
Farewell the mossy path and nodding flow'r:  
I shall not hear again from yonder bow'r  
The song of birds, or humming of the bee,  
**Nor listen to the waterfall, nor see**  
The clouds float on behind the lofty tow'r.

## PDEMS PARTLY OF RURAL LIFE

No more, at breezy eve, or dewy morn,  
My gliding scythe shall shear thy mossy green:  
My busy hands shall never more adorn,

My eyes no more may see, this peaceful scene.  
But still, sweet spot, wherever I may be,  
My love-led soul will wander back to thee.

### *Sonnet: Architecture*

O noble art! how greatly I delight  
In noble works of thy gigantic hand!  
The lofty columns' massy shafts, that stand  
Beneath entablatures of stately height;  
The tap'ring spire that reaches out of sight;  
The lofty roof; with arches that expand  
To dumb-beholden width; and windows grand  
And glorious with many-colour'd light!

O noble art! how long thy works out-dwell  
The sons of men! The piles that linger still  
In early-cities Egypt's rainless clime,

And on the holy soil of Greece, will tell  
How masterly thou workest, since thy skill  
Can mock the working of all-wasting time.

FROM  
HWOMELY RHYMES  
A SECOND COLLECTION OF POEMS  
IN THE DORSET DIALECT  
1859



## *My Orcha'd in Linden Lea*

'Tthin the woodlands, flow'ry gleaded,  
By the weak tree's mossy moot,  
The sheenen grass-bleades, timber-sheaded,  
Now do quiver under voot;  
An' birds do whissle auver head,  
An' water's bubblen in its bed,  
An' there vor me the apple tree  
Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

When leaves that leatery wer a-springen  
Now do feade 'ithin the copse,  
An' painted birds do hush their zingen  
Up upon the timber's tops;  
An' brown-leav'd fruit's a-turnen red,  
In cloudless zunsheen, auver head,  
Wi' fruit vor me, the apple tree  
Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

Let other vo'k meake money vaster  
In the a'ir D' dark-room'd towns,  
I don't dread a peevish measter;  
Though noo man do heed my frowns,  
I be free to goo abraide,  
Or teake my hwomeward road  
To where, vor me, the apple tree  
Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

## HWOMELY RHYMES

### *Day's Work a-Done*

And oh! the jay our rest did yield,  
At evēnen by the mossy wall,  
When we'd a-work'd all day a-vield,  
While zummer zuns did rise an' vail,  
As there a-letten  
Goo all fretten,  
An' vorgetten all our twiles,  
We zot among our childern's smiles.

An' under skies that glitter'd white,  
The while our smoke, arisen blue,  
Did melt in aicr, out o' zight,  
Above the trees that kept us lew;  
Wer birds a-zingen,  
Tongues a-ringen,  
Childern springen, vull o' jay,  
A-finishen the day in play.

An' back behind, a-stannen tall,  
The cliff did sheen to western light;  
An' while avore the water-vail,  
A-rottlen loud, an' foamen white.  
The leaves did quiver,  
Gnots'did whiver,  
By the river, where the pool,  
Tn evenen air did glissen cool.

An' childem there, a-runnen wide,  
Did play their geames along the grove,  
Vor though to us 'twer jay to bide  
At rest, to them 'twer jay to move.  
The while my smilen  
Jeane, beguilen,  
All my twilen, wi' her ceare,  
Did call me to my evenen feare.

## A SECOND COLLECTION

### *The Waggon a-Stooded*

*Dree o'ni a-taken tft.*

- (1) Well, here we be, then, wi' the vu'st poor Iwoad  
O' vuzz we brought, a-stooded in the road.
- (2) The road, George, no. There's na'r a road That's  
wrong.  
If we'd a road, we mid ha' got along.
- (1) Noo road! Ees 'tis, the road that we do goo.
- (2) Do goo, George, no. The plcace we can't get  
drough.
- (1) Well, there, the vu'st Iwoad we Ve a-haul'd to day  
Is here a-stooded in theasc bed o' clay.  
Here's rotten groun'! an' how the wheels do cut!  
The little woone's a-zunk up to the nut.
- (3) An' yeel this rotten groun' don't reach a lug.
- (1) Well, come, then, gi'e the plow another tug.
- (2) They meares wull never pull the waggon out,  
A-Iwoaded, an' a-stooded in thik rout,
- (3) We'll try. Come, *Smiler*, come! C' up, *Whitevoot*,  
gee!
- (2) White-voot wi' lags all auver mud! Hee! Hee!
- (3) 'Twoon't wag. We shall but snap our gear,  
An' overstrain the meares. Twoon't wag, 'tis clear,

## HWOMELY RHYMES

(1) That's your work, William. No, in coo'se, 'twoon't  
wag.

Why did ye dreve en into thease here quag?  
The vore-wheels be a-zunk above the nuts.

(3) What then? I coulden leave the beaten track,  
To turn the waggon auver on the back  
Ov woone o' theasem wheel-high emmet-butts.  
If you be sich a drever, an' do know't,  
You dreve the plow, then; but you'll auverdrow 't.

(1) I dreve the plow, indeed! Oh! ees, what, now  
The wheels woont wag, then, I mid dreve the plow!  
We'd better dig away the groun' below  
The wheels. (2) There's na'r a speade to dig wi'.

(1) An' teake an' cut a Ionk o' frith, an' drow  
Upon the clay. (2) Nor hook to cut a twig wi'.

(1) Oh! here's a bwoy a-comen. Here, my lad,  
Dost know vor a'r a speade, that can be had?

(B) At father's. (1) Well, where's that? (Bwoy) At  
Sam'el Riddick's.

(1) Well run, an' ax vor woone. Fling up your heels,  
An' mind: a speade to dig out theasem wheels,  
An' hook to cut a little lock o' widdicks.

(3) Why, we shall want zix ho'ses, or a dozen,  
To pull the waggon out, wi' all thease vuzzen.

(1) Well, we mus' lighten en; come, Jeames, then, hop  
Upon the Iwood, an' jus' fling off the top.

(2) If I can clim' en; but 'tis my consa'it,  
That I shall auverzet en wi' my waight,

## A SECOND COLLECTION

- (1) You auverzet en! No, Jeames, he won't vail,  
The Iwoad's a-built so firm as any wall.
- (2) Here! lend a hand or shoulder vor my knee  
Or voot. I'll scramble to the top an' zee  
What I can do. Well, here I be, among  
The fakkets, vor a bit, but not vnr long.  
Heigh, George! Ha! ha! Why this wull never stand.  
Your firm 's a wall, is all so loose as zand;  
'Tis all a-come to pieces. Oh! Teake ceare!  
Ho! **I'm** a-vallen, vuzz an' all! Haii! There!
- (1) Lo'k there, thik fellor is a-vell lik' lead,  
An' half the fuzzen wi 'n, heels over head!  
There's all the vuzz a-lyen lik' a staddlc,  
An' he a-deab'd wi' mud. Oh! Here's a caddie!
- (3) An' zoo you soon got down zome vuzzen, Jimmy.
- (2) Ees, I do know 'tis down, I brought it wi' me.
- (3) Your Iwoad, George, wer a rather slick-built thing,  
But there, 'twer prickly vor the hands! Did sting?
- (1) Oh! ees, d'ye teake me vor a nincompoop,  
No, no. The Iwoad wer up so firm 's a rock,  
But two o' theasem emmet-butts would knock  
The tightest barrel nearly out o' hoop.
- (3) Ohr! now then, here's the bwoy a-bringen back  
The speade. Well done, my man. That idden slack.
- [2] Well done, my lad, sha't have a ho'se to ride  
When thou'st a meare. (Bwoy) Next never's-tide.
- (3) Now let's dig out a spit or two  
O' clay, a-vore the little wheels;  
Oh! so's, I can't pull up my heels,  
I be a-stogg'd up over shoe.

### HWOMELY RHYMES

- (1) Come, William, dig away! Why do you spuddle  
A'most so weak's a child. How you do muddle!  
Ore me the speade a-bit. A pig would rout  
It out a'most so nimbly wi<sup>1</sup> his snout.
- (3) Oh! SD'S, d'ye hear it, then. How we can thundei'  
How big we be, then George! what next I wonder?
- (1) Now, William, gj'e the waggon woone mwore  
twitch,  
The wheels be free, an<sup>1</sup> 'tis a lighter nitch.
- (3) Come, *Smiler*, gee<sup>1</sup> C'up, *While-voot*. (1) That wull  
do
- (2) Do wag. (1) Do goo at last. (3) Well done. Tis  
drough.
- (1) Now, William, till you have mwore houses' lags,  
Don't dreve the waggon into theasem quags.
- (3) You build your Iwoads up tight enough to ride.
- (1) I can't do less, d'ye know, wi' you vor guide.

### *The Young that died in Beauty*

If souls should only sheen so bright  
In heaven as in e'lhly light,  
An' nothen better wer the cease,  
How comely still, in sheape an' feiice,  
Would many reach thik happy pieace,—  
The hopeful souls that in their prime  
Ha' seem'd a-took avore their time—  
The young that died in beauty.

## A SECOND [TDLLECTI0N

But when woone's lim's ha' lost their strangth  
A-twilen drough a lifetime's langth,  
An" auver cheaks a-grown wold  
The slowly-wcasten years ha' rolled,  
The deep'nen wrinkle's hollor vwold;  
When life is ripe, then death do call  
Vor less ov thought, than when do vall  
On young vo'ks in their beauty.

But pinen souls, wi' heads a-hung  
In heavy sorrow vor the young,  
The sister or the brother dead,  
The father wi' a child a-vied,  
The husband when his bride ha' laid  
Her head at rest, noo mwore to turn,  
Have all a-vound the time to murn  
Vor youth that died in beauty.

An' yeet the church, where prayer do rise  
Vrom thoughtvul souls, wi' downcast eyes,  
An' village greens, a-beat half beare  
By dancers that do meet, an' wear  
Such merry looks at feast an' feair,  
Do gather under leatest skies,  
Their bloomen cheaks an' sparklen eyes,  
Though young ha' died in beauty.

But still the dead shall mwore than keep  
The beauty ov their early sleep;  
Where comely looks shall never wear  
Uncomely, under twile an' ceare.  
The fear at death be always feair,  
Still feair to livers' thought an' love,  
An' feairer still to God above,  
Than when they died in beauty.

HWOMELY RHYMES

*Our Abode in Arby Wood*

Though ice do hang upon the willows  
Out beside the vrozen brook,  
An' storms do roar above our pillows,  
Drough the night, 'ithin our nook;  
Our evenen he'th's a-glowen warm,  
Drough wringen vrost, an' roaren storm.  
Though winds mid meiike the wold beams sheake.  
In our abode in Arby Wood.

An' there, though we mid hear the timber  
Creake avore the windy rain;  
An' climen ivy quiver, limber,  
Up agean the window peane;  
Our merry vai'ces then do sound,  
In rollen glee, or dree-vaice round;  
Though wind mid roar, 'ithout the door,  
Ov our abode in Arby Wood.

*The Wold Wall*

Here, Jeane, we vu'st did meet below  
The leafy boughs, a-swingen slow,  
Avore the zun, wi' evenen glow,  
Above our road, a-beamen red;  
The grass in zwath wer in the meads,  
The water gleam'd among the reeds  
In air a-stealen roun' the hall,  
Where ivy clung upon the wall.  
Ah! well-a-day! O wall adieu!  
The wall is wold, my grief is new,

## A SECOND COLLECTION

An<sup>1</sup> there you walk'd wi' blushen pride,  
Where softly-wheelen streams did glide,  
Drough sheades o' poplars at my zide,  
An' there wi' love that still do live,  
Your feace did wear the smile o' youth,  
The while you spoke wi<sup>1</sup> age's truth,  
An' wi' a rrosebud's mossy ball,  
I deek'd your bosom vrom the wall.  
Ah! well-a-day! O wall adieu!  
The wall is wold, my grief is new.

BuL now when winter's ram do vail,  
An' wind do beat agean the hall,  
The while upon the waL'ry wall  
In spots o' grey the moss do grow;  
The ruf noo mwore shall auverspread  
The pillor DV our weary head,  
Nor shall the rrose's mossy ball  
Behang vor you the house's wall.  
Ah! well-a-day! O wall adieu!  
The wall is wold, my grief is new.

### *John Bleak? at Hwotne at Night*

No: where the woak do auverspread,  
The grass begloom'd below his head,  
An' water, under bowen zedge,  
A-springen vrom the river's edge,  
Do ripple, as the win' do blow,  
An' sparkle, as the sky do glow;  
An' grey-leav'd withy-boughs do cool,  
Wi' darksome sheades, the clear-feaced pool,  
My chimny smoke, 'ithin the lew  
O' trees is there arisen blue;  
Avore the night do dim our zight,  
Or candle-light, a-sheenen bright,  
Do sparkle drough the window,

## HWOMELY RHYMES

When crumpled leaves o' Fall do bound  
Avore the wind, along the ground,  
An' wither'd bennet-stems do stand  
A-quiv'ren on the chilly land;  
The while the zun, wi' zetten rim,  
Do leave the workman's pathway dim;  
An' sweet-breath'd childern's hangen heads  
Be laid wi' kisses, on their beds;  
Then I do seek my woodland nest,  
An' zit beside my vier at rest,  
While night's a-spread, where day's a-vled,  
An' lights do shed their beams o' red,  
A-sparklen drough the window.

If winter's whistlen winds do vreeze  
The snow a-gather'd on the trees,  
An' sheades o' poplar stems do vail  
In moonlight up athirt the wall;  
An' icicles do hang below  
The oves, a-glitt'ren in a row,  
An' risen stars do slowly ride  
Above the ruf's upslanten zide;  
Then I do lay my weary head  
Asleep upon my peaceful bed,  
When middle-night ha' quench'd the light  
Dv embers bright, an' candles white  
A-beamen drough the window.

### *Zun-zet*

Where the western zun, unclouded,  
Up above the grey hill-tops,  
Did sheen drough ashes, lofty sh'ouded.  
On the turf beside the copse,  
In zummer weather,  
We together,

A SECOND COLLECTION

Sorrow-slighten, work-vorgetten.  
Gambol'd wi' the zun a-zetten.

There, by flow'ry bows o' bramble,  
Under hedge, in ash-tree shea'des,  
The dun-heai'r'd ho'se did slowly ramble  
On the grasses' dewy bleades,  
Zet free o' Iwoads,  
An' stwony rwoads,  
Vorgctvul o' the lashes fretten,  
Grazen wi' the zun a-zetten.

There wer rooks a-beaten by us  
Drough the air, in a vlock,  
An' there the lively blackbird, nigh us,  
On the meaple bough did rock,  
Wi' ringen droat,  
Where zunlight smote  
The yollow boughs o' zunny hedges  
Auver western hills' blue edges.

Waters, drough the meads a-purlen,  
Glissen'd in the evenen's light,  
An' smoke, above the town a-curlen,  
Melted slowly out o' zight;  
An' there, in glooms  
Ov unzunn'd rooms,  
To zome, wi' idle sorrows fretten,  
Zuns did set avore their zetten.

We were out in geames and reaces,  
Loud a-laughen, wild in me'th,  
Wi' windblown hair, an' zunbrown'd feaces,  
Lea'pen on the high-sky'd e'th,  
Avore the lights  
Wer tin'd o' nights,  
An' while the gossamer's light netten  
Sparkled to the zun a-zetten.

## HWDMELY RHYMES

### *The Water Crowvoot*

O small-feac'd flow'r that now dost bloom  
To stud wi' white the shallor Frome,  
An' leave the dote to spread his flow'r  
On darksome pools o' stwoneless Stour,  
When softly-rizen airs do cool  
The water in the sheenen pool,  
Thy beds o' snow-white buds do gleam  
So feair upon the sky-blue stream,  
As whitest clouds, a-hangen high  
Avore the blueness o' the sky;  
An' there, at hand, the thin-heair'd cows,  
In airy sheades o' withy boughs,  
Or up bezide the mossy rails,  
Do stan' an' zwing their heavy tails,  
The while the ripplen stream do flow  
Below the dusty bridge's bow;  
An' quiv'ren water-gleams do mock  
The weaves, upon the sheaded rock;  
An' up athirt the copen stwone  
The lai'tren bwoy do lean alwone,  
A-watchen, wi' a stedvast look,  
The vallen waters in the brook,  
The while the zand o' time do run  
An' leave his errand still undone.  
An' oh! as long's thy buds would gleam  
Above the softly-sliden stream,  
While sparklen zummer-brooks do run  
Below the lofty-climen zun,  
I only wish that thou could'st stay  
Vor noo man's harm, an' all men's jay.  
But no, the waterman 'ull weade  
Thy water wi' his deadly bleade,  
To slay thee even in thy bloom,  
Fair small-feaced flower o' the Frome.

*The Lilac*

Dear lilac-tree, a-spreaden wide  
 Thy purple blooth on ev'ry zide,  
 As if the hollow sky did shed  
 Its blue upon thy flow'ry head;  
 Oh! whether I mid sheare wi' thee  
 Thy open air, my bloomen tree,  
 Or zee thy blossoms vrom the gloom,  
 Tthin my zunless worken-room,  
 My heart do leap, but leap wi' sighs,  
 At zight o' thee avore my eyes,  
 For when thy grey-blue head do sway  
 In cloudless light, 'tis Spring, 'tis May.

'Tis Spring, 'tis May, as May woonce shed  
 His glowen light above thy head—  
 When thy green boughs, wi' bloomy tips,  
 Did sheade my childern's laughen lips;  
 A-screenen vrom the noonday gleare  
 Their rwozy cheaks an' glossy hair;  
 The while their mother's needle sped,  
 TDD quick vor zight, the snow-white thread,  
 Unless her han', wi' loven ceare,  
 Did smooth their little heads o' hair;

Or wi' a sheake, tie up anew  
 Vor zome wild voot, a slippen shoe;  
 An' I did lean beside thy mound  
 Agean the dea'sy-dappled ground,  
 The while the woaken clock did tick  
 My hour o' rest away too quick,  
 An' call me off to work anew,  
 Wi' slowly-ringen strokes, woone, two.  
 Zoo let me zee noo darksome cloud  
 Bedim to-day thy flow'ry sh'oud,

## HWOMELY RHYMES

But let en bloom on ev'ry spray,  
Drough all the days o' zunny May.

### *Wavfearen*

The sky wer clear, the zunshccn glow'd  
On droopen flowers drough the day,  
As I did beat the dusty road  
Vrom hinder hills, a-feaden gray;  
Drough hollows up the hills,  
Vrom knaps along by mills,  
Vrom mills by churches tow'rs, wi' bells  
That twold the hours to woody dells.

An' when the winden road do guide  
The thirsty vootman where mid flow  
The water vrom a rock bezide  
His vootsteps, in a sheenen bow;  
The hand a-hollow'd up  
Do beat a goolden cup,  
To catch an' drink it, bright an' cool,  
A-vallen light 'ithin the pool.

Zoo when, at last, I hung my head  
Wi' thirsty lips a-burnen dry,  
I come bezide a river-bed  
Where water flow'd so blue's the sky;  
An' there I meade me up  
O<sup>1</sup>- coltsvoot leaf a cup,  
Where water vrom his lip o' gray,  
Wer sweet to sip thik burnen day.

But when our work is right, a jay  
Du come to bless us in its train,  
An' hardships ha' zume good to pay  
The thoughtvul soul vor all their pain:

## A SECOND TOLLECTION

The het do sweeten sheiide,  
An' weary lim's ha' mcadc  
A bed o' slumber, still an' sound,  
By woody hill or grassy mound.

An<sup>1</sup> while I /ot in sweet delay  
Below an elem on a hill,  
Where boughs a-halfway up did sway  
In sheades o' lim's above em still,  
An' blue sky show'd between  
The flutfren leaves o" green;  
I woulden gi'e that gloom an' sheiide  
Vor any room that wealth ha' meade.

But oh! that vo'k, that have the roads  
Where weary-vootcd souls do pass,  
Would leave bcside the stwonc vor Iwoads,  
A little strip voi zummer grass;  
That when the stwoncs do bruise  
An' burn an' gall our toocs,  
We then mid cool our vcct on beds  
O' wild-thyme sweet, or dcaisy-heads.

### *the Leane*

They do zay that a travellen chap  
Have a-put in the newspaper now,  
That the bit o' green ground on the knap  
Should be all a-took in vor the plough.  
He do fancy 'tis easy to show  
That we can be but stunpolls at best,  
Vor to leave a green spot where a flower can grow,  
Or a voot-weary walker mid rest.  
'Tis hedge-grubben, Thomas, an' ledge-grubben,  
Never a-done

**While a sov'ren mwore's to be won.**

### HWDMELY RHYMES

The road, he do zay, is so wide  
As 'tis wanted vor travellers' wheels,  
As if all that did travel did ride  
An' did never gel galls on their heels.  
He would leave sich a thin strip o' groun',  
That, if a man's vect in his shoes  
Wer a-burnen an' zore, why he coulden zit down  
But the wheels would run over his tooes.  
Vor 'tis meake money, Thomas, an' teake money,  
What's zwold an' bought  
Is all that is worthy o' thought.

Years agoo the leane-zides did bear grass,  
Vor to pull wi' the geeses' red bills,  
That did hiss at the vo'k that did pass,  
Or the bwoys that pick'd up their white quills.  
But shortly, if vover or vive  
Ov our goslens do creep vrom the agg,  
They must mwope in the geirden, mwore dead than  
alive,  
In a coop, or a-tied by the lag.  
Vor to catch at land, Thomas, an' snatch at land,  
Now is the plan;  
Meake money wherever you can.

The childern wull soon have noo pleace  
Vor to play in, an' if they do grow,  
They wull have a thin musherroom feace,  
Wi' their bodies so sumple as dough.  
But a man is a-meade ov a child,  
An' his limbs do grow worksome by play;  
An' if the young child's little body's a-spweil'd,  
Why, the man's wull the sooner decay.  
But wealth is wo'th now mwore than health is wo'th;  
Let it all goo,  
If't 'ull bring but a sov'ren or two.

## A SECOND COLLECTION

Vor to breed the young fox or the heare,  
We can gi'e up whole eacres o' ground,  
But the greens be a-grudg'd, vor to rear  
Our young childern up healthy an' sound,  
Why, there woont be a-left the next age  
A green spot where their veet can goo free;  
An<sup>1</sup> the goocoo wull soon be committed to cage  
Vor a trespass in zomebody's tree.  
Vor 'tis locken up, Thomas, an' blocken up,  
Stranger or brother,  
Men mussen come nigh woone another.

Woone day I went in at a gcate,  
Wi' my child, where an echo did sound,  
An' the owner come up, an' did reate  
Me as if I would car off his ground.  
But his vield an' the grass wer-a-bt,  
An' the damage that he could a-took  
Wer at mmost that the while I did open the gcate  
I did rub roun' the eye on the hook.  
But 'tis dreven out, Thomas, an' heven out.  
Trample noo grounds,  
Unless you be after the hounds.

Ah! the Squier o' Culver-dell Hall  
Wer as diff'rent as light is vrom dark,  
Wi' zoine vo'k that, as evenen did vail,  
Had a-broke drough long grass in his park;  
Vor he went, wi' a smile, vor to meet  
Wi' the trespassers while they did pass,  
An<sup>1</sup> he zaid, 'I do fear you'll catch cwold in your veet,  
You've a-walk<sup>1</sup>d drough so much o' my grass.'  
His mild words, Thomas, cut em lik' swords, Thomas,  
Newly a-whet,  
An' went vurder wi' them than a dret.

## HWDMELY RHYMES

### *The Railroad*

An' while I went 'ithin a train,  
A-riden on athirt the plain,  
A-clearen swifter than a hound,  
On twin-laid rails, the zwimmen ground;  
I cast my eyes 'ithin a park,  
Upon a woak wi' grey-white bark,  
An' while I kept his head my mark,  
The rest did wheel around en.

An' when in life our love do cling  
The clwosest round zome single thing,  
We then do vind that all the rest  
Do wheel roun' thai, vor vu'st an' best;  
Zoo while our life do last, mid nought  
But what is good an<sup>l</sup> feair be sought,  
In word or deed, or heart or thought,  
An' all the rest wheel round it.

### *Seats*

When starbright maidens be to zit  
In silken frocks, that they do wear,  
The room mid have, as 'tis but fit,  
A han'some seat vor vo'k so feair;  
But we, in zun-dried vield an<sup>l</sup> wood,  
Ha' seats as good's a golden chair.

Vor here, 'ithin the woody drong,'  
A ribbed elem-stem do lie,  
A-vell'd in Spring, an' stretch'd along  
A bed o' graegles up knee-high,  
A sheady seat to rest, an' let  
The burnen net o' nucm goo by.

## A SECOND COLLECTION

Or if you'd look, wi' wider scope,  
Out where the gray-tree'd plain do spread,  
The ash beside the sunny slope,  
Do shade a cool-air'd daisy bed,  
An' grassy seat, wi' spreaden eaves  
O' rus'len leaves, above your head.

An' there the train mid come in zight,  
Too vur to hear a-rolen by,  
A-breathe quick, in heasty flight,  
His breath o' twile, avore the sky,  
The while the waggon, wi' his Iwoad,  
Do crawl the rwoad a-winden nigh.

Or now thease happy holiday  
Do let vo'k rest their weary lim's,  
An' Iwoaded hay's a-hangen gray,  
Above the waggon-wheels' dry rims,  
The mead ha<sup>1</sup> seats in weales or pooks,  
By winden brooks, wi' crumblen brims.

Or if you'd gi'e your thoughtvul mind  
To yonder long-vorseaken hall,  
Then teake a stwonen seat behind  
The ivy on the broken wall,  
An' learn how e'thly wealth an' might  
Mid clim' their height, an' then mid vail.

### *Sound o' Water*

I born in town! oh no, my dawn  
D' life broke here beside thease lawn;  
Not where pent air do roll along,  
In darkness drough the wall-bound drong,  
An<sup>1</sup> never bring the goo-coo's zong,

## HWDMELY RHYMES

Nor sweets o' blossoms in the hedge,  
Or benden rush, or sheenen zedge,  
Or sounds o' flowen water.

The air that I've a-breath'd did sheake  
The draps o' rain upon the breake,  
An' bear aloft the swingen lark,  
An' huffle roun' the elem's bark,  
In boughy grove, an' woody park,  
An' brought us down the dewy dells,  
The high-wound zongs o' nightingales,  
An' sounds o' flowen water.

An' when the zun, wi' vi'ry rim,  
'S a-zinken low, an' wearen dim,  
Here I, a-most too tired to stand,  
Do leave my work that's under hand  
In pathless wood or oben land,  
To rest 'ithin my thatchen oves,  
Wi' ruslen win's in leafy groves,  
An' sounds o' flowen water.

### *Trees be Company*

When zummer's burnen het's a-shed  
Upon the droopen grasses head,  
A-dreven under sheady leaves  
The workvo'k in their snow-white sleeves.  
We then mid yearn to clinV the height,  
Where thorns be white, above the vern;  
An' air do turn the zunsheen's might  
To softer light too weak to burn—  
On woodless downs we mid be free,  
But lowland trees **be** company.

## A SECOND COLLECTION

Though downs mid show a wider VIEW  
O' green a-reachen into blue  
Than roads a-winden in the glen,  
An' ringen wi' the sounds o' men;  
The thistle's crown o' red an' blue  
    In Fall's cwold dew do wither brown,  
An' larks come down 'ithin the lew,  
    As storms do brew, an' skies do frown—  
    An' though the down do let us free,  
    The lowland trees be company.

Where birds do zing, below the 7un,  
In treus above the blue-smok'd tun,  
An' sheadcs o' stems do auverstratch  
The mossy path 'ithin the hatch;  
If leaves be bright up over head,  
    When May do shed its glitt'ren light;  
Or, in the blight o' Fall, do spread  
    A yollor bed avore our zight—  
    Whatever season it nud be,  
    The trees be always company.

When dusky night do nearly hide  
The path along the hedge's zide,  
An' dailight's hwomely sounds be still  
But sounds o' water at the mill;  
Then if noo feace we long'd to greet  
    Could come to meet our Iwonesome treace  
Or if noo peace o' weary veet,  
    However fleet, could reach its pleace—  
    However Iwonesome we mid be,  
    The trees would still be company.

## HWOMELY RHYMES

### */ know Who*

Aye, aye, vull rathe the zun mus' rise  
To meake us tired o' zunny skies,  
A-sheenen on the whole day ough,  
From mornen's dawn till evenen's dew.  
When trees be brown an' meads be green,  
An' skies be blue, an' streams do sheen,  
An' thin-edg'd clouds be snowy white  
Above the bluest hills in zight;  
But I can let the daylight goo,  
When I've a-met wi'—I know who.

In Spring I met her by a bed  
O' laurels higher than her head;  
The while a rrose hung white between  
Her blushes an' the laurel's green;  
An' then in Fall, I went along  
The row of elems in the drong,  
An' heard her zing beside the cows,  
By yollor leaves o' meaple boughs;  
But Fall or Spring is feair to view  
When day do bring me—I know who.

An' when, wi' wint'r a-comen roun',  
The purple he'th's a-feaden brown,  
An' hangen vern's a-sheaken dead,  
Beside the hill's besheaded head:  
An' black-wing'd rooks do glitter bright  
Above my head, in pealer light;  
Then though the birds do still the glee  
That sounded in the zummer tree,  
My heart is light the winter drough,  
In me'th at night, wi'—I know who.

A SECOND COLLECTION

*Jessie Lee*

Above the timber's benden shfouds,  
The western wind did softly blow;  
An' up avore the knap, the clouds  
Did ride as white as driven snow.  
Vrom west to east the clouds did zwim  
Wi' wind that plied the elcm's lim';  
Vrom west to east the stream did glide,  
A-sheenen wide, wi' winden brim.

How feair, I thought, avore the sky  
The slowly-zwimmen clouds do look;  
How soft the win's a-streamen by;  
How bright do rool the weavy brook:  
When there, a-passen on my right,  
A-walken slow, an' treaden light,  
Young Jessie Lee come by, an" there  
Took all my ceare, an' all my zight.

Vor lovely wer the looks her feace  
Held up avore the western sky:  
An' comely wer the steps her peace  
Did meake a-walken slowly by:  
But I went east, wi' beaten breast,  
Wi' wind, an' cloud, an' brook, vor rest,  
Wi' rest a-lost, vor Jessie gone  
So lovely on, toward the west.

Blow on, O winds, athirt the hill;  
Zwim on, O clouds; O waters vail,  
Down maeshy rocks, vrom mill to mill;  
I now can auverlook ye all.  
But roll, O zun, an' bring to me  
My day, if such a day there be,  
When zome dear path to my abode  
Shall be the road o' Jessie Lee.

## HWOMELY RHYMES

### *True Love*

As evenen air, in green-treed Spring,  
Do sheake the new-sprung pa'sley bed,  
An' wither<sup>1</sup>d ash-tree keys do swing  
An' vail a-flutt'ren roun' our head:  
There, while the birds do zing their zong  
In bushes down the ash-tree drong,  
Come Jessie Lee, vor sweet's the please  
Your vaice an' feace can meake vor me.

Below the budden ashes' height  
We there can linger in the lew,  
While boughs, a-gilded by the light,  
Do sheen avore the sky o' blue:  
But there by zetten zun, or moon  
A-risen, time wull vlee too soon  
Wi' Jessie Lee, vor sweet's the please  
Her vai'ce an' feace can meake vor me.

Down where the darksome brook do flow,  
Below the bridge's arched wall,  
Wi' alders dark, a-leanen low,  
Above the gloomy watervall;  
There I've a-led ye hwome at night,  
Wi' noo feace else 'ithin my zight  
But yours so feair, an' sweet's the please  
Your vaiice an' feace ha' meade me there.

An' oh! when other years do come,  
An' zetten zuns, wi' yollor gleare,  
Drough western window-peanes, at hwome,  
Do light upon my evenen chair:

## A SECOND COLLECTION

While day do weane, an' dew do vail,  
Be wi' me then, or else in call,  
As time do vice, vor sweet's the pleace  
Your vaice an' feace do meakc vor me.

Ah! you do smile, a-thinken light  
O' my true words, but never mind;  
Smile on, smile on. but still your flight  
Would leave me little jay behind:  
But let me not be zoo a-tried  
Wi' you a-lost where I do bide,  
O Jessie Lee, in any pleace  
Your vaice an' feace ha' blest vor me.

I'm sure that when a soul's a-brought  
To this our life ov air an' land,  
Woone mwore's a-mark'd in God's good thought,  
To help, wi' love, his heart an' hand.  
An' oh! if there should be in store  
An angel here vor my poor door,  
Tis Jessie Lee, vor sweet's the pleace  
Her vaice an' feace can meake vor me.

### *The Bean Yield*

'Twer where the zun did warm the lewth,  
An' win' did whiver in the sheade,  
The sweet-air'd beans were out in blooth,  
Down there 'ithin the elem gleade;  
A yollor-banded bee did come,  
An' softly-pitch, wi' hushen hum,  
Upon a bean, an' there did sip,  
Upon a swayen blossom's lip:  
An' there cried he, 'Aye, I can zee,  
This blossom's all a-zent vor me.'

### HWDMELY RHYMES

A-jilted up an' down, astride  
Upon a lofty ho'se a-trot,  
The measter then come by wi' pride,  
To zee the beans that he'd a-got;  
An' as he zot upon his ho'se,  
The ho'se agean did snort an' toss  
His high-ear'd head, an' at the zight  
Dv all the blossom, black an' white:  
'Ah! ah!' thought he, the seame's the bee,  
'Thease beans be all a-zent vor me.'

Zoo let the worold's riches breed  
A strife o' claims, wi' weak and strong,  
Vor now what cause have I to heed  
Who's in the right, or in the wrong;  
Since there do come drought yonder hatch,  
An' bioom below the house's thatch,  
The best o' maidens, an' do own  
That she is mine, an' mine alwone:  
Zoo I can zee that love do gi'e  
The best ov all good gifts to me.

Vor whose be all the crops an' land  
A-won an' lost, an' bought, an' zwold  
Dr whose, a-roll'd vrom hand to hand,  
The highest money that's a-twold?  
Vrom man to man a passen on,  
'Tis here to-day, to-morrow gone.  
But there's a blessen high above  
It all—a soul o' stedvast love:  
Zoo let it vlee, if God do gi'e  
Sweet Jessie vor a gift to me.

A SECOND COLLECTION

*The Wife a-Lost*

Since I noo mwore do zee your feace,  
Up steairs or down below,  
I'll zit me in the Iwonesome please,  
Where flat-boughf d beech do grow:  
Below the beeches' bough, my love,  
Where you did never come,  
An' I don't look to meet ye now,  
As I do look at hwome.

Since you noo mwore be at my zide,  
In walks in zummer het,  
I'll goo alwone where mist do ride,  
Drough trees a-drippen wet:  
Below the ra'in-wet bough, my love,  
Where you did never come,  
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,  
As I do grieve at home.

Since now bezide my dinner-bwoard  
Your va'ice do never sound,  
I'll eat the bit I can avword,  
A-vield upon the ground;  
Below the darksome bough, my love,  
Where you did never dine,  
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,  
As I at hwome do pine.

Since I do miss your vaice an' feace  
In prayer at eventide,  
I'll pray wi' woone sad va'ice vor greace  
To goo where you do bide;  
Above the tree an' bough, my love,  
Where you be gone avore,  
An' be a-walten vor me now,  
To come vor evermwore.

## HWOMELY RHYMES

### *Out at Plough*

Though cool avore the sheenen sky  
Do vail the sheades below the copse,  
The timber-trees, a-reachen high,  
Ha' zunshcen on their lofty tops,  
Where yonder land's a-lyen plow'd,  
An' red, below the snow-white cloud,  
An' vlocks o' pitchen rooks do vwold  
Their wings to walk upon the mwold,  
While floods be low,  
An' buds do grow,  
An' air do blow, a-broad, O.

But though the air is cwold below  
The creakkn cospes' darksome screen,  
The truest sheade do only show  
How strong the warmer zun do sheen;  
An' even times o' grief an' pain,  
Ha' good a-comen in their tram,  
An' 'tis but happiness do mark  
The sheades o' sorrow out so dark.  
As twile be sad,  
Or smiles be glad,  
Dr times be bad, at hwome, O.

An' there the zunny land do lie  
Below the hangen, in the lew,  
Wi' vurrows now a-crumblen dry,  
Below the plowman's dusty shoe;  
An' there the bwoy do whissel sh'ill,  
Below the skylark's merry bill,  
Where primrrose beds do deck the zidcs  
O' banks below the meaple wrides.  
As trees be bright  
Wi<sup>1</sup> bees in flight,  
An' weather's bright, abroad, O.

## A SECOND COLLECTION

An' there, as sheenen wheels do spin  
Vull speed along the dousty rwoad,  
He can but stan', an' wish 'ithin  
His mind to be their happy Iwoad,  
That he mid gaily ride, an' goo  
To towns the rwoad mid teake en drough,  
An' zee, for woonce, the zights behind  
The bluest hills his eyes can vind,  
    O' towns, an' tow'rs,  
    An' downs, an' flow'rs,  
        In zunny hours, abroad, O.

But still, vor all the weather's feair,  
Below a cloudless sky o' blue,  
The bwoy at plough do little cea're  
How vast the brightest day mid goo;  
Vor he'd be glad to zee the zun  
A-zetten, wi' his work a-done,  
That he, at hwome, mid still injay  
His happy bit ov evenen play,  
    So light's a lark  
    Till night is dark,  
        While dogs do bark, at hwome, O.

### *The Turn o' the Days*

O the wings o' the rook wer a-glitteren bright,  
As he wheel'd on above, in the zun's evenen light,  
An' noo snow wer a-left, but in patches o' white,  
    On the hill at the turn o' the days.  
An' along on the slope wer the beare-timber'd copse,  
Wi' the dry wood a-sheaken, wi' red-twigg'd tops.  
Vor the dry-flowen wind, had a-blow'd off the drops  
    O' the rain, at the turn o' the days.

## HWOMELY RHYMES

There the stream did run on, in the sheade o' the hill,  
So smooth in his flowen, as if he stood still,  
An' bright wi' the skylight, did slide to the mill,  
By the meads, at the turn o' the days.  
An' up by the copse, down along the hill brow,  
Wer vurrows a-cut down, by men out at plough,  
So straight as the zunbeams, a-shot drough the bough  
O' the tree at the turn o' the days.

Then the boomen wold clock in the tower did mark  
His vive hours, avore the cool evenen wer dark,  
An' ivy did glitter a-clung round the bark  
O' the tree, at the turn o' the days.  
An' women a-fraid o' the road in the night,  
Wer a-heastenen on to reach hwome by the light,  
A-casten long sheades on the road, a-dried white,  
Down the hill, at the turn o' the days.

The father an' mother did walk out to view  
The moss-bedded snow-drop, a-sprung in the lew,  
An' hear if the birds wer a-zingen anew,  
In the boughs, at the turn o' the days.  
An' young vo'k a-laughen wi' smooth glossy feace,  
Did hie over vields, wi' a light-vooted peace,  
To friends where the tow'r did betoken a pleave  
Among trees, at the turn o' the days.

### *My Love's Guardian Angel*

As in the cool-air'd road I come by,  
—in the night,  
Under the moon-clim'd height o' the sky,  
—in the night,  
There by the lime's broad lim's as I did stay,  
While in the air dark sheades wer' at play

## A SECOND COLLECTION

Up on the windor-glass that did keep  
Lew vrom the wind, my true love asleep,  
—in the night.

While in the grey-wall'd height o' the tow'r,  
—in the night,  
Sounded the midnight bell wi' the hour,  
—in the night,  
There come a bright-heair'd angel that shed  
Light vrom her white robe's zilvery thread,  
Wi' her vore-vinger held up to meake  
Silence around lest sleepers mid weake,  
—in the night.

'Oh! then,' I whispered, 'do I behold  
—in the night.

Linda, my true-love, here in the cwold,  
—in the night?'

'No,' she meade answer, 'you do misteake:  
She is asleep, 'tis I be aweake;  
I be her angel brightly a-drest,  
Watchen her slumber while she do rest,  
—in the night.'

"Zee how the clear win's, brisk in the bough,  
—in the night,  
While they do pass, don't smite on her brow,  
—in the night;  
Zee how the cloud-sheades naiseless do zweep  
Over the house-top where she's asleep.  
You, too, goo on, though times mid be near,  
When you, wi' me, mid speak to her ear  
—in the night.'

## HWOMELY RHYMES

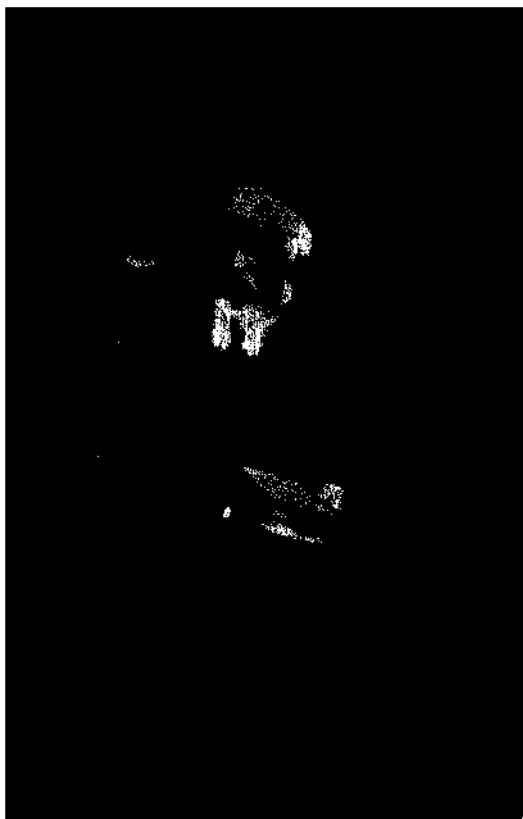
### *Leeburn Mill*

Ov all the meads wi' shoals an' pools,  
Where streams did sheake the limber zedge,  
An' milken vo'k did teake their stools,  
In evenen zun-light under hedge:  
Ov all the wears the brook did vill,  
Or all the hatches where a sheet  
O' foam did leap below woone's veet,  
The pleace vor me wer Leeburn Mill.

An' while below the mossy wheel  
All day the foarnen stream did roar,  
An' up in mill the floaten meal  
Did pitch upon the sheaken vloor.  
We then could vind but vew han's still,  
Or veet a-resten off the ground,  
An' seldom hear the merry sound  
O"geames a-play'd at Leeburn Mill.

But when they let the stream goo free,  
Beside the drippen wheel at rest,  
An' leaves upon the poplar-tree  
Wer dark avore the glowen west;  
An' when the clock, a-ringen sh'ill,  
Did slowly beat zome evenen hour,  
Dh! then 'ithin the leafy bow'r  
Our tongues did run at Leeburn Mill.

An' when November's win' did blow,  
Wi' hufflen storms along the plain,  
An' blacken'd leaves did lie below  
The neaked tree, a-zoak'd wi' rain,  
I werden at a loss to vill  
The darkest hour o' rainy skies,  
If I did vind avore my eyes  
The feaces down at Leeburn Mill.





FROM  
POEMS OF RURAL LIFE  
IN THE DORSET DIALECT  
THIRD COLLECTION  
1862

*“Δωρίσθεν δ’ ἔξεστι, δοκῶ, τοῖς Δωρειέεσσι”*

THEOCRITUS.



## *The Echo*

About the tow'r an' churchyard wall,  
Out nearly overright our door,  
A tongue ov wind did always call  
Whatever we did call avore.  
The vaice did mock our neames, our cheers.  
Our merry laughs, our hands' loud claps,  
An' mother's call 'Come, come, my dears'  
—*my dears;*  
Or 'Do as I do bid, bad chaps'  
—*bad chaps.*

An' when o' Zundays on the green,  
**In** frocks an' cwoats as gay as new.  
We walk'd wi' shoes a-meade to sheen  
So black an' bright's a vull-ripe slooe  
We then did hear the tongue ov air  
A-mocken mother's vaice so thin,  
'Come, now the bell do goo vor pray'r'  
—*vor pray'r;*  
"Tis time to goo to church; come in'  
—*come in,*

The night when little Anne, that died,  
Begun to zicken, back in May,  
An' she, at dusk ov evenen-tide,  
Wer out wi' others at their play,  
Within the churchyard that do keep  
Her little bed, the vaice o' thin  
Dark air, mock'd mother's call 'To sleep'  
—*to sleep;*  
"Tis bed time now, my love, come in'  
—*come in.*

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' when our Jeane come out so smart  
A-married, an' we help'd her in  
To Henry's newly-painted cart,  
The while the wheels begun to spin,  
An' her gay nods, vor all she smil'd,  
Did sheake a tear-drop vrom each eye,  
The vaice mock'd mother's call, 'Dear child'  
—*dear child*;  
'God bless ye evermwore; good bye'  
—*good bye*.

### *Naighbour Playmeates*

O jay betide the dear wold mill,  
My naighbour playmeates<sup>1</sup> happy hwome,  
Wi' rallen wheel, an' leapen foam,  
Below the overhangen hill,  
Where, wide an' slow,  
The stream did flow,  
An' flags did grow, an' lightly vlee  
Below the grey-leav'd withy tree,  
While clack, clack, clack, vrom hour to hour.  
Wi' whirlen stwone, an' streamen flour,  
Did goo the mill by cloty Stour.

An' there in geames by evenen skies,  
When Meary zot her down to rest,  
The broach upon her panken breast,  
Did quickly vail an' lightly rise,  
While swans did zwim  
In high-neck'd trim.

An' swallows skim the water, bright  
Wi' whirlen froth, in western light;  
An' clack, clack, clack, that happy hour,  
Wi' whirlen stwone, an' streamen flour,  
Did goo the mill by cloty Stour.

### THIRD COLLECTION

Now mortery jeints, in streaks o' white,  
Along the gearden wall do show  
In May, an' cherry boughs do blow,  
Wi' bloomen tutties, snowy white,  
Where rollen round,  
Wi' rumblen sound,  
The wheel woonce drown'd the vai'ce so dear  
To me. I fain would goo to hear  
The clack, clack, clack, vor woone short hour,  
Wi' whirlen stwone, an' streamen flour,  
Beside the mill on doty Stour.

But should I vind a-heaven now  
Her breast wi' air o' thik dear pleace?  
Dr zee dark locks by such a brow,  
Or het o<sup>1</sup> play on such a feace?  
No! She's now stai'd,  
An' where she play'd,  
There's noo such maid that now ha' took  
The pleace that she ha' long vorsook,  
Though clack, cluck, clack, vrom hour to hour,  
Wi' whirlen stwone an' streamen flour,  
Do goo the mill by cloty Stour.

An' still the pulley rwope do heist  
The wheat vrom red-wheeled waggon beds.  
An' ho'ses there wi' Iwoads of grist,  
Do stand an' toss their heavy heads;  
But on the vloer,  
Or at the dooer,  
Do show noo mwore the kindly feace  
Her father show'd about the pleace,  
As clack, clack, clack, vrom hour to hour,  
Wi' whirlen stwone, an' streamen flour,  
Did goo his mill by cloty Stour.

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

*The Two Churches*

A happy day, a happy year,  
A zummer Zunday, dazzlen clear,  
I went athirt vrom Lea to Noke.  
To goo to church wi' Fanny's vo'k:  
The sky o' blue did only show  
A cloud or two, so white as snow,  
An' air did sway, wi' softest strokes,  
The eltrot roun' the dark-bough'd woaks.  
O day o' rest when bells do toll!  
O day a-blest to ev'ry soul!  
How sweet the zwells o' Zunday bells.

An' on the cowslip-knap at Creech,  
Below the grove o' steately beech,  
I heard two tow'rs a-cheemen clear,  
Vrom woone I went, to woone drew near,  
As they did call, by flow'ry ground,  
The bright-shod veet vrom housen round,  
A-drownen wi' their holy call,  
The goocoo an' the water-vail.  
Die off, O bells o' my dear pleace,  
Ring out, O bells avore my feace,  
Vull sweet your zwells, O ding-dong bells.

Ah! then vor things that time did bring  
My kinsvo'k, *Lea* had bells to ring;  
An' then, agean, vor what bevel!  
My wife's, why *Noke* church had a bell;  
But soon wi' hopevul lives a-bound  
In woone, we had woone tower's sound,  
Vor our high jays all vive bells rung,  
Our losses had woone iron tongue.  
Oh! ring all round, an' never mwoan

THIRD COLLECTION

So deep an' slow woone bell alwone,  
Vor sweet your swells o' vive clear bells.

*Woak Hill*

When sycamore leaves wer a-spreaden,  
Green-ruddy, in hedges,  
Beside the red doust o' the ridges,  
A-dried at Woak Hill;

I packed up my goods all a-sheenen  
Wi' long years o' handlen,  
On dousty red wheels ov a waggon,  
To ride at Woak Hill.

The brown thatchen ruf o' the dwellen,  
I then wer a-leaven,  
Had sheltered the sleek head o' Meary.  
My bride at Woak Hill.

But now vor zome years, her light voot-vall  
'S a-lost vrom the vlooren.  
TOD soon vor my jay an' my childern,  
She died at Woak Hill.

But still I do think that, in soul,  
She do hover about us;  
To ho vor her motherless childern,  
Her pride at Woak Hill.

Zoo—lest she should tell me hereafter  
I stole of T'ithout her,  
An' left her, uncall'd at house-ridden,  
To bide at Woak Hill—

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

I call'd her so fondly, wi' lippens  
All soundless to others,  
An' took her wi' air-reachen hand.  
To my zide at Woak Hill.

Dn the road I did look round, a-talken  
To light at my shoulder,  
An' then led her in at the door-way,  
Miles wide vrom Woak Hill.

An' that's why vo'k thought, vor a season,  
My mind wer a-wandren  
Wi' sorrow, when I wer so sorely  
A-tricd at Woak Hill.

But no; that my Meary mid never  
Behold herzelf slighted,  
I wanted to think that I guided  
My guide vrom Woak Hill.

### *The Hedger*

Upon the hedge thease bank did bear,  
WI' lowonesome thought untwold in words,  
I woonce did work, wi' noo sound there  
But my own strokes, an' chirpen birds;  
As down the west the zun went wan,  
An' days brought on our Zunday's rest,  
When sounds o' cheemen bells did vill  
The air, an' hook an' axe wer still.

Along the wold town-path vo'k went,  
An' met unknown, or friend wi' friend,  
The ma'id her busy mother zent,  
The mother wi' noo mai'd to zend;

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' in the light the gleazier's glass,  
As he did pass, wer dazzlen bright,  
Or woone went by wi' down-cast head,  
A^wrapp'd in blackness vor the dead.

An' then the bank, wi' risen back,  
That's now a-most a-trodden down,  
Bore thorns wi' rind o' sheeny black,  
An' meaple stems o' ribby brown;  
An' in the lewth o' theasc tree heads,  
Wer primrrose beds a-sprung in blooth,  
An' here a geate, a-slammen to,  
Did let the slow-wheel'd plough roll drough.

Ov all that then went by, but vew  
Be now a-left behine', to beat  
The mornen flow'rs or evenen dew,  
Or slam the woaken vive-bar'd gcatc;  
But woone, my wife, so litty-stepp'd,  
That have a-kept my path o' life,  
Wi' her vew errands on the road,  
Where woonce she bore her mother's Iwoad.

### *In the Spring*

My love is the maid ov all maidens,  
Though all mid be comely,  
Her skin's lik' the jessamy blossom  
A-spread in the Spring.

Her smile is so sweet as a beaby's  
Young smile on his mother,  
Her eyes be as bright as the dew drop  
A-shed in the Spring.

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

O grey-leafy pinks o' the gearden,  
Now bear her sweet blossoms;  
Now deck wi' a rrose-bud, O briar,  
Her head in the Spring.

O light-rollen wind blow me hither,  
The vaice ov her talken,  
Or bring vrom her veet the light doust,  
She do tread in the Spring.

O zun, meake the gil'cups all glitter,  
In goold all around her;  
An<sup>1</sup> meake o' the deaisys<sup>1</sup> white flowers  
A bed in the Spring.

O whistle, gay birds, up beside her,  
hi drong-way, an' woodlands,  
O zing, swingen lark, now the clouds,  
Be a-vied in the Spring.

An' wha, you mid ax, be my praises  
A-meaken so much o',  
An' oh! 'tis the maid I'm a-hopen  
To wed in the Spring.

*The Flood in the Spring*

Last night below the elem in the lew  
Bright the sky did gleam  
On water blue, while air did softly blow  
On the flowen stream,  
An' there wer gil'cups' buds untwold,  
An' deaisies that begun to vwold  
Their low-stemm'd blossoms vrom my zight  
Agean the night, an' evenen's cwold.

### THIRD COLLECTION

But, oh! so cwold below the darksome cloud  
    Soon the night-wind roar'd,  
Wi' rai'ny storms that zent the swollen streams  
    Over ev'ry vword.

The while the drippen tow'r did tell  
The hour, wi' storm-be-smotrier'd bell,  
An' over ev'ry flower's bud  
Roll'd on the flood, 'ithin the dell.

But when the zun arose, an' lik' a rwose  
    Shone the mornen sky;  
An' roun' the woak, the wind a-blown weak,  
    Softly whiver'd by.

Though drown'd wer still the deai'sy bed  
Below the flood, its feace instead  
O' flow'ry grown', below our shoes  
Show'd feairest views o' skies o'er head.

An' zoo to try if all our faith is true  
    Jay mid end in tears,  
An' hope, woonce feair, mid sadden into fear,  
    Herein e'thly years.

But He that tried our soul do know  
To meake us good amends, an' show  
Instead o' things a-took away,  
Some higher jay that He'll bestow.

### *Comen Hwome*

As clouds did ride wi' heasty flight,  
An' woods did sway upon the height,  
An' bleades o' grass did sheake, below  
The hedge-row bramble's swingen bow,  
I come back hwome where winds did zwell,  
    In whirls along the woody gleades,  
    On primrrose beds, in windy sheades,  
To Burnley's dark-tree'd dell.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

There hills do screen the timber's bough,  
The trees do screen the leaze's brow,  
The timber-sheaded leaze do bear  
A beaten path that we do wear.  
The path do stripe the Icaze's zide,  
    To willows at the river's edge.  
    Where hufflen winds did shcake the zcdge,  
An' sparklen weaves did glide.

An' where the river, bend by bend,  
Do drain our mead, an' mark its end,  
The hangen leaze do teake our cows,  
An' trees do sheade em wi' their boughs,  
An' I the quicker beat the road,  
    To zee a-comen into view,  
    Still greener vrom the sky-line's blue,  
Wold Burnley our abode.

### *The Rwose in the Dark*

In zummer, leate at evenen tide,  
    I zot to spend a moonless hour  
'Ithin the window, wi' the zide  
    A-bound wi' rwozes out in flow'r,  
Beside the bow'r, vorsook o' birds,  
An' listen'd to my true-love's words.

A-risen to her comely height,  
    She push'd the swingen ceasement round;  
And I could hear, beyond my zight,  
    The win'-blow'd beech-tree softly sound,  
**On** higher ground, a-swayen slow,  
On drough my happy hour below.

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' tho' the darkness then did hide  
The dewy rrose's blushen bloom,  
He still did cast sweet air inside  
To Jeane, a-chatten in the room;  
An' though the gloom did hide her feace,  
Her words did bind me to the please.

An' there, while she, wi' runnen tongue,  
Did talk unzeen 'ithin the hall,  
I thought her like the rrose that flung  
His sweetness vrom his darken'd ball,  
'Thout the wall, an' sweet's the zight  
Ov her bright feace, by mornen light.

### *Zunimer Winds*

Let me work, but mid noo tie  
Hold me vrom the oben sky,  
When zummer winds, in playsome flight,  
Do blow on vields in noon-day light,  
Orruslen trees, in twilight night.  
Sweet's a stroll,  
By flow'ry knowl, or blue-feiiced pool  
That zummer win's do ruffle cool.

When the moon's broad light do vill  
Plains, a-sheenen down the hill;  
A-glitteren on window glass,  
O then, while zummer win's do pass  
The rippled brook, an' swayen grass,  
Sweet's a walk,  
Where we do talk, wi' feaces bright,  
In whispers in the peacevul night.

When the swayen men do mow  
Flow'ry grass, wi' zweepen blow,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

In net a-most enough to dry  
The flat-spread dole-leaf that do lie  
Upon the stream a-slcalen by,  
    Sweet's their rest,  
Upon the breast o' knap or mound  
Out where the goocoo's vaicedo sound.

Where the sleek-heair'd maid do zit  
Out o' door to zew or Knill,  
Below the elem where the spring  
'S a-runnen, an' the road do bring  
The people by to hear her zing,  
    On the green,  
Where she's a-zcen, an' she can zee,  
O gay is she below the tree.

Come, O zummer wind, an<sup>1</sup> bring  
Sounds o' birds as they do zing,  
An' bring the smell o' bloomen may,  
An' bring the smell o' new-mow'd hay;  
Come fan my feace as I do stray,  
    Fan the heair  
O' Jessie feair; fan her cool,  
By the weaves o' stream or pool.

### *The Neame Letters*

When high-flown larks wer on the wing,  
A warm-air'd holiday in Spring.  
We stroll'd, 'ithout a ceare or frown,  
    Up roun' the down at Meldonley;  
An' where the hawthorn-tree did stand  
Alwone, but still wi' mwore at hand,  
We zot wi' sheades o' clouds on high  
    A-flitten by, at Meldonley.

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' there, the while the tree did sheade  
Their gigglen heads, my knife's keen bleade  
Carved out, in turf avore my knee,

J. L., T. D., at Meldonley.

Twer Jessie Lee J. L. did mean,  
T. D. did stan<sup>1</sup> vor Thomas Deane;  
The 'L' I scratched but slight, vor he  
Mid soon be D, at Meldonley.

An<sup>1</sup> when the vields o' wheat did spread  
Vrom hedge to hedge in sheets o' red  
An' bennets wer a-sheaken brown,

Upon the down at Meldonley,  
We stroll'd agean along the hill,  
An' at the hawthorn-tree stood still,  
To zee J. L. vor Jessie Lee,  
An' my T. D., at Meldonley.

The grey-poll'd bennet-stems did hem  
Each half-hid letter's zunken rim,  
By Icadys-vingers that did spread  
In yollow red, at Meldonley.

An' hearebells there wi" light blue bell  
Shook soundless on the letter L,  
To ment the bells when L vor Lee  
Become a D at Meldonley.

Vor Jessie, now my wife, do strive  
Wi' me in life, an' we do thrive;  
Two sleek-heired meares do sprackly pull

My waggon vull, at Meldonley;  
An' small-hoofd sheep, in vleece white  
Wi' quickly-panken zides, do bite  
My thymy grass, a-mark'd vor me  
In black, T.D., at Meldonley.

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

*The New House a-gdlen Wold*

Ah! when our wedded life begun,  
Thease clean-wall<sup>1</sup>d house of ours wer new;  
Wi' thatch as yollor as the zun  
Avore the cloudless sky o' blue;  
The sky o' blue that then did bound  
The blue-hilled worold's flow'ry ground.

An' we've a-vound it weather-brown'd,  
As Spring-tide blossoms oben'd white,  
Or Fall did shed, on zunburnt ground,  
Red apples from their leafy height:  
Their leafy height, that Winter soon  
Left leafless to the cool-feaced moon.

An' ram-bred moss ha' stain'd wi' green  
The smooth-feaced wall's white-morter'd streaks,  
The while our childern zot between  
Our scats avore the fleame's red peaks:  
The fleame's led peaks, till axan white  
Did quench em vor the long-sleep'd night.

The bloom that woonce did overspread  
Your rounded cheak, as time went by,  
A-shrinken to a patch o' red,  
Did feade so soft's the evenen sky:  
The evenen sky, my faithful wife,  
O' days us feair's our happy life.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *Zummer Stream*

Ah! then the grassy-meaded May  
Did warm the passen year, an' gleam  
Upon the yollow-grounded stream,  
That still by beech-tree sheades do stray.  
The light o' weaves, a-runnen there,  
Did play on leaves up over head,  
An' vishes scealy zides did gleiire,  
A-darten on the shallow bed,  
An' like the stream a-sliden on,  
My zun out-measur'd time's agone.

There by the path, in grass knee-high,  
Wer butternveles in giddy flight,  
All white above the deaisies white,  
Or blue below the deep blue sky.  
Then glowen warm wer ev'ry brow,  
O' mai'd, or man, in zummer het,  
An' warm did glow the cheeks I met  
That time, noo mwore to meet em now.  
As brooks, a-sliden on their bed,  
My season-measur'd time's a-vled.

Vrom yonder window, in the thatch,  
Did sound the maidens' merry words,  
As I did stand, by zingen birds,  
Beside the elem-sheaded hatch.  
'Tis good to come back to the pleave,  
Back to the time, to goo noo mwore;  
'Tis good to meet the younger feace  
A-menten others here avore.  
As streams do glide by green mead-grass,  
My zummer-brighten'd years do pass.

*Eclogue*

*Come and Zee us m the Zummer*

John; William; William's Bwoy; and William's Maid  
at Feair.

JOHN

Zoo here be your childern, a-shearen  
Your feair-day, an' each wi' a feairen.

WILLIAM

Aye, well, there's noo peace 'ithout comen  
To stannen an' show, in the zummer.

JOHN

An' how is your Jeane? still as merry  
As ever, wi' cheaks lik' a cherry?

WILLIAM

Still merry, but beauty's as feadesome  
'S the ram's gowen bow in the zummer.

JOHN

Well now, I do hope we shall vind ye  
Come soon, wi' your childern behind ye,  
To Stowe, while o' bwoth zides o' hedges,  
The zunsheen do glow in the zummer.

WILLIAM

Well, aye, when the mowen is over,  
An' ee-grass t o whiten wi' clover.  
A man's a-tired out, vor much walken,  
The while he do mow in the zummer.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### WILLIAM'S BWOY

I'll goo, an' we'll zet up a wicket,  
An' have a good innens at cricket;  
An' teake a good plounce in the water,  
Where clote-leaves do grow in the zummer.

#### WILLIAM'S MAID

I'll goo, an' we'll play 'Thread the needle'  
Or 'Hunten the slipper', or wheedle  
Young Jemmy to fiddle, an' recly  
Su brisk to an' fro in the zummer.

#### JOHN

An' Jeans. Mind you don't come 'ithout her,  
My wife is a-thinken about her;  
At our house she'll find she's as welcome  
'S the rwose that do blow in the zummer.

#### *Lindenore*

At Lindenore upon the steep,  
Beside the trees a-reachen high,  
The while their lower limbs do zweep  
The river-stream a-flowen by;  
By greygle bells in beds o' blue,  
Below the tree-stems in the lew,  
Calm air do vind the rwose-bound door,  
Ov Ellen Dare o' Lindenore.

An<sup>1</sup> there noo foam do hiss avore  
Swift bwoats, wi' water-pi owen keels,  
An<sup>1</sup> there noo broad high-road's a-wore  
By vur-brought trav'krs<sup>1</sup> cracklen wheels;  
Noo crowd's a-passen to and fro,  
Upon the bridge's high-sprung bow:  
An<sup>1</sup> vew but I do seek the door  
Ov Ellen Dare o' Linden ore.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Vor there the town, wi' zun-bright walls,  
Do sheen vur off, by hills o' grey,  
An' town-vo'k ha' but seldom calls  
O' business there, from day to day:  
But Ellen didden have her ruf  
To be admir'd, an' that's enough—  
Vor I've a-vound 'ithin her door,  
Feair Ellen Dare o' Lindenore.

### *Treat Well your Wife*

No, no, good Measter Collins cried,  
Why you've a good wife at your zide;  
Zoo do believe the heart is true  
That gi'ed up all bezide vor you,  
An<sup>1</sup> still beheave as you begun  
To seek the love that you've a-won  
    When wounce in dewy June,  
In hours o' hope soft eyes did flash,  
Each bright below his sheady lash,  
    A-glisnen to the moon.

Think how her girlhood met noo ccare  
To peale the bloom her fea'ce did wear,  
An' how her glossy temple prest  
Her pillow down, in still-feaced rest,  
While sheades o' window bars did vail  
In moonlight on the gloomy wall,  
    In cool-air'd nights o' June;  
The while her lids, wi<sup>1</sup> ben den streaks  
O' lashes, met above her cheeks,  
    A-bloomen to the moon.

Think how she left her childhood's ppeace,  
An' only sister's long-knownn feace,

### THIRD COLLECTION

An<sup>1</sup> brother's jokes so much a-miss'd,  
An' mother's chciik, the last a-kiss'd;  
An' how she lighted down avore  
Her new abode, a husband's door,  
    Your wedden night in June;  
Wi' heart that beat wi' hope an' fear.  
While on each eye-lash hung a tear,  
    A-glisnen to the moon.

Think how her father zot all dum',  
A-thinken on her, back at hwome,  
The while grey axan gather'd thick,  
On dyen embers, on the brick;  
An' how her mother look'd abrode,  
Drough window, down the moon-bright road,  
    Thik cloudless night o' June,  
Wi' tears upon her lashes big  
As rain-drops on a slender twig,  
    A-glisnen to the moon.

Zoo don't zit thoughtless at your cup  
An' keep your wife a-waiten up,  
The while the clock's a-ticken slow  
The chilly hours o' vrost an' snow,  
Until the zinken candle's light  
Is out avore her drowsy sight,  
    A-dimm'd wi' grief too soon;  
A-leaven there alwone to murn  
The feaden cheak that woonce did burn,  
    A-blDomen to the moon.

### *Hawthorn Down*

All up the down's cool brow  
    I work'd in noontide's gleare,  
On where the slow-wheel'd plow  
    'D a-wore the grass half bare.

PDEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' gil'cups quiver'd quick,  
As air did pass,  
An' deaisies huddled thick  
Among the grass.

The while my ears did swing  
Wi' work I had on hand,  
The quick-wing'd lark did zing  
Above the green-tree'd land.  
An' bwoys below me chafed  
The dog vor fun,  
An' he, vor all they laef'd,  
Did meake em run.

The south zide o' the hill,  
My own tun-smoke rose blue,—  
In North Coomb, near the mill,  
My mother's wer in view—  
Where woonce her vier vor all  
Ov us did burn,  
As I have childern small  
Round mine in turn.

An' zoo I still wull cheer  
Her life wi' my small store,  
As she do drop a tear  
Beside her Iwonesome door.  
The love that I do owe  
Her ruf, I'll pay,  
An' then zit down below  
My own wi'jay.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *Oben Vidds*

Well, you mid keep the town an' street,  
Wi' grasshss stwones to beat your veet,  
An' zunless windows where your brows  
Be never cooled by swayen boughs;  
An' let me end, as I begun,  
My days in oben air an' zun,  
Where zummer win's a-blowen sweet,  
Wi' blooth o' trees as whites a sheet;  
Or swayen boughs, a-benden low  
Wi' rip'nen apples in a row,  
An' we a-nsen rathe do meet  
The bright'nen dawn wi' dewy veet,  
An' leave, at night, the vootless groves,  
To rest 'ithin our thatchen oves.  
An' here our childern still do bruise  
The deaisy buds wi' tiny shoes,  
As we did meet avore em, free  
Vrom ceare, in play below the tree.  
An' there in me'th their lively eyes  
Do glissen to the zunny skies,  
As air do blow, wi' leazy peace  
To cool, in sheade, their burneri feace.  
Where leaves o' spreaden docks do hide  
The zawpit's timber-lwoaded zidc,  
An' trees do lie, wi' scraggy limbs,  
Among the deaisy's crimson rims.  
An' they, so proud, wi' earms a-spread  
To keep their Balance good, do tread  
Wi' ceareful steps o' tiny zoles  
The narrow zides o' trees an' poles.  
An' zoo I'll leave vor your light veet  
The peavement o' the zunless street,  
While I do end, as I begun,  
My days in oben air an' zun.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

### *Times o' Year*

Here did sway the eltrot flowers,  
When the hours o' night wer vew,  
An' the zun, wi' early beams  
Brighten'd streams, an' dried the dew,  
An' the goocoo there did greet  
Passers by wi' dusty veet.

There the milkmaid hung her brow  
By the cow, a-sheenen red;  
An' the dog, wi' upward looks,  
Watch'd the rooks above his head,  
An' the brook, vrom bow to bow,  
Here went swift, an<sup>l</sup> there wer slow.

Now the cwolder-blowen blast,  
Here do cast vrom elems' heads  
Feaded leaves, a-whirlen round,  
Down to ground, in yollow beds,  
Ruslen under milkers' shoes,  
When the day do dry the dews.

Soon shall grass, a-vrosted bright,  
Glisten white instead o' green,  
An' the wind shall smite the cows,  
Where the boughs be now their screen.  
Things do change as years do vlec;  
What ha' years in store vor me?

### *To Me*

At night, as drough the mead I took my way,  
In a'fr a-sweeten'd by the new-meade hay,  
A stream a-vailen down a rock did sound,  
Though out o' zight wer foam an' stwone to me.

### THIRD COLLECTION

Behind the knap, above the gloomy copse,  
The wind did russle in the trees' high tops,  
Though evenen darkness, an' the risen hill,  
Kept all the quiv'ren leaves unshown to me,

Within the copse, below the zunless sky,  
I heard a nightengeale, a-warblen high  
Her Iwoansome zong, a-hidden vrom my zight,  
An' showen nothen but her mwoan to me.

An' by a house, where rwooses hung avore  
The thatch-brow'd window, an' the oben door,  
I heard the merry words, an' hearty laugh  
O' zome feair maid, as yet unknown to me.

High over head the white-rimm'd clouds went on,  
Wi' woone a-comen up, vor woone a-gone;  
An' feair they floated in their sky-back'd flight,  
Bui still they never mcade a sound to me.

An' there the miller, down the stream did float  
Wi' all his childem, in his white-sail'd bwoat,  
Vur off, beyond the stragglen cows in mead,  
But zent noo vaice, athirt the ground, to me.

An' then a butternlee, in zultry light,  
A-wheelen on about me, vier-bright,  
-Did show the gayest colors to my eye,  
But still did bring noo vafce around to me.

I met the merry laugher on the down,  
Bezide her mother, on the path to town,  
An' oh! her sheape wer comely to the zight,  
But wordless then wer she a-vound to me.

Zoo, sweet ov unzeen things mid be sound,  
An' feair to zight mid soundless things be vound,  
But I've the laugh *to* hear, an' feace to zee,  
Vor they be now my own, a-bound to me.

*Tweil*

The rick ov our last zummer's haulen  
 Now vrom grey's a-feaded dark,  
 An' off the barken rail's a-vallen,  
 Day by day, the rotten bark.—  
 But short's the lime our works do stand,  
 So feair's we put em out ov hand.  
 Vor time a-passen, wet an' dry,  
 Do spwell em wi<sup>1</sup> his changen sky.  
 The while wi<sup>1</sup> striven hope, we men,  
 Though a-ruen time's undoen,  
 Still do tweil an' tweil agean.

In wall-zide sheades, by leafy bowers.  
 Underneath the swayen tree,  
 O' leate, as round the bloomen flowers,  
 Lowly humm'd the giddy bee.  
 My childern's small left voot did smite  
 Their tiny speade, the while the right  
 Did trample on a deaisy head,  
 Beside the flower's dusty bed,  
 An' though their work wer idle then.  
 They a-smilen, an' a-tweilen,  
 Still did work an' work agean.

Now their little limbs be stronger,  
 Deeper now their va'ice do sound;  
 An' their little veet be longer,  
 An' do tread on other ground;  
 An' rust is on the little bleades  
 Ov all the broken-hafted speades,  
 An' flow'rs that wer my hope an' pride  
 Ha' long ago D a-bloom'd an' died,  
 But still as I did leabor then  
 Vor love ov all them diildern small,  
 Zoo now HI tweil an' tweil agean.

### THIRD COLLECTION

When the smokeless tun's a-grown  
Cwold as dew below the stars,  
An' when the vier noo mwore's a-glowen  
Red between the window bars,  
We then do lay our weary heads  
In peace upon their nightly beds,  
An' gi'e woone sock, wi' heaven breast,  
An' then breathe soft the breath o' rest,  
Till day do call the sons o' men  
Vrom night-sleep's blackness, vull o' sprackness,  
Out abroad to tweil agean.

Where the vaice o' the winds is mildest,  
In the plain, their stroke is keen;  
Where their drcatnen vaice is wildest,  
In the grove, the grove's our screen.  
An' where the worold in their strife  
Do dreaten mmost our tweilsome life,  
Why there Almighty ceare mid cast  
A better screen agean the blast.  
Zoo I woon't live in fear o' men,  
But, man-neglected, God-directed,  
Still wull tweil an' tweil agean.

### *The Broken Heart*

News o' grief had overteaken  
Dark-ey'd Fanny, now vorseaken;  
There she zot, wi' breast a-heaven,  
While vrom zide to zide, wi' grieven,  
Veil her head, wi' tears a-creepèn  
Down her cheeks, in bitter weepen.  
There wer still the ribbon-bow  
She tied avore her hour ov woe,

PDEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' there wer still the nan's that tied it  
Hangen white,  
Or wringen tight,  
In ceare that drown'd all ceare bezide it.

When a man, wi' heartless slighen,  
Mid become a maiden's blighen,  
He mid cearelessly vorseake her,  
But must answer to her Mea'ker;  
He mid slight, wi' selfish blindness,  
All her deeds o' loven-kindness,  
God wull wa'igh em wi' the slighen  
That mid be her love's requiten;  
He do look on each deceiver,  
He do know  
What weight o' woe  
Do break the heart ov ev'ry griever.

*Evenei Light*

The while I took my bit o' rest,  
Below my house's eastern shea'de,  
The things that stood in vicld an' gleade  
Wer bright in zunsheen vrom the west.  
There bright wer east-ward mound an' wall,  
An' bright wer trees, arisen tall,  
An' bright did break 'ithin the brook,  
Down rocks, the watervall.

There deep 'ithin my pworches bow  
Did hang my heavy woaken door,  
An' in beyond en, on the vloer,  
The evenen dusk did gather slow;  
But bright did gleare the twinklen spwokes  
O' runnen carriage wheels, as vo'ks  
Out east did ride along the road,  
Beside the low-bough'd woaks,

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' I'd a-lost the zun vrom view,  
Until agean his feace mid rise,  
A-sheenen vrom the eastern skies  
To brighten up the rwose-borne dew;  
But still his lingren light did gi'e  
My heart a touchen jay, to zee  
His beams a-shed, wi' stratchen sheade,  
On east-ward wall an' tree.

When jay, a-zent me vrom above,  
Vrom my sad heart is now agone,  
An' others be a-walken on,  
Amid the light ov Heaven's love,  
Oh! then vorloven-kindness seake,  
Mid I rejaice that zome do teake  
My hopes a-gone, until agean  
My happy dawn do break.

### *The Wheel Routs*

'Tis true I brought noo fortune hwome  
Wi' Jenny, vor her honeymoon,  
But still a goodish hansel come  
Behind her perty soon,  
Vor stick, an' dish, an' spoon, all veil  
To Jeane, vrom Aunt o' Camwy dell.

### **Zoo all the lot o' stuff a-tied**

Upon the plow, a tidy tod,  
On gravel-crunchen wheels did ride,  
Wi' ho'ses, iron-shod,  
That, as their heads did nod, my whip  
Did guide along wi' lightsome flip.

An' there it rod 'ithin the rwope,  
Astra'in'd athirt, an' strain'd along,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Down Thornhay's even-en-lighted slope  
An' up the beech-tree drong;  
Where wheels a-bound so strong, cut out  
On either zide a deep-zunk rout.

An' when at Fall the trees wer brown,  
Above the bennet-bearen land,  
When beech-leaves slowly whiver'd down,  
By evenen winds a-fann'd;  
The routs wer each a band o' red,  
A-vill'd by drifted beech-leaves dead.

An' when, in Winter's leafless light,  
The keener eastern wind did blow,  
An' scatter down, avore my zight,  
A chilly cwoat o' snow;  
The routs agean did show vull bright,  
In two long streaks o' glitt'ren white.

But when, upon our wedden night,  
The cart's light wheels, a-rollen round,  
Brought Jenny hwome, they run too light  
To mark the yielden ground;  
Or welcome would be vound a pear  
O' green-vill'd routs a-runnen there.

Zoo let me never bring 'ithin  
My dwellen what's a-won by wrong,  
An' can't come in 'ithont a sin;  
Vor only zee how long  
The waggon marks in drong, did show  
Wi' leaves, wi' grass, wi' groun', wi' snow.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *Lizzie*

O Lizzie is so mild o' mind,  
Vor ever kind, an' ever true;  
A-smilen, while her lids do rise  
To show her eyes as bright as dew.  
An' comely do she look at night,  
A-dancen in her skirt o' white,  
An' blushen wi' a rwose o' red  
Bezide her glossy head.

Fear is the rwose o' blushen hue,  
Behung wi' dew, in mornen's hour,  
Fear is the rwose, so sweet below  
The noontide glow, bezide the bow'r.  
Vull fear, an' eet I'd rather zee  
The rwose a-gather'd off the tree,  
An' bioomen still with blossom red,  
By Lizzie's glossy head.

Mid peace droughout her e'thly day,  
Betide her way, to happy rest,  
An' mid she, all her weanen life,  
Or maid or wife, be loved and blest.  
Though I mid never zing anew  
To neame the mai'd so feair an' true,  
A-blushen, wi' a rwose o' red,  
Bezide her glossy head.

#### *Blessens a-Left*

Lik' souls a-toss'd at sea I bore  
Sad strokes o' trial, shock by shock,  
An' now, lik' souls a-cast ashore  
To rest upon the beaten rock,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

I still do seem to hear the sound  
O' weaves that drove me vrom my track,  
An' zee my struggJen hopes a-drown'd,  
An' all my jays afloated back.  
By storms a-toss'd, I'll gi'e God praise,  
Wi' much a-lost I still ha' jays.  
My peace is rest, my fai'th is hope,  
An' freedom's my unbounded scope.

Vor fai'th mid blunt the sting o' fear,  
An' peace the pangs ov ills a-vound,  
An' freedom vlec vrom evils near,  
Wi' wings ID vwold on other ground.  
Wf much a-lost, my loss is small,  
Vor though ov e'thly goods bereft,  
A thousand times well worth em all  
Be they good blessens now a-left.  
What e'th do own, to eHh mid vail,  
But what's my own my own I'll call,  
My faith, an' peace, the gifts o' greace,  
An' freedom still to shift my pleace.

### **When I've a-had a tree to screen**

My meal-rest vrom the high zunn'd-sky,  
Or ivy-hoi den wall between  
My head an' win's a-rustlen by,  
I had noo call vor nan's to bring  
Their seav'ry dainties at my nod,  
But stoop'd a-drinken vrom the spring,  
An' took my meal, wi' thanks to God,  
Wi' faith to keep me free o' dread,  
An' peace to sleep wi' steadvast head,  
An' freedom's hands, an' veet unbound  
To woone man's work, or woone seame ground.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *Fall Time*

The gather'd clouds, a-hangen low,  
Do meake the woody ridge look dim;  
An' raln-vill'd streams do brisker flow,  
Arisen higher to their brim.  
In the tree, vrom lim' to lim',  
Leaves do drop  
Vrom the top, all slowly down,  
Yollor, to the gloomy groun'.

The rick's a-tipp'd an' weather-brown'd,  
An' thatch'd wi' zedge a-dried an' dead;  
An' orcha'd apples, red half round,  
Have all a-happer'd down, a-shed  
Underneath the trees' wide head.  
Ladders long,  
Kong by rong, to dim' the tall  
Trees, be hung upon the wall.

The crumpled leaves be now a-shcd  
In mornen winds a-blown keen;  
When they wer green the moss wer dead,  
Now they be dead the moss is green.  
Low the evenen zun do sheen  
By the boughs,  
Where the cows do swing their tails  
Over the merry milkers' pails.

#### *The Zilver-Iweed*

The zilver-weed upon the green,  
Out where my sons an' daughters play'd,  
Had never time to bioDm between  
The litty steps o' bwoy an' maid.

## PDEMS DF RURAL LIFE

But rwose-trees down along the wall,  
That then wer all the maiden's ceare,  
An' all a-trimm'd an' train'd, did bear  
Their bloomen buds vrom Spring to Fall.

But now the zilver leaves do show  
To zummer day their goolden crown,  
**Wi'** noo swift shoe-zoles' litty blow,  
In merry play to beat em down.  
An' where vor years zome busy hand  
Did train the rwoses wide an' high;  
Now woone by woone the trees do die,  
An' vew of all the row do stand.

### *Zummer Thoughts in Winter Time*

Well, aye, last evenen, as I shook  
My locks ov hay by Leecombe brook,  
The yollow zun did weakly glance  
Upon the winter mead askance,  
A-casten out my narrow sheade  
Athirt the brook, an' on the mead.  
The while agean my Iwonesome ears  
Did russle weatherbeaten spears,  
Below the withy's leafless head  
That overhung the river's bed;  
I there did think o' days that dried  
The new-mow'd grass o' zummer-tide,  
When white-sleev'd mowers' whetted blades  
Rung sh'll along the green-bough'd gleades,  
An' maidens gay, wi' playsomc chaps,  
A-zot wi' dinners in their laps,  
Did talk wi' merry words that rung  
Around the ring, vrom tongue to tongue;  
An' welcome, when the leaves ha<sup>1</sup> died,  
Be zummer thoughts in winter-tide.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *Fm out o'' Door*

I'm out, when, in the winter's blast,  
The zun, a-runnen lowly round,  
Do mark the sheades the hedge do cast  
At noon, in hoarvrost, on the ground.  
I'm out when snow's a-lyen white  
In keen-air'd yields that I do pass,  
An' moonbeams, vrom above, do smite  
On ice an' sleeper's window-glass.  
I'm out D' door,  
When win' do zweep,  
By hangen steep,  
Or hollow deep,  
At Lindenore.

D welcome is the lewth a-vound  
By rustlen copse, or ivied bank,  
Dr by the hay-rick, weathcr-brown'd  
By barken-grass, a-springen rank;  
Or where the waggon, vrom the team  
A-freed, is well a-housed vrom wet,  
An' on the dusty cart-house beam  
Do hang the cobweb's white-lin'd net.  
While storms do roar,  
An' win' do zweep,  
By hangen steep,  
Or hollow deep,  
At Lindenore.

An' when a good day's work 's a-done  
An' I do rest, the while a squall  
Do rumble in the hollow tun,  
An' ivy-stems do whip the wall.  
Then in the house do sound about  
My ears, dear vaices vull or thin,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

A prayen vor the souls vur out  
At sea, an' cry wi' bibb'ren chin—  
Oh! shut the door.  
What soul can sleep,  
Upon the deep,  
When storms do zweep  
At Lindenore.

### *A Snowy Night*

Twer at night, an' a keen win' did blow  
Vrom the east under peale-twinklen stars,  
All a-zweepen along the white snow;  
On the groun', on the trees, on the bars,  
Vrom the hedge where the win' russled drough,  
There a light-russlen snow-doust did valJ;  
An' noo pleaec wcr a-vound that wer lew,  
But the shed, or the ivy-hung wall.

Then I knock'd at the wold passage door  
Wi' the win'-driven snow on my locks;  
Till, a-comen along the cwold vtoor,  
There my Jenny soon answer'd my knocks.  
Then the wind, by the door a-swung wide,  
Flung some snuw in her elear-bio omen feace,  
An' she blink'd wi' her head all a-zide,  
An' a-chucklen, went back to her please.

An' in there, as we zot roun<sup>1</sup> the brands,  
Though the talkers wcr mainly the men,  
Bloomen Jeane, wi' her work in her hands,  
Did put in a good word now an' then.  
An' when I took my leave, though so bleak  
Wer the weather, she went to the door,  
Wi<sup>1</sup> a smile, an' a blush on the cheak  
That the snow had a-smitten avore.

### THIRD COLLECTION

#### *The Year-Clock*

We zot bczlde the leafy wall,  
Upon the bench at evenfall,  
While aunt led off our minds vi om ccare  
Wi' veairy teales, I can't tell where:  
An' vound us woone among her stock  
O' feables, o' the girt Year-clock.  
His feace wer blue's the zummer skies,  
An' widc's the zight o' looken eyes,  
For hands, a zun wi' glowen feace,  
An' pealer moon wi' swifter peace,  
Did wheel by stars o" twinklen light,  
By bright-wall'd day, an<sup>1</sup> dark-treed night;  
An' down upon the high-sky'd land,  
A-reachen wide, on either hand,  
Wer hill an' dell wi' win'-sway'd trees,  
An' lights a-zweepen over seas,  
An' gleamen cliffs, an' bright-wall'd tow'rs,  
Wi' sheades a-marken on the hours;  
An' as the feace, a-ralien round,  
Brought comely sheapes along the ground,  
The Spring did come in winsome steate  
Below a glowen rainbow geate;  
An' fan wi' air a-blownen weak,  
Her glossy hear, an' rwozy cheak,  
As she did shed vrom oben hand,  
The leapen zeed on vurrow'd land;  
The while the rook, wi' heasty flight,  
A-floaten in the glowen light,  
Did bear avore her glossy breast  
A stick to build her lofty nest,  
An' strong-lim'b Tweil, wi<sup>1</sup> steady hands,  
Did guide along the vallow lands  
The heavy zull, wi' bright-shear'd beam,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Avore the weary oxen team.  
Wi' Spring a-gone there come behind  
Sweet Zummer, jay ov ev'ry mind,  
Wi' feace a-beamen to beguile  
Our weary souls ov ev'ry tweil.  
While birds did warble in the dell  
In softest air o' sweetest smell;  
An' she, *so* winsome-feair did vwoold  
Her comely limbs in green an' goold,  
An" wear a rwoisy wreath, wi' studs  
O' berries green, an' new-born buds,  
A-fring'd in colours vicr-bright,  
Wi' sheapes o' buttcrvlees in flight.  
When Zummer went, the next ov all  
Did come the sheape o' brown-feac'd Fall  
A-smilen in a comely gawn  
O' green, a-shot wf yollow-brown,  
A-border'd wi' a goolden stripe  
O' fringe, a-meade o' corn-ears ripe,  
An' up ageaa her comely zide,  
Upon her rounded carm, did ride  
A perty basket, all a-twin'd  
O' slender stems wi' leaves an' rind,  
A-vill'd wi' fruit the trees did shed,  
All ripe, in purple, goold, an' red;  
An' busy Leabor there did come  
A-zingenzongs DV harvesthwome,  
An' red-ear'd dogs did briskly run  
Roun' cheervul Leisure wi' his gun,  
Or stan' an' mark, wi' stedvast zight,  
The speckled pa'tridge rise in flight.  
An' next agean to mild-feac'd Fall  
Did come peale Winter, last ov all,  
A-benden down, in thoughtvul mood,  
Her head 'ithin a snow-white hood  
A-deck'd wi' icy-jewels, bright  
An' cwold as twinklen stars o' night;

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' there wer weary Leabor, slack  
O' veet to keep her vrozen track,  
A-loaken off, wi' wistful eyes,  
To reefs o' smoke, that there did rise  
A-melten to the peale-feac'd zun,  
Above the houses' lofty tun.  
Afl' there the girt Year-clock did goo  
By day an' night, vor ever true,  
Wi' mighty wheels a-rollen round  
'Ithout a beat, 'ithout a sound.

#### *The Humstrum*

Why woonce, at Chris'mas-tide, avore  
The wold year wer a-reckon'd out.  
The humstrums here did come about,  
A-sounden up at ev'ry door.  
But now a bow do never screape  
    A humstrum, any where all round,  
An' zome can't tell a humstrum's sheape,  
    An' never heard his jinglen sound.  
As *ing-an-ing* did ring the string,  
As *ang-an-ang* the wires did clang.

The strings a-tighten'd lik' to crack  
Athirt the canister's tin zide,  
Did reach, a glitt'ren, zide by zide,  
Above the humstrum's hollow back.  
An' there the bwoy, wi' bended stick,  
    A-strung wi' heair, to meake a bow,  
Did dreve his elbow, light'nen quick,  
    Athirt the strings from high to low.  
As *ing-an-ing* did ring the string,  
As *ang-an-ang* the wires did clang.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

The mother there did stan' an' hush  
Her child, to hear the jinglen sound,  
The merry mai'd, a-scrubben round  
Her white-steav'd pail, did stop her brush.  
The mis'ess there, vor wold time's seack,  
    Had gifts to gi'e, and smiles to show,  
An' measter, too, did stan' an' sheake  
    His two broad zides, a-chucklen low,  
While *ing-an-ing* did ring the string,  
While *ang-an-ang* the wires did clang.

The players' pockets wer a-strout,  
Wi' wold brown pence, a-rottlen in,  
Their zwangen bags did soon begin,  
Wi' brocks an' scraps, to plim well out.  
The childern all did run an' poke  
    Their heads vrom hatch or door, an' shout  
A-runnen back to wolder wo'k.  
    Why, here! the humstrums be about!  
As *ing-an-ing* did ring the string,  
As *ang-an-ang* the wires llid clang.

### *Heedless O' m', Love*

**Oh! I vu'st know'd o<sup>1</sup> my true love,**  
    As the bright moon up above,  
Though her brightness wer my pleasure,  
    She wer heedless o' my love,  
Tho' twer all gay to my eyes,  
Where her feair feace did arise,  
She noo mwore thought upon my thoughts,  
    Than the high moon in the skies.

Oh! I vu'st heard her a-zingen,  
    As a sweet bird on a tree,

### THIRD COLLECTION

Though her zingen wer my pleasure.  
Twer noo zong she zung to me,  
Though her sweet valce that wer nigh,  
Meade my wild heart to beat high,  
She noo mwore thought upon my thoughts.  
Than the birds would passers by,

Oh! I vu'st know'd her a-weepen,  
As a ram-dimm'd mornen sky,  
Though her tear-drops dimn'd her blushes,  
They wer noo drops I could dry.  
Ev'ry bright tear that did roll,  
Wer a keen pain to my soul,  
But noo heart's pang she did then vccl,  
Wer vor my words to console.

But the wold times be a-vanish'd,  
An' my true love is my bride.  
An' her kind heart have a-meade her.  
As an angel at my zide;  
I've her best smiles that mid play,  
I've her me'th when she is gay,  
When her tear-drops be a-rollen,  
I can now wipe em away.

### *Don't Cedre*

At the feast, I do mind very well, all the vo'ks  
Wer a-took in a happeren show'r,  
But we chaps took the maidens, an' kept em wi' clokes  
Under shelter, all dry as mill flour;  
An' to my lot veil Jeane, that's my bride,  
That did titter, a-hung at my zide;  
Zaid her aunt, 'Why the vo'k 'ull talk finely o' you,"  
An', cried she, I don't ceare if they do,'

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

When the time o' the feast wer agean a-DOme round,  
An' the vo'k wer a-gather'd woonce mwore,  
Why she guess'd if she went there, she'd soon be  
a-vound

An' a-took seafely hwome to her door.  
Zaid her mother, "'Tis sure to be wet'.  
Zaid her cousin, "'Til rain by zunset'.  
Zaid her aunt, 'Why the clouds there do look black an'  
blue',  
An' zaid she, 'I don't ceare if they do'.

An' at last, when she own'd I mid meake her my bride,  
Vor to help me, an' sheare all my lot,  
An' wi' faithvulness keep all her life at my zide,  
Though my way mid be happy or not,  
Zaid her naighbours, 'Why wedlock's a clog,  
An' a wife's a-tied up lik' a dog<sup>1</sup>.  
Zaid her aunt, 'You'll vind trials enough vor to rue',  
An' zaid she, 'I don't ceare if I do.'

Now she's married, an' still in the midst ov her tweils  
She's as nappy's the daylight is long,  
So do goo out abroad wi' her feace vull o<sup>1</sup> smiles,  
An' do work in the house wi' a zong.  
An', zays woone, 'She don't grieve, you can tell.'  
Zays another, 'Why, don't she look well!'  
Zays her aunt, 'Why the young vo'k do envy you two",  
An', zays she, 'I don't ceare if they do'.

Now vor me I can zing in my business abraade,  
Though the storm do beat down on my poll,  
There's a wife-brighten'd vier at the end o' my road,  
An' her love vor the jay o' my soul.  
Out o' door I wi' rogues mid be tried;  
Out o' door be brow-beaten wi' pride;  
Men mid scowl out o' door, if my wife is but true—  
Let em scowl, 'I don't ceare if they do'.

## THIRD COLLECTION

### *Kindness*

Good Measter Collins heard wo one day  
A man a-talken, that did zay  
It woulden answer to be kind,  
He thought, to vo'k o' grov'len mind,  
Vor they would only tcake it wrong,  
That you be weak an' they be strong.  
'No,' cried the goodman, 'never mind,  
Let vo'k be thankless,—you be kind;  
Don't do your good for e'thly ends  
At man's own call vor man's amends.  
Though souls befriended should remain  
As thankless as the sea vor ra'in,  
On them the good's a-lost 'tis true,  
But never can be lost to you.  
Look on the cool-feaced moon at night  
Wi' light-vull ring, at utmost height,  
A-casten down, in gleamen strokes,  
His beams upon the dim-bough'd woaks,  
To show the cliff a-risen steep,  
To show the stream a-vallen deep,  
To show where winden roads do lead,  
An' prickly thorns do ward the mead.  
While sheades o' boughs do flutter dark  
Upon the weak-trees' moon-bright bark,  
There in the lewth, below the hill,  
The nightengeale, wi' ringen bill,  
Do zing among the soft-ai'r'd groves,  
While up below the house's oves  
The maid, a-looken vrom her room  
Drough window, in her youthvul bloom,  
Do listen, wi' white ears among  
Her glossy hairlocks, to the zong.  
If, then, the while the moon do light

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

The Iwonesome zinger o' the night,  
His cwold-beam'd light do seem to show  
The prowlen owls the mouse below.  
What then? Because an evil will,  
Ov his sweet good, mid meake zome ill,  
Shall all his feace be kept behind  
The dark-brow'd hills to leave us blind?'

### *Daniel Dwithen, the Wisz Chap*

Dan Dwithen wer the chap to show  
His naighbours mwore than they did knuvv,  
Vor he could zee, wi' half a thought,  
What zome could hardly be a-taught;  
    An' he had never any doubt  
Whatever 'twere, but he did know<sup>1</sup>!,  
An' had a-reach'd the bottom o't,  
    Or soon could meake it out.

Wi' narrow feace, an' nose so thin  
That light a'most shone drough the skin,  
As he did talk, wi' his red pair  
O' lips, an' his vull eyes did steare,  
    What nippy looks friend Daniel wore,  
An' how he smile as he did bring  
Such reasons vor to clear a thing,  
    As dather'd vo'k the mwore!

When woonce there come along the road  
At night, zome show-vo'k, wi' a Iwoad  
Ov half the wild outlandish things  
That crawl'd, or went wi' veet, or wings;  
    Their elephant, to stratch his knees,  
Walk'd up the road-zide turf, an' left  
His tracks a-zunk wi' all his heft  
    As big's a vinny cheese.

### THIRD COLLECTION

An' zoo next mornen zome vo'k vound  
The girt round tracks upon the ground,  
An' view'd em all wi' stedvast eyes,  
An' wi' their vingers spann'd their size,  
    An' took their depth below the brink:  
An' whether they mid he the tracks  
O' tilings wi' witches on their backs,  
    Or what, they coulden think.

At last friend Dan come up, an' brought  
His wit to help their dizzy thought,  
An' looken on an' off the ea'th,  
He cried, a-drawen a vull breath,  
    Why, I do know; what, can't ye zee 't?  
I'll bet a shillen 'twer a deer  
Broke out o' park, an' sprung on here,  
    Wi' quoits upon his veet.

### *Turnen Things Off*

Upzides wi' Polly! no, he'd vind  
That Poll would soon leave him behind.  
To turn things off! oh! she's too quick  
To be a-caught by cv'ry trick.  
Wo one day our Jimmy stole down steairs  
On merry Polly unawares,  
The while her nimble tongue did run  
A-tellen, all alive wi' fun,  
To sister Anne, how Simon Heare  
Did hanker after her at feair.  
'He left,' cried Polly ',cousin Jeane,  
An' kept wi' us all down the leane,  
An' which way ever we did lead  
He vollow'd over hill an' mead;  
An' wi' his head o' shaggy hair,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

An' sleek brown cwoat that he do weare,  
An' collar that did reach so high  
'S his two red ears, or perty nigh,  
He swung his tail, wi' steps o' pride,  
Back right an' left, vrom zide to zide,  
A-walken on, wi' heavy strides  
A half behind, an' half upzides.'  
'Who's that?' cried Jimmy, all agog;  
An' thought he had her now han'-pat,  
That's Simon Heare,' but no, 'Who's that?'  
Cried she at woonce, 'Why Uncle's dog,  
Wi' what have you a-been misled  
I wonder. Tell me what I zaid.'  
Woone evenen as she zot beside  
The wall the ranglen vine do hide,  
A-prattlen on, as she did zend  
Her needle, at her vingcr's end.  
On drough me work she had in hand,  
Zome bran-new thing that she'd a-plann'd,  
Jim overheard her talk agcan  
O' Robin Hine, ov Ivy Leane,  
'Oh! no, what he!' she cried in scorn,  
'I woulden gie a penny vor'n;  
The best ov him's outzide in view;  
His cwoat is gay enough, 'tis true,  
But then the wold vo'k didden bring  
En up to know a single thing,  
An' as vor zingin,—what do seem  
His zingen's nothen but a scream.'  
'So ho!' cried Jim, 'Who's that, then, Meary,  
That you be now a-talken o'?'  
He thought to catch her then, but, no,  
Cried Polly, 'Oh! why Jeane's caneary,  
Wi' what have you a-been misled,  
I wonder. Tell me what I zaid.'

THIRD COLLECTION

*A Lot o Maidens a-rannen the Yields<sup>^</sup>*

'Come on. Be sprack, a-laggen back.'  
'Oh! be there any cows to hook?'  
'Lauk she's afraid, a silly maid,'  
Cows? No, the cows be down by brook.  
'Oh here then, oh! here is a lot.'  
'A lot o' whal? what is it? what?'  
'Why blackberries, as thick  
As ever they can stick.'  
'I've dewberries, oh! twice  
As good as they; so nice.'  
'Look here. Theiise boughs be all but blue  
Wi' snags.'

'Dh! gi'e me down a vew.'

'Come here, oh! do but look.'  
'What's that? what is it now?'  
'Why nuts a-slippen shell.'  
'Hee! hee! pull down the bough.'  
'I wish I had a crook.'  
'There zome o'm be a-vell.'

*(One sings)*

'I wish I was on Bimport Hill  
I would zit down and cry my vill.'  
'Hee! hee! there's Jenny zomewhere nigh,  
A-zingen that she'd like to cry.'

*(Jenny sings)*

'I would zit down and cry my vill  
Until my tears would dreve a mill.'  
'Oh! here's an ugly crawlen thing,  
A sneake.' 'A slooworm; he wont sting.'  
'Hee! hee! how she did squal an' hop,  
A-spinnen roun' so quick's a top.'  
'Look here, oh! quick, be quick.'

<sup>1</sup> The idea, though but little of the substance, of this poem, will be found in a little Italian poem called *Caccia*, written by Franco Sacchetti.



### THIRD COLLECTION

'Oh! what wer that so loud  
A-rumblen?' 'Why a clap  
O' thunder. Here's a cloud  
O' rain. I veel a drap.'  
'A thunderstorm. Do rain.  
Run hwome wi' might an' main.'  
Hee! hee! oh! there's a drop  
A-tricklei down my back. Hec! hee!<sup>1</sup>  
'My head's as wet's a mop.'  
'Oh! thunder,' 'there's a crack. Dh! Oh!<sup>1</sup>  
'Oh! I've a-got the stitch, Oh!  
'Oh! I've a-lost my shoe, Oh!  
'There's Fanny into diLdi, Oh!  
Tm wet all drough an' drough, Oh!

### *Good Night*

While down the meads wound slow,  
Water vor grsen-wheel'd mills,  
Over the streams bright bow,  
Win' come vrom dark-back'd hills.  
Birds on the win' shot along down steep  
Slopes wi' a swift-swung zweep.  
Dim wean'd the red-streak'd west.  
Lim'-weary souls 'Good-rest'.

Up on the plough'd hill brow,  
Still wer the zull's wheel'd beam,  
Still wer the red-wheel'd plough,  
Free o' the strong limb'd team,  
Still wer the shop that the smith meade ring,  
Dark where the sparks did spring;  
Low shot the zun's last beams.  
Lim'-weary souls 'Guod dreams'.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Where I vrom dark bank-sheades  
Turn'd up the west hill road,  
Where all the green grass bleades  
Under the zunlight glow'd.  
Startled I met, as the zunbeams play'd  
Light, wi' a zunsmote maid,  
Come vor my day's last zight.  
Zun-brighten'd maid 'Good night'.

### *Went Hwome*

Upon the slope, the hedge did bound  
The yield wi' blossom-whited zidc,  
An' charlockpatches, yollow-dyed,  
Did reach along the white-soil'd ground  
An' vo'k, a-comen up vrom mead,  
Brought gil-cup meal upon the shoe;  
Or went on where the road did lead,  
Wi' smeechy doust from heel to tooe.  
As noon did smite, wi' burnfcn light,  
The road so white, to Meldonley.

An' I did tramp the zun-dried ground,  
By hedge-climb'd hills, a-spread wi' flow'rs,  
An' watershooten dells, an' tow'rs,  
By elem-trees a-hemm'd all round,  
To zee a vew wold friends, about  
Wold Meldon, where I still ha' zome,  
That bid me speed as I come out,  
An' now ha' bid me welcome hwome,  
As I did goo, while skies wer blue,  
Vrom view to view, to Meldonley.

An' there wer timber'd knaps, that show'd  
Cool sheades, vor rest, on grassy ground,

### THIRD COLLECTION

An" thatch-brow'd windows, flower-bound,  
Where I could wish wer my abode.  
I pass'd the maid avore the spring,  
    An' shepherd by the thornen tree;  
An' heard the merry drever zing,  
    But met noo kith or kin to me.  
Till I come down, vrom Meldon's crown  
To rufs o' brown, at Meldonley.



FROM  
POEMS  
IN THE DORSET DIALECT  
BY THE LATE REV. W. BARNES  
19D6

(mostly written in 1867: the dates, unless otherwise stated, are of publication in the *Dorset County Chronicle*)



## *The Wind at the Door*

As day did darken on the dewless grass  
There still wi' nwone a-come by me,  
To stay a-while at hwome by me;  
Within the house, all dumb by me,  
I zot me sad as the eventide did pass.

An' there a win'-blast shook the rattlen door,  
An' seemed, as win' did mwone without,  
As if my Jeane, alwone without,  
A-stannen on the stone without,  
Wer there a-come wi' happiness oonce mworc.

I went to door; an' out vrom trees above  
My head, upon the blast by me,  
Sweet blossoms wer a-cast by me,  
As if my love, a-past by me,  
Did fling em down—a token ov her love.

'Sweet blossoms o' the tree where I do murn,'  
I thought, 'if you did blow vor her,  
Vor apples that should grow vor her,  
A-vallen down below vor her,  
O then how happy I should zee you kern.'

But no. Too soon I voun' my charm abroke.  
NOD comely soul in white like her—  
NOD soul a-steppen light like her—  
An' nwone o' comely height like her—  
Went by; but all my grief agean awoke.

*Winter A-Comen*

I'm glad we have wood in store awhile,  
 Avore all the ground's avroze awhile;  
 Vor soon we must shut the door awhile  
 Vrom wind thafs a-whirlen snow.

The zwallows have all a-hicd away,  
 The flowers have now a-died away,  
 An' boughs, wi' their leaves, a-dried away,  
 In wind do goo to an' fro.

Your walks in the ash-tree droves be cwold,  
 Your banks in the elem groves be cwold,  
 Your bench by the house's oves be cwold  
 Where zummer did leately glow.

NOD rwDse is a-bloumen red to-day,  
 NDD pink vor your breast or head to-day,  
 A-dccken the gearden bed to-day,  
 Do linger a-nodden low.

NOD mworc is the swingen lark above,  
 An air a-clouded dark above  
 Do stifle the zun's last spark above,  
 Where little blue sky do show.

Zoo now gi'e your cheaks a bloom to-night,  
 Where vier do het the room to-night,  
 A'dreven away the gloom to-night,  
 While winterly wind do blow.

*Winter Weather*

When elem stems do rise, in row,  
Dark brown, vrom hangens under snow,  
An' woods do reach as black as night  
By slopen yields o' cleanest white;  
The shooters by the snowy rick,  
Where trees be high, an' wood is thick,  
A-marken tracks the geame do prick,  
Do like the winter weather.

Or where do spread the grey-blue sheet  
Ov ice, vor skeater's gliden veet  
That they do lift, vrom zide to zide,  
Long yards, an' hit em down to slide;  
Or sliders, one a-tott'ren slack  
Of limb, an' one upon his back,  
An' one upright, do keep his track—  
Ha<sup>1</sup> fun, in winter weather.

When we at night, in snow an' gloom,  
Did seek some neighbour's lighted room,  
Though snow did show noo path avore,  
Towards the house, we vound the door;  
An' there, as round the brands, did spread  
The crccpen vire o' cherry red,  
Our veet vrom snow, vrom wind our head,  
Wer warm, in winter weather.

Wherever day mid give our road  
By knaps, or hollows over-snow'd;  
By windy gaps, or lewer nooks,  
Or bridged ice, o' vrozen brooks;  
Still mid we all, when night do come,  
Know where we have a peacevul hwome,  
An' glowen vire vor vingers numb  
Wi' cwold, in winter weather.

## POEMS IN THE DORSET DIALECT

### *Clouds*

A-riden slow, at lofty height,  
Wer' clouds, a-blown along the sky,  
O' purple blue, an' pink, an' white,  
In pack an' pile, a-reachen high,  
A-shiften off, as they did goo,  
Their sheapes, from new, agean to new

An' zome like rocks an' tow'rs o' stwone,  
Dr hills or woods, a-reachen wide;  
An' zome like roads, wi' doust a-blown,  
A-glitt'ren white up off their zide,  
A-comen bright, agean to feade  
In sheapes a-meade to be unmeade.

Zoo things do come, but never stand,  
In life. It mid be smiles or tears,  
A joy in hope, an' one in hand,  
Zome grounds o' grief, an' zome o' fears,  
It mid be good or mid be ill,  
But never long a-standen still.

1868

### *The Broken Jug*

JENNY AND JOHN

JEN. As if you coudden leave the jug alwone!  
Now you've a-smack'd my jug,  
Now you've a-whack'd my jug,  
Now you've a-crack'd my jug  
Agean the stwone.

BY THE LATE REV. W. BARNES

JOHN. Why he must be a-crack'd unknown to you,  
Zoo don't belie the stwone,  
He scarce went nigh the stwone:  
He just went by the stwone,  
An' broke in two.

JeN. He, crack'd avore! no, he wer sound enough,  
Vrom back to lip, wer sound,  
To stand or tip wer sound,  
To hold or dip wer sound,  
Don't talk such stuff.

JOHN. How high then do the price o'n reach?  
I'd buy zome mwore, so good;  
Vd buy a score, so good;  
I'd buy a store, so good,  
At twopence each.

JEN. Indeed! with stwonenjugs a-zwold so dear.  
*(slaps him)*  
No, there's a tap, vor lies;  
An' there's a slap, vor lies,  
An' there's a rap, vor lies,  
About your ear.

JOHN. Oh! there be pretty hands! a little dear.

1867

*Green*

Our zummer way to church did wind about  
The cliff, where ivy on the ledge wer green.

Our zummer way to town did skirt the wocxl,  
Where sheenen leaves in tree an<sup>l</sup> hedge wer green.

## PDEMS IN THE DDRSET DIALECT

Our zummer way *to* milken in the mead,  
Wer on by brook, where fluttren zedge wer green.

Our hwomeward ways did all run into one,  
Where moss *upon* the ruufstwonnes' edge were green.

1867

### *White ari Blue*

My love is o' comely height, an' straight,  
An' comely in all her ways and ga'tt;  
In feace she do show the rwose's hue,  
An' her lids on her eyes be white on blue.

When Elemley clubmen walk'd in May,  
An' vo'k come in clusters, ev'ry way,  
As soon as the zun dried up the dew,  
An' clouds in the sky wer white on blue,

She come by the down, wi' trippen talk,  
By deasies, an' sheenen banks o' chalk,  
An' brooks, where the crowvoot flow'rs did strew  
The sky-tinted water, white on blue.

She nodded her head, as play'd the band;  
She dapp'd wi' her voot, as she did stand;  
She danced in a reel, a-wearen new  
A skirt wi' a jacket, white wi' blue.

I singled her out vrom thin an<sup>1</sup> stout,  
Vrom slender an' stout I chose her out;  
An' what, in the evenen, could I do,  
But gi'e her my breast-knot, white an' blue?

*Written 31st October 1867*

BY THE LATE REV. W. BARNES

*The Littk Hwomestead*

Where the zun did glow warm vrom his height,  
On the vo'k, at their work, in white sleeves;  
An' the goold-banded bee wer in fljght,  
Wi' the birds that did flit by the leaves,  
There my two little children did run,  
An' did rile, and did roll, in their fun;  
An' iid dips, in their hands  
    Stick or stwune vor their play;  
In their hands, that had little a-grown;  
Vor their play, wi' a stick or a stwone.

As the zun down his high zummer bow  
To the west o' the orcha'd did vail,  
He did leave the brown bee-hives, in row,  
In the sheade o' the houses gray wall;  
An' the flowers, a-sheenen in bloom,  
Zome a-lighted, an' zome in the gloom,  
To the cool o' the air,  
    An' the damp o' the dew:  
O' the air, vrom the apple-tree sheades,  
An' the dew, on the grasses' green bleades.

An' there were my orcha'd a-tined  
Wi' a hedge on the steep-zided bank,  
Where the ivy did twine roun' the rind  
O' the wood-stems, an" trees in high rank;  
Vor *to* keep out the wide-lipped cow;  
An' the stiff-snowted pigs, that would plough  
Up the nesh-bleaded grass,  
    By the young apple-trees;  
The grass a-grown up to good height,  
By the trees, that wi' blooth wer all white.

POEMS IN THE DORSET DIALECT

O when is a father's good time,  
That do pay for his Iweil wi' mmost jay?  
Is it when he's a-spenden his prime  
Vor his children, still young in their play,  
Or when they've a-grown to their height,  
An' a-gone vrom his hearen an' zight,  
Wi' their mother's woone voice  
    A-left hwome at the door:  
A voice that noo longer do zing,  
At the door that mwore seldom do swing?

*The Mother's Dream*<sup>1</sup>

I'd a dream to-night  
    As I veil asleep  
Dh! the touchen zight  
    Still do meake me weep,—  
Dv my little bwoy  
That's a-took away;  
Aye, about my joy  
    I wer not to keep.

As in heaven high  
    I my child did seek,  
There, in train, come by  
    Children feair an' meek;  
Each in lilywhite,  
Wi' a lamp alight  
Each wer dear to zight,  
    But noo words did speak.

Then a-looken sad  
    Come my child in turn;  
But the lamp he had  
    Oh! he didden burn;

The English version is printed on p. 231.

BY THE LATE REV. W. BARNES

He, to clear my doubt,  
Zaid, a-turn'd about,  
Your tears put en out;  
Mother, never murn.

1867

*The Geate A-Vallen To*

In the zunsheen of our zummers  
Wi' the haytime now a-come,  
How busy wer we out a-vield  
Wi' vew a-left at hwome,  
When waggons rumbled out DV yard  
Red wheeled, wi' body blue,  
And back behind 'em loudly slamm'd  
The geate a-vallen to.

Drough day sheen ov how many years  
The geate ha' now a-swung,  
Behind the veet o' vull-grown men  
And vootsteps of the young.  
Drough years o' days it swung to us  
Behindeach little shoe,  
As we tripped lightly on avore  
The geate a-vallen to.

In evenen time o' starry night  
How mother zot at hwome  
And kept her blazing vire bright  
Till father should ha' come,  
And how she quicken'd up and smiled  
And stirred her vire anew,  
To hear the trampen ho'ses' steps  
And geate a-vallen to.

## POEMS IN THE DDRSET DIALECT

There's moon-sheen now in nights o' Fall  
When leaves be brown vrom green,  
When to the slammen o' the geate  
Our Jenny's ears be keen,  
When the wold dog do wag his tall,  
And Jean could tell to who,  
As he do come in drough the geate,  
The geate a-vailen to.

And oft do come a saddened hour  
When there must goo away  
One well-beloved to our heart's core.  
Vor long, perhaps for aye:  
And oh! it is a touchen thing  
The Ioven heart must rue  
To hear behind his last farewell  
The geate a-vailen to.

*Written 13th October 1885*

FROM  
POEMS OF RURAL LIFE  
IN COMMON ENGLISH  
1868



*The Mother's Dream*<sup>1</sup>

I'd a dream to-night  
As I fell asleep,  
Oh! the touching sight  
Makes **me** still to weep:  
Of my little lad,  
Gone to leave me sad,  
Aye, the child I had,  
But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,  
I my child did seek,  
There, in tram, came by  
Children fair and meek,  
Each in lily white,  
With a lamp alight;  
Each was clear ID sight,  
But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,  
Came my child in turn,  
But the lamp he had,  
Dh! it did not burn;  
He, to clear my doubt,  
Said, half turned about,  
'Your tears put it out;  
Mother, never mourn.'

For the Dorset original, see p. 226.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

### *Melhill Feast*

Aye up at the feast, by Melhill's brow,  
So softly below the clouds in flight,  
There swept on the wood, the shade and light,  
Tree after tree, and bough by bough.

And there, as among the crowd, I took  
My wandering way, both to and fro,  
Full comely were shapes that day could show,  
Face upon face, and look by look.

And there, among girls on left and right,  
On one with a winsome smile, I set  
My looks; and the more, the more we met  
Glance upon glance, and sight by sight.

The road she had come by then was soon  
The one of my paths that best I knew,  
By glittering gossamer and dew,  
Evening by evening, moon by moon,

First by the door of maidens fair,  
As fair as the best till she is nigh,  
Though now I can heedless pass them by,  
One after one, or pair by pair.

Then by the orchards dim and cool,  
And then along Woodcombe's timber'd side,  
And then by the meads, where waters glide  
Shallow by shallow, pool by pool.

And then to the house that stands alone  
With roses around the porch and wall,  
Where, up by the bridge, the waters fall  
Rock under rock, and stone by stone.

## IN COMMON ENGLISH

Sweet were the hopes I found to cheer  
My heart as I thought on time to come,  
With one that would bless my happy home,  
Moon upon moon, and year by year.

### *A Brisk Wind*

The burdock leaves beside the ledge,  
The leaves upon the poplar's height,  
Were blown by windblasts up on edge,  
And show'd their undersides of white;  
And willow trees beside the rocks,  
All bent grey leaves, and swung grey boughs,  
As there, on wagging heads, dark locks  
Bespread red cheeks, behung white brows.

### *Shellbrook*

When out by Shellbrook, round by stile and tree,  
With longer days and sunny hours come on,  
With spring and all its sunny showers come on,  
With May and all its shining flowers come on,  
How merry, young with young would meet in glee.

And there, how we in merry talk went by  
The foam below the river bay, all white,  
And blossom on the green-leav'd may, all white,  
And chalk beside the dusty way, all white,  
Where glitt'ring water match'd with blue the sky.

Or else in winding paths and lanes, along  
The timb'ry hillocks, sloping steep, we roam'd;  
Or down the dells and dingles deep we roam'd;  
Or by the bending brook's wide sweep we roam'd  
On holidays, with merry laugh or song,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

But now, the frozen churchyard wall Ings keep  
The patch of tower-shaded ground, all white,  
Where friends can find the frosted mound, all white  
With turfy sides upswelling round, all white  
With young offsunder'd from the young in sleep.

### *By the Mill in Spring*

With wind to blow, and streams to flow,  
To flow along the gravel stone,  
The waves were bright, the chfTs were white,  
Were white before the evening sun,  
Where shaken sedge would softly sigh,  
As we, with windblown locks, went by.

As lambs would swing their tails, and spring;  
And spring about the ground chalk white;  
The smoke was blue, above the yew;  
The yew beside your house in sight;  
And wind would sing with sullen sound,  
Against the tree beside the mound;

Where down at mill, the wheel was still,  
Was still, and dripp'd with glitt'ring tears,  
With dusty poll, up lane would stroll,  
The miller's man with mill-stunn'd ears;  
While weakly-wailing wind would swim,  
By ground with ivied elm-trees dim.

My work and way may fail or fay,  
Or fay as days may freeze or glow,  
I'll try to bear my toil or care,  
Or care, with either friend or foe,  
If, after all, the evening tide  
May bring me peace, where I abide

## IN COMMON ENGLISH

### *Sing again Together*

Since now, once more beside this mound,  
We friends are here below the limes,  
Come, let us try if we can sound  
A song we sang in early times.

When out among the hay in mead,  
Or o'er the fields, or down the lane,  
Our Jenny's voice would gaily lead  
The others, chiming strain by strain.

When roses' buds are all outblown,  
The lilies' cups will open white,  
When lilies' cups, at last, are flown,  
The later pinks unfold to sight.

We learnt good songs that came out new,  
But now are old among the young,  
And, after we are gone, but few  
Will know the songs that we have sung.

So let us sing another rhyme  
On this old mound in summer time.

### *Season Tokens*

The shades may show the time of day,  
And flowers, how summer wanes away.

Where thyme on turfey banks may grow,  
Or mallows, by the laneside ledge,  
About the blue-barr'd gate, may shew  
Their grey-blue heads, beside the hedge,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

Or where the poppy's scarlet crown  
May nod by clover, dusky red,  
Or where the field is ruddy brown,  
By brooks, with shallow-water'd bed.

The shades may show the time of day,  
And flow'rs, how summer wanes away.  
Or, where the light of dying day,  
May softly shine against the wall,  
Below the sloping thatch, brown-grey,  
Or over pale-green grass, may fall,  
Or where, in fields that heat burns dry,  
May show the thistle's purple studs,  
Or beds of dandelions ply  
Their stems with yellow fringed buds.

There shades may show the time of day,  
And flowers, how summer wanes away.

### *By Neighbours' Doors*

As up on trees' high limbs,  
The western sunshine glowed,  
And down by river brims  
The wind-blown ripples flowed,  
There we did seek the tun  
Where evening smoke rose grey,  
While dells begun to miss the light of day.

The mother-holden child,  
Before the gate, would spring,  
And crow, and struggle wild  
At sight of birds on wing;  
And home-bound men would shout  
And make their game, before  
The girls come out in clusters at the door.





## IN COMMON ENGLISH

There the horse would prance by, with his neck a high  
bow,  
And would toss up his nose over outspringing knees;  
And the ox, with sleek hide, and with low-swimming  
head;  
And the sheep, little kneed, with a quickdipping nod;  
And a girl, with her head carried on in a proud  
Gait of walking, as smooth as an air-swimming cloud.

### *The Knoll*

(The speaker, who lives by the knoll, talks to an old friend)

O home, people tell us, is home  
be it never so homely,  
And Meldon 's the home where my fathers  
all sleep by the knoll.

And there they have left me a living,  
in land, where, in summer,  
My hay, wither'd grey, awaits hauling  
in heap, by the knoll.

And there, among bright-shining grass-blades,  
and bent-grass, in autumn,  
My CDWS may all lie near the waters  
that creep by the knoll,

And up on the slope of the hillocks,  
by white-rinded ash-trees,  
Are ledges of grass and of thyme-beds,  
with sheep, by the knoll.

And down on the west of my house  
is a rookery, rocking  
In trees that will ward off the winds  
that may sweep by the knoll.

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

And there I have windows outlooking  
to blushing-skied sunset,  
And others that face the fresh morning's  
first peep, by the knoll.

And though there is no place but heaven  
without any sorrow,  
And I, like my fellows in trial,  
may weep by the knoll,

Still, while I fulfil, like a hireling,  
the day of my labour,  
I wish, if my wish is not sinful,  
to keep by the knoll.

So, if you can find a day empty  
of work, with fine weather,  
And feel yourself willing to climb  
up the steep by the knoll,

Come up, and we'll make ourselves merry  
once more, all together;  
You'll find that your bed and your board  
shall be cheap by the knoll.

### *Hill and Dell'*

At John's, up on Sandhills, 'tis healthy and dry,  
Though I may not like it, it may be—not I.  
Where fir-trees are spindling, with tapering tops,  
From leafy-leav'd fern in the cold stunted copse,  
And under keen gorsebrakes, all yellow in bloom,  
The skylark's brown nest is deep-hidden in gloom;

<sup>1</sup> For the Dorset original, see p. 263.

IN COMMON ENGLISH

And high on the cliff, where no foot ever wore  
A path to the threshold, 's the sand martin's door,  
On waterless heights, while the birds lowly sigh,  
On tree-climbing ivy, before the blue sky.

I think I could hardly like his place as well  
As my own shelter'd home in the timberly dell,  
Where rooks come to build in the high-swaying  
    boughs,  
And broadheaded oaks yield a shade for the cows;  
Where grey-headed withy-trees lean o'er the brook  
Of grey-lighted waters that whirl by the nook,  
And only the girls and the swans arc in white,  
Like snow on grey moss in the midwinter's light,  
And wind softly drives, with a low rustling sound,  
By waves on the water and grass on the ground.

*The Shop of Meat-ware, or Wares to Eat*

[The complaint of a housemother who keeps a luxury shop]

By selling meat-ware I shall get no meat;  
I must not keep a shop of wares to cat.  
I have some goods, but I can hardly think  
That they are sold as quickly as they shrink;  
I have some goods, but yet my little stocks  
Will waste away, like camphor in a box.  
Some hand, at whiles, steals in, and slyly slips  
Some little thing away for some two lips.  
You people here don't wait for gain of trade,  
**But** take the store before the gain is made.  
I had some eggs, and I can miss some eggs,  
And I don't think they went without some legs.  
I had some eggs, and some have left my store,  
And I don't think they travell'd out of door;  
I had some eggs, and eggs have gone from hence,

## POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

And I don't think they brought me any pence;  
I had some eggs, as yet I know full well;  
I bought some eggs, but now have none to sell.

### *Air and Light*

Ah! look and see how widely free  
O'er all the land the wind will spread;  
If here a tree-top sways, a tree  
On yonder hillock waves its head.  
How wide the light outshows to sight  
The place and living face of man?  
How far the river runs for lip  
To drink, or hand to sink and dip.

But one may sink with sudden woe  
That may not pass, in wider flight,  
To other souls, declining slow,  
And hush'd, like birds at fall of night.  
And some are sad, while some are glad;  
In turn we all may mourn our lot:  
And days that come in joy may go  
In evenings sad with heavy woe.

The morning sun may cast abroad  
His light on dew about our feet,  
And down below his noontide road  
The streams may glare below his heat;  
The evening light may sparkle bright  
Across the quiv'ring gossamer;  
But I, though fair he still may glow,  
Must miss a face he cannot show.

*Written 15th April 1864*

*The Fireside Chairs*

HUSBAND TO WIFE

The daylight gains upon the night,  
And birds are out in later flight;  
'Tis cold enough to spread our hands,  
Once now and then, to glowing brands.  
So now we two are here alone  
To make a quiet hour our own,  
We'll take, with face to face, once more  
Our places on the warm hearth floor,  
Where you shall have the window view  
Outside, and I can look on you.

When first I brought you home, my bride,  
In yellow glow of summer tide,  
I wanted you to take a chair  
On that side of the fire—out there—  
And have the ground and sky in sight,  
With face against the window light;  
While I, back here, should have my brow  
In shade, and sit where I am now;  
That you might see the land outside,  
And I might look on you, my bride.

And there the gliding waters spread,  
By waving elm-trees over head,  
Below the hill that slopes above  
The path, along the high-treed grove,  
Where sighing winds once whisper'd down  
Our whisper'd words; and there's the crown  
Of *Duncliffe* hill, where widening shades  
Of timber fall on sloping glades:  
So you enjoy the green and blue  
Without, and I will look on you.

## PDEMS OF RURAL LIFE

And there we pnt'd, within the copse,  
With nutting-crooks the hazel lops,  
That now arise, unlcaved and black,  
Too thin to keep the wind-blast back;  
And there's the church, and spreading lime,  
Where we did meet at evening time,  
In clusters, on the beaten green,  
In glee, to see and to be seen;  
All old sights, we! comer than new,  
And look'd on, as I look'd on you.

### *Black and White*

By the wall of the garden that glimmer'd, chalk white,  
**In** the light of the moon, back in May,  
There were you all in black, at my side, coming round  
On the ground where the cypress did sway:  
Oh! the white and the black. Which was fairest to view?  
Why the black, become fairest on you.

By the water downfalling in many a bow,  
White as snow, on the rock's peaky steep;  
There your own petted cow show'd the ridge of her  
back,  
Of deep black, as she lay for her sleep:  
Oh! the white and the black. Which was fairest to view?  
Why the black, become fairest on you.

When you stroll'd down the village at evening, bcdight  
All in white, in the warm summer-tide,  
The while *Towsy*, your loving old dog, with his back  
Sleeky black, trotted on at your side:  
Ah! the black and the white. Which was fairest to view?  
Why the white, become fairest on you.

## IN COMMON ENGLISH

At the end of the barton the granary stood,  
Of black wood, with white geese at its side;  
And the white-winged swans, on the quick-running  
    wave,  
By the cave of black darkness did glide:  
Oh! the black and the white. Which was fairest to view?  
Why the white, become fairest on you.

### *Bed-ridden*

The sun may in glory go by,  
    Though by cloudiness hidden from sight;  
And the moon may be bright in the sky,  
    Though an air-mist may smother its light.  
There is joy in the world among some,  
    And among them may joy ever be;  
And oh! is there health-joy to come,  
    Come any more unto me?

The stream may be running its way,  
    Under ice that lies dead as the stone,  
And below the dark water may play  
    The quick fishes in swimmings unshown,  
There is sprightliness shown among some,  
    Aye, and sprightly may they ever be,  
And oh! is there limb-strength to come,  
    Come any more unto me?

### *Plorata Veris Lacrimis*

O now, my true and dearest bride,  
Since thou hast left my lonely side,  
My life has lost its hope and zest.  
The sun rolls on from east to west,

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE

But brings no more that evening rest,  
Thy loving-kindness made so sweet,  
And time is slow that once was fleet,  
As day by day was waning.

The last sad day LhaL show'd thee lain  
Before me, smiling in thy pain,  
The sun soar'd high along his way  
To mark the longest summer day,  
And show to me the latest play  
Of thy sweet smile, and thence, as all  
The days' lengths shrunk from small to small,  
My joy began its waning.

And now 'tis keenest pain to see  
Whate'er I saw in bliss with thee.  
The softest airs that ever blow,  
The fairest days that ever glow,  
Unfelt by thee, but bring me woe.  
And sorrowful I kneel in pray'r,  
Which thou no longer, now, canst share,  
As day by day is waning.

How can I live my lonesome days?  
How can I tread my lonesome ways?  
How can I take my lonesome meal?  
Or how outlive the grief I feel?  
Or how again look on to weal?  
Or sit, at rest, before the heat  
Of winter fires, to miss thy feet,  
When evening light is waning.

Thy voice is still I lov'd to hear,  
Thy voice is lost I held so dear.  
Since death unlocks thy hand from mine,  
No love awaits me such as thine;  
Oh! boon the hardest to resign!

IN COMMON ENGLISH

But if we meet again at last  
In heav'n, I little care how fast  
My life may now be waning,

1852

*Do Good*

Ah! child! the stream that brings  
To thirsty lips their drink,  
Is seldom drain'd; for springs  
Pour water to its brink.

The weilsprings that supply  
The streams, are seldom spent,  
For clouds of rain come by  
To pay them what they lent.

The clouds that cast their rain  
On lands that yield our food,  
Have water from Lhe main,  
To make their losses good.

The sea is paid by lands,  
With streams from ev'ry shore;  
So give with kindly hands,  
For God can give you more.

He would that in a ring  
His blessings should be sent,  
From living thing to thing,  
But nowhere staid or spent.

And ev'ry soul that takes,  
But yields not un again,  
Is so a link that breaks  
In Heaven's love-made chain.



FROM  
A SELECTION  
FROM UNPUBLISHED POEMS  
BY THE REV. WILLIAM BARNES  
1870



## *Musings*

Before the falling summer sun  
The boughs are shining all as gold,  
And down below them waters run,  
As there in former years they roll'd;  
The poolside wall is glowing hot,  
The pool is in a dazzling glare,  
And makes it seem as, ah! 'tis not,  
A summer when my life was fair,

The evening, gliding slowly by,  
Seems one of those that long have fled;  
The night comes on to star the sky  
As then it darken'd round my head.  
A girl is standing by yon door,  
As one in happy times was there,  
And this day seems, but is no more,  
A day when all my life was fair.

We hear from yonder feast the hum  
Of voices, as in summers past;  
And hear the beatings of the drum  
Again come throbbing on the blast.  
There neighs a horse in yonder plot,  
As once there neigh'd our petted mare,  
And summer seems, but ah! is not  
The summer when our life was fair.

## *Flowers-a-Field*

In hay-fields where the hedge-boughs cope  
The sunny hedge-bank's flow'ry slope,  
Out where the prickly wildrose blows,  
Above the bloomy bramble-bows'

## A SELECTION FROM UNPUBLISHED

Some maiden cries The briars prick  
My fingers to the very quick;  
Come pull me down a wild rose, do,  
For I can't cope with it like you!

And out in meadows, where the hay,  
Now nearly dry, is rustling gray,  
Before the touch of rake or prongs,  
And under women's merry songs;  
Then there, as I by chance come by  
The laughing girls, I hear them cry,  
'Come pull me down a woodbine, do,  
For I can't reach it there. Can you?'

And down beside the river's brim,  
Where swirling waters softly swim—  
Where we can see the bulrush nod  
Its club upon its slender rod;  
Then there, as merry girls behold  
The water-lily's flow'r of gold,  
They cry, 'Oh! rake me out one, do.  
For I can't reach it in. Can you?'

### *Cliffwood*

By Cliffwood rocks I took my way  
With sorrow-sunken mind,  
As slowly waned the ling'ring day  
To labour-worn mankind.  
No shadow fell on slope or dell,  
Twas sunless, though not wet;  
The sun was clouded off to me,  
I saw not where it set.

POEMS BY THE REV. W, BARNES

I pass'd the lawn where once I sought  
My joy at Mary's door,  
And where I lingered still in thought,  
When I was there no more.  
For while all gay in merry play,  
We there at evening met,  
Unheeded sank the horned moon,  
I saw not where it set,

I came from foreign lands, once more  
By that dear way to roam;  
But she's no longer at her door,  
She's at a better home.  
That she had lain one day in pain  
No tidings did T get;  
My sun went down unknown to me,  
I knew not when it set.

*Arise, O Winds!*

Arise, O winds, and drive away  
The curling fog by mound or nook,  
For we to-day would see you play  
Along the lightly-sparkling brook.  
By brook and brake,  
O winds, awake.

Arise! but do not mar our way  
With clouds of dust to blind our eyes,  
For we would look this holiday  
On all the charms of land and skies.  
By hill and lake,  
O winds, awake

## A SELECTION FROM UNPUBLISHED

O winds, blow on! but do not fly  
With dark'ning clouds of sudden show'rs,  
For we would pass the fields all dry  
Among the heads of summer flow'rs.  
Sweep hill and plain,  
But not with rain.

And come to-night to clear away  
The clouds that o'er the moon may pass,  
For we may wish to see you play  
By moonshades on the beech-side grass.  
So make, we pray,  
A happy day.

### *Time Steals Away*

Ay! if you mark the sunny ground,  
Where now the maypole shade may fall,  
It soon will wheel a span around,  
While seeming not to go at all.  
I know not how the time is flown  
Since you and I met here one May;  
A day of rest, a season blest,  
For oh! how time will steal away.

While once our evening mirth began,  
The candle's glossy stem was tall,  
But soon burnt down, a long half-span,  
Though seeming not to sink at all.  
The time is gone, I know not how,  
Since there we gather'd, young and gay,  
In nights of joys, with merry noise,  
For oh! how lifetime steals away.

POEMS BY THE REV. W. BARNES

**The winterbourne, when o'er the dell**

**The spring was green, was flowing fast,  
And then fell dry, but who can tell**

What day and hour it ran its last.  
I know not how the time has fled

Since there, with you, I flung the hay,  
In youth's gay pride, in hope's fair tide,  
**For oh! how lifetime steals away.**

As when the ship goes under sail

Far out before the sounding beach,  
And, while we hear some friend's new tale,  
She sinks beyond our eyesight's reach.

So time has gone, I know not how,  
Since we had picnics on the bay,  
The happy year, the summer dear,  
Of time that softly steals away.

*Proud of his Home*

Up under the wood, where treetips sway  
All green, though by skyshine tinted gray;  
Above the soft mead, where waters glide,  
Here narrow and swift, there slow and wide,  
Up there is my house, with rosc-trimm'd walls,  
By land that up-slopes, and land that falls—  
On over the mill, and up on the ridge,  
Up on the ledge above the bridge.

The wind, as it comes along the copse,  
Is loud with the rustling trees' high tops;  
The wind from beyond the brook is cool,  
And sounds of the ever-whirling pool:  
Up there at my house, with well-trimmed thatch.  
And lowly-walFd lawn, and arched hatch,

A SELECTION FROM UNPUBLISHED

Beside the tall trees where blackbirds sing—  
Over the rock, and water spring.

And when from the north the wind blows cold,  
The trees are my screen, a hundred fold'  
And wind that may blow from southern skies,  
Through quivering limetrees softly sighs,  
And out in the west a tow'r stands gray,  
And hills on the eastward fade away—  
From under the wood, above the mill,  
Over the stream, below the hill.

As people along the road go by,  
They suddenly turn their heads awry,  
They slacken their canter to a trot,  
With 'Oh! what a pretty little spot!'  
They take for their trot a walking pace,  
With 'Heigh! what a charming little place I'  
They lift up their hands with wond'ring look.  
With 'Lo! what a lovely little nook!'

They see my laburnums' chains of gold,  
And pallid blue lilac flow'rs unfold;  
They look at my fuchsias' hanging bells,  
And calceolarias"yellow shells,  
And cups of my lilies, white as snow,  
And pinks as they hang their blossoms low;  
And then at my roses, fine and fair  
As ever have sweeten'd summer air.

They look at my rose with open eyes,  
With 'Oh! what a handsome shape and size;'<sup>1</sup>  
They put up their hand to breast or hair,  
To fancy they put my rose up there;  
They put up a leaf below the nose,  
To fancy they smell my fine moss-rose;  
With back-looking face they go their ways,  
With 'Oh! that's the place that people praise'.

POEMS BY THE REV. W. BARNES

The foot-weary man that there may tread  
The road, with no place to lay his head,  
Will say, as he heaves his sighing breast,  
'How blest is the man with that sweet nest!'  
And bachelors fain would own the care  
Of sweet little children playing there—  
Up under the wood, on Meldon ridge,  
Up the road, from Meldon bridge.

*How Great Become*

How great do I become! How great!  
With all my children now full grown,  
And settled, each a wedded mate,  
And all with children of their own.  
I first was one, and then one more  
Well-wived; and children made me ten;  
And they with all their wives or men,  
And children, now make me two score,  
With children's children, far or nigh,  
How great I am become! Am I?

I own a share of Weston folk,  
On Norton work I have some hands,  
At Beechley I send up a smoke,  
My surname sounds on Ashridge lands.  
In Meldon church my voices sing,  
Yes, there I have young tongues to pray,  
And I have boys and girls at play  
Below the rocks, at Clevevell spring,  
With all the souls that I may claim  
How great I am! How great my name!

But oh! how little can I track  
The longsome team of father men,

## A SELECTION FRUM UNPUBLISHED

That runs, from me to elders, back  
A chain of links beyond my ken.  
O'er what dear heads, by one and one,  
My name at length came down on me  
I know not now, nor may I sec  
Below me one child's child's sweet son.  
No. I am only one of all  
Those links of life. But one. How small!

### *The Rooks*

Ay! when the sun is near the ground,  
At evening, in the western sky,  
From west to eastward, all around,  
The gathered rooks begin to fly.

In wedgelike flock, with one ahead,  
They flap their glitt'ring wings in flight;  
But did you ever hear it said  
Whereto they take their way at night!

At Akdean wood, folk say they meet,  
To fold at night their weary wings,  
And roost, with little clenching feet,  
On boughs that nightwind softly swings.

O yes, at Akdean's shadowy ground  
Are broad limb'd oaks, and ashes tall;  
Black pines, and aspen trees that sound  
As soft as water at a fall,

There I have spent some happy hours,  
Where yellow sunshine broke through shades  
On blue-bell beds and cowslip flow'rs,  
And us among them, in the glades.

*A Night Song, No. 1*

Oh! do you wake, or do you sleep  
    With window to the full-moon'd sky?  
Oh! have you lost, or do you keep  
    A thought of all the day gone by?  
Or are you dead to all you knew  
Of life, the while I live to you?

May air, o'er wallside roses brought,  
    Of charming gardens give you dreams;  
May rustling leaves beguile your thought  
    With dreams of walks by falling streams.  
And on your lids be light that yields  
Bright dream-clouds over daisied fields.

Our meeting hour of yesterday  
    To me, now deep in waning night,  
S ferns all a glory pass'd away  
    Beyond a year-time's longsorne flight.  
Though night seems far too short to weigh  
Your words and deeds of yesterday,

While rise or sink the glittering stars  
    Above dim woods, or hillock brows,  
There, out within the moonpaled bars,  
    In darksome bunches sleep your cows,  
So sweetly sleep, asleep be they  
Until you meet the opening day.

*A Night Song, No. 2*

Be it midnight, be it dawning,  
    Do the clouds hold up, or weep;  
Be it moonlight, be it sunshine,  
    Is no care to folk asleep.

POEMS BY THE REV. W. BARNES

So I linger not *to* tell you  
How the midnight moon may soar;  
But if one thing be your business,  
'Tis that love is at the door.

Whether leafy is the chestnut,  
Or its chilly twigs be bare;  
Whether dewy, whether frosty  
Be the grass, is not your care.  
So forget until the morning,  
Land below, and sky above;  
But it should be worth your knowing,  
That before your gate is love,

Oh! how softly in our slumbers  
Do we oft, unwitting, glide  
From the day's end to the morrow,  
Over midnight's gloomy tide.  
So may every day that opens,  
Bring to you its one joy more,  
Till you live in peace and honour,  
Blest with love within my door.

Like a birdling, say the people,  
Is young Love, that fain would roam,  
Ever lively in his freedom,  
But will die confined at home.  
No. I feel that you will never  
Find the love at my heart's core,  
Flying, faithless, out of window  
Though stern want should *corns* to door.

FROM  
POEMS AND FRAGMENTS  
HITHERTO UN COLLECTED

(The dates are of publication in the *Dorset  
County Chronicle*)



## *Hill or Dell'*

At John's, up on zand-hill, 'tis heathy an' dry  
Though I midden like il i' may be, not I.  
Where vir-irees do spindle, wi' teaperen tops,  
Vrom lealy-leav'd vern, in the cwold-stunted copse,  
An' under sharp vuzzen, all yollow in blooth,  
The sky-lark's brown nest is a-hid m the lewth,  
An' high on the cliff, where noo voot ever wore  
A path to the drashold, 's the zandmartin's door,  
On waterless heights, where the wind do stream by  
A-sighen by ivy, avore the blue sky.  
I do think I could teake vor the best o' the two  
My timber-screen'd hwome, here below in the lew;  
Where rooks be a-builden in high elcm boughs.  
An' broadheaded woaks be a sheade vor the cows.  
Where greyheaded withies do lean by the feace  
O' greylighted waters, a-slacknen their peace,  
An' only the maidens an" swans be in white,  
Like snow on grey moss in the mid-winter's light,  
An' wind do dreve on, wi a low-ruslen sound  
By weaves on the water, an grass'on the ground.

## *My Love a-Growen*

(From a Tuscan folk-poem)

As vrom the pond's lew zide the weaves do zwim  
Vrom small to bigger, to the windy brim,  
As winds in yonder woods do murmur low,  
And higher sound, the nearer they do blow,  
As day a-broken to the mornen moon  
Do grow in brightness to the burnen noon,

<sup>1</sup> The English version is printed on p. 240.

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

Zoo grew my love, vrom small to woman high,  
Vrom feair to feaircr, as the years went by,  
Zoo did my love to woman's height vrom small  
Grow feairer, year by year, a-grown tall.  
Vrom small to women-high, my love did show  
Mwore comely, and my love wi' her did grow.

### *The Hearth of Urien*

(From the Elegy on Urten attributed to the bard  
Llywarch the Aged)

*A not this hearth*, where goats now feed?  
Here chatt'ring tongues, with noisy speed,  
Once talk'd around the yellow mead.

*Is uut this hearth* this day among  
Tall nettles? Once here stood a throng  
Of Owen's suitors all day long.

*Is nyf this hearth* with grass o'crspread?  
Ere noble Owen yet was dead,  
The cauldron-heating flames were red.

*Is not this hearth* where toad-stools grow?  
There Owen's warriors once did show  
The swordblade dreaded by the foe.

*Is not this hearth* within a band  
Of rushes? Once here blazed the brand,  
And food was dealt with lib'ral hand.

*Is not this hearth* below the thorn?  
Here, ere it thus was left forlorn,  
Did once pass round the mead's deep horn.

*Is not this hearth* where emmets crawl?  
Here blazed the torch upon the wall,  
Around the crowded banquet hall.

HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED

*Is not this hearth* now cold among  
Red sorrel-stems? Here once a throng  
Of warnors drank with laugh and song.

*Is not this hearth*, where swine have ploughed?  
Here once bold warriors' tongues were loud.  
As mead-cups pass'd among the crowd.

*Is not this hearth*, where scrapes the hen?  
No want was here among the men  
Of brave Owen and Urien.

1863

*Cyddylan's Hall*

(From the Elegy on Cyddylan attributed to the bard  
Llywarch the Aged)

Cyddylan's hall is all in gloom—to-night;  
No fire, no lighted room:  
Amid the stillness of a tomb.

Cyddylan's hall is left alone—to-night:  
A hall with none to own.  
O Death, take me where he is flown.

Cyddylan's hall is now unblest—to-night;  
On Hydwrth's rocky crest  
No lord is there, no meal, no guest.

Cyddylan's hall! It makes me wan  
To see cold hearths and roofing gone.  
My lord is dead, and I live on!

Cyddylan's hall is sad within—to-night;  
For sons of Cyndrwyn,  
Cynon, Gwion, and Gwyn.

1867

POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

*An Englyn on a Yellow Greyhound*

(from the Englyni Vilgi Melyn, in Edward Jones's 'Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards' 1794)

Hound yellow, light of tread—the cunning foe  
Of deer bedappled red;  
He of the wind gets not ahead,  
Nor yet is by the wind outsped.

1867

*The Dove*

(From *Bugrilgerdd*—'Pastoral Poem'—by Edward Richaid  
1714-1777)

I once in happy times  
Within my leafy grove,  
With joyful voice did rove  
And with the cuckoo sing  
And now am like a dove  
That in his grief alone  
Upon some beam may moan  
The losing of a wing.

*The Storm-Wind*

When the swift-rolling brook, swollen deep,  
Rushes on by the alders, full speed,  
And the wild-blowing winds lowly sweep  
O'er the quivering leaf and the weed,  
And the willow tree writhes in each limb,  
Over sedge-beds that reel by the brim—

The man that is staggering by  
Holds his hat to his head by the brim;

### HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED

And the girl as her hair-locks outfly,  
    Puts a foot out, to keep herself trim,  
And the quivering wavelings o'erspread  
The small pool where the bird dips his head.

But out at my house, in the let  
    Of the nook, where the winds die away,  
The light swimming airs, round the tree  
    And the low-swinging ivy stem, play  
So soft that a mother that's nigh  
Her -till cradle, may hear her babe sigh.

1868

### *Troubles of the Day*

As there, along the elmy hedge, I go  
    By banksides white with parsley—parsley-bloom—  
Whefe smell of new-mown hay comes wafted by  
    Dn wind of dewy evening, evening gloom,  
And homeward take my shaded way between  
The hedge's high-tipp'd wood, and barley green,  
    I sing, or mean  
'D troubles of the day, flee to the west  
Come not my homeward way. I seek my rest.'

The dairy cows, by meadow trees, lie free,  
    Of calls to milkers' pails—the milkmaids' calls;  
The horses now have left their rolling wheels  
    And reel'd in home to stable, to their stalls,  
And down the grey-pool'd stream the fish awhile  
Are free from all the prowling angler's guile,  
    And o'er the stile  
I sink, and sing or say, 'Flee to the west,  
O troubles of the day, I seek my rest.'

POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

My boy—whose Intie high-rigged boat, athwart  
The windy pool, by day, at afternoon,  
Has fluttered, tipping like a bird  
That tries to fly unfledged, to fly too soon—  
Now sleeps forgetful of the boat, and fond  
Old dog that he has taught to swim the pond.  
So flee beyond  
The edge of sinking day, towards the west,  
Ye troubles, flee away. I seek my rest.

A star is o'er the tower on the hill  
Whence rings *no* clanging knell, no evening peal;  
The mill stands dark beside the flouncing foam,  
But still is all its gear, its mossy wheel.  
No rooks now sweep along the darkened sky,  
And o'er the road few feet or wheels go by.  
So fly, O fly  
Ye troubles, with the day, adown the west,  
Come not along my way. I seek my rest.

1869

*The Moor*

Where yonder leaning hill-side roves  
With woody dippings, far around  
And many jutting brows, and coves,  
Of rugged cliffs, and slopy ground,  
Beside the stream that slowly sinks  
With reaches tinted from the skies,  
And stream-side meadows, lowly lies  
The moor, with dikes and sedgy brinks.

About us there the willow shade  
Oft play'd beside the water's edge,  
And there the radded bulrush sway'd  
Its soft brown dub, above the sedge.

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

And by the aspen or the bridge,  
The angler sat, and lightly whipp'd  
His little float, that, dancing, dipp'd  
From o'er the waveling's little ridge

There cows, in clusters, rambled wide,  
Some hanging low their heads to eat,  
Some lymg on their heavy side,  
Some standing on their two-peaked feet,  
Some sheeted white, some dun or black,  
Some red, and others brindled dark,  
Some marked with milk-white star, or spark,  
And ours all white along the back.

There cows, to others, low'd; now here  
Now there, from open heat to shade;  
And out among them, far or near,  
With quiv'ring scream, the horses neigh'd  
The while some boy, WJthm the mead,  
On some high mare might come astride;  
And sliding down her bulging side,  
Might set her, snorting, free to feed.

And there we saw the busy crow  
For mussels down the river play,  
And rooks sweep on where men below  
Went, water-hemm'd, their crooked way.  
And gamb'ling boys, in merry train,  
On holidays came rambling by  
With often-grounded poles, to fly  
In high-bow'd flight, o'er dike and drain.

There men at work on pathless grass,  
Are seen, though out of hearing wide,  
By neighbour-meeting folk, that pass  
The many-roaded upland side.

### HITHERTO UNCDLLECTED

So some may like the trampled road,  
O'er well-ruhhd stile-bars, with a gloss,  
And some the moor, thai some may cross  
But pass no door of man's abode.

1869

### *Leaf Hues*

Where green is all the common hue  
Of leaves, there seldom comes to light  
A greenness for the blossoms too;  
But they arc blue, or red, or white.

With my dear child's last dress of green  
Her fuce of blushing white was seen;  
The- while her hair hung freely down  
In waving locks of golden brown.

The chestnut leaves die off to red,  
And maple leaves in yellow die;  
The holly leaves in brown lie dead,  
And bramble brown and gray will die.

But she lay dead as white's a sheet;  
She lay as white as flour of wheat;  
And she was folded all in white,  
To rise an angel ever bright.

1869

### *Sister Gone*

When Mary on her wedding day,  
At last a bride, had gone away  
From all her friends that there had spent  
The happy day in merriment,

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

And ringers rang, at evenfall,  
Their peals of bells, from great to small,  
Within the tower's mossy wall  
So high against the evening sky.

Then Jane, that there throughout the day  
Had been the gayest of the gay,  
At last began to hang her head  
And ponder on her sister fled,  
And days that seem'd too quickly flown,  
To leave her now at home alone,  
With no one's life to match her own,  
So sad, though hitherto so glad.

It saddened me that moonpaled night  
To see her by the wall, in white,  
While friends departed mate with mate  
Beyond the often-swinging gate,  
As there beside the lilac shade,  
Where golden-chained laburnum sway'd,  
Around her face her hairlocks play'd,  
All black with light behind her back.

1869

### *First Shown*

With you first shown to me,  
With you first known to me,  
My life-time loom'd, in hope, a length of joy:  
Your voice so sweetly spoke,  
Your mind so meetly spoke,  
My hopes were all of bliss without alloy,  
As I, for your abode, sought out, with pride,  
This house with vines o'er-rangling all its side.

**HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED**

I thought of years to come,  
All free of tears to come,  
When I might call you mine, and mine alone,  
With steps to fall for me,  
And daycares all for me,  
And hands for ever nigh to help my own;  
And then thank'd Him who had not cast my time  
Too early or too late for your sweet prime.

Then bright was dawn, o'er dew,  
And day withdrawn, o'er dew,  
And mid-day glow'd on flow'rs along the ledge,  
And walls in sight, afar,  
Were shining white, afar,  
And brightly shone the stream beside the sedge.  
But still, the fairest light of those clear days  
Seem'd that which fell along your flow'ry ways.

1869

*Older*

**(Husband and Wife)**

- H.* As golden chains behung their tree  
And swung, in breezes, to and fro,  
There you, below the humming bee,  
Were sitting in the shade to sew.
- W.* Ah! sew in white, with no black dyes  
Of mourning, under weeping eyes.
- H.* With eyes that show'd a glist'ning blue  
As dear as succory blossoms bear,  
Dr as your girdle, shining new,  
Dr knot new-made for breast or hair.

POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

- W. Aye, hair, all glossy black, that all  
Now withers grey in life's late fall.
- //. Vet fall, with charms we all can feel,  
Awaits the ripening time and sun,  
For gifts, enhancing all our weal,  
In growth of fruits by spring begun.
- W. Begun, as once with us begun  
Our life that now is far outrun.
- H. Outrun to reach a happy stage  
To which our riper mind has brought  
A treasure for our wiser age,  
The wisdom cull'd from time by thought.

1869

*A Bride Song*

The bride forsakes her maiden room.  
And window up below the eaves,  
And now, O merry birds, to whom  
Will ye all sing among the leaves?  
Go call the dove from woods aloof  
To moan in trees above her roof.

The bride has left her mother's door  
Nor soon again shall there be shown;  
Oh! sweep ye not the hallowed floor,  
Oh! sweep ye not the threshold stone,  
For fear ye heedlessly off-sweep  
Her tracks that all the ground should keep.

The bride has left the garden hatch,  
To let her through it swung about;  
Turn not to-night its key or latch,

## HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED

As if you meant to shut her out,  
Nor while the wicket keepeth good  
Give tu the fire its hallow'd wood.

The bride is gone along the road,  
And with her joy is gone away;  
Oh! bless her to her new abode,  
Though dull be left your lonesome day.  
Her road was to the western sky,  
Where now your thoughts will daily fly.

1871

### *Not to be Forgotten*

Oh! that days should follow on  
Until at last, to all mankind,  
Your shape and name should all be gone  
Both out of sight and out of mind,  
That every thought of you should die,  
And be forgotten ev'rywhere,  
As that of bloom or butterfly  
That shines a little while so fair.  
Oh! that I could somehow set you  
So that man should not forget you.

Aye, could I for ever leave  
Your name on yonder spring or rill,  
Or give it evermore to cleave  
To yonder everlasting hill;  
Or make the hollow rocks a tongue  
To sound it with the wind in flight,  
Or find some fairy, ever young,  
To give it on in dreams of night.  
Oh! that I could somehow set it  
Where the world should not forget it.

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

Somehow set your shape and hue  
On time-proof stone that nought could mar,  
To last as if for ever new,  
As in the sky abides the star;  
Or could but find in my sweet thought  
Of you, sweet wording for the tongue  
Of song, that ever should be caught  
From all the old, by all the young—  
Song that should for ever set you  
Where the world should not forget you.

1872

### *Not Sing at Night*

While sang the lark above the lea,  
Or thrush by neshleav'd bust or tree,  
In early day, or afternoon,  
We often heard the merry tune  
Of your gay song from orchard shades  
Or bough-hemm'd lanes, or grassy glades.  
But hardly ever found you trill  
A song at night, when birds were still.

The way the merry sound *came* by  
Betoken'd, what I fain would spy,  
Your steps behind some half-brown'd rick,  
Or flow'ry hedge, too high and thick,  
Or where below the clear blue sky  
The snow-white linen hung to dry,  
But where you would not go to fill  
The shade with sound when birds were still.

When darkness dimm'd the hues of day,  
And we went lonely on the way  
Without the day's high noises near,  
We there, upon the road, could hear

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

Beside the grey old bars the sound  
Of barley rustling o'er the ground,  
But never found your warbling come  
Upon the wind, when birds were dumb.

When clouds bedimm'rt the welkin's blue,  
And night came on without its dew,  
And winter wind had stripp'd the trees,  
And crackling roads began to freeze,  
And ground erst warm with summer heat  
Was whiten'd o'er with happ'ring sleet,  
You sang where I would fain have heard  
You, still at home, while sang no bird.

1872

### *Rooks and Swallows*

I sat me where an ash tree's head  
From o'er a bankside reach'd around,  
With outcast shade that overspread  
Some grass, and eke some stubbled ground,  
While hedges up the hillock's brows  
Held out their now befruted boughs.

The children and the birds well knew  
Where hung the berried bramble bows,  
Or where were sloes of meally blue,  
Or heps, the children of the rose,  
Or elderberries over head  
Were black, or boughs of haws were red.

There near the wheatrick's yellow back,  
That shone like gold before the sky,  
Some rooks with wings of glossy black  
Came on down wheeling from on high,  
And lightly pitched upon their feet  
Among the stubble of the wheat.

### HITHERTO UNCOLLErTED

And then some swallows floated by,  
All sweeping out their airy bow,  
And rising up from low to high,  
Or sweeping down from high to low,  
Now soon to strike their longer flight,  
Away from our land's chilly light.

'The rooks,' I thought, 'will still behold,  
These trees, leafbare, in driven sleet,  
The swallows shun our winter cold  
For clearer skies and glowing heat.  
And which is best? To have no year  
Of home, or lifelong dwelling here?'

On sunny days we often yearn  
To speed us to some other land,  
And men of other tongues, and learn  
Their ways of life, and works of hand;  
Aye, how the world of lands is fill'd  
With many mankinds many-skilled.

But since we lack the wings of gold  
That waft men over all the earth,  
And find our livelihood withhold  
Our life to this our land of birth;  
So let it be, since like a dove  
We find us here enough to love.

1872

### *The Old Farmhouse*

That many-tunn'd farmhouse that stands  
A little off the old high road,  
When landlords lived upon their lands,  
Was long its landlord's dear abode;

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

And often thence, with horn-call'd hounds  
High-steeded through the gate he sped,  
The while the whirring grey-wing'd doves  
Flew out of dovecoats overhead.

And after that, below the tun,  
There burnt for happy souls the fire  
Of one whose name has blest his SDH,  
A farmer lit to be a squire.  
And while his barley-sowing sped,  
On dusty mould, in springtide light,  
From those old dovecotes' many doors  
The grey-wing'd doves arose in flight.

And while through days of longsome span  
His com was sunn'd from green to red,  
His son grew up from boy to man,  
And now is master in his stead;  
For him the loaded waggons roll  
To staddled ricks that rustle dry,  
And there for him the grey-wing'd doves  
Around the mossy dovecots fly.

There oft his sister, then a child—  
That's now a mother, fair, though staid—  
His merry playmate flitted wild  
And tittering, through light and shade  
On tiptoe, fanning in her speed  
The gold-like straws beside her shoe;  
While to the dovecotes, nigh at hand,  
The grey-wing'd doves in haste upflew.

And still with fondness, and with praise  
The brother's and the sister's mind  
Behold their home-spent childhood's days  
So fair, and left so far behind—

## HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED

As I behold, in thought, the time  
When first the lord of wall and sward  
There dwelt, and first the grey-wing'd doves.  
Flew out from dovecotes in the yard.

1873

### *Return*

If a leaf swim away on the stream,  
Who can tell where 'twill rest at the tost?  
Or if thistledown fly on the wind  
Will it come by a back-flowing blast?  
If my love o'er the ocean shall roam  
Will he come again home,  
Aye, home?

Shall the fleet-rushing swallow that speeds  
In the fall o'er the broad-reaching sea,  
Come again in the following spring,  
Here to wheel round the old parrock tree?  
If my love sail afar from the land  
Will he yet shake our hand,  
Aye, hand?

Oh! the cherry-tree blossom'd all white,  
And again with its cherries was red;  
But it now has been chill'd by the frost,  
And it seems to be withering dead.  
I had joy under last summer's sky,  
And to-year must it die,  
Aye, die?

No. My love's not a leaf on the stream,  
Nor the down of the thistle's brown seeds,  
Nor a swallow that never may find  
Its old haunts in our green summer meads.

POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

And although for a while he may roam,  
He will find his way home,  
Aye, home.

1875

*Hiding my Love*

(From a Tuscan folk-poem)

I wish that all the crooked streets were gone.  
And ev'ry house had fastened up its door;  
And all the hills were levell'd as a floor,  
That hide a shape so fair to look upon.  
I wish that ev'ry oak would die and fall,  
That bears a hanging leaf, however small,  
That bears a single leaf, which, hanging low,  
May hide my love, on walking to and fro.

1875

*A Rejection*

(From a Tuscan folk-poem)

Bloom of the cypress tree.  
I write with one hand, and with one erase.  
I must confess I do not care for thee,

Violets quickly fade.  
Full oft to me my mother dear has said  
Men seek the dow'r, my child, and not the maid,

How'rof mint.  
**Where true love once has been  
It leaves esteem, its lasting print.**

## HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED

O bloom of May.

If I discoursed with my love an hour  
That happy hour would seem the longest day.

Flow'r of broom.

If all my sighs were flames of fire  
They all the world would soon consume.

Sweet laurel bloom.

I for a husband would a ringer choose,  
That he might ring sweet peals above my tomb.

Flow'r of millet.

Tobacco's good, and better is the box;  
I think of you at least whene'er T fill it.

1875

### *From Dafydd ap Gwilym's 'I'r Gwynt' (To the Wind')*

Swift is the course thou runnest now,  
Along the high!oped mountain's brow,  
Stripping the bushes on thy track,  
And answering none, by none sent back.  
No leader's might, no sworded train,  
No blue-steeled blade, no flood, no rain,  
No fire's flame, no wily will,  
No son of man can keep thee still,  
No drowning depth, no warning tongue,  
No hook whereon thou may'st be hung.  
Thou needest no swift steed to ride,  
Nor bridge nor boat where rivers glide.  
No catchpole takes thee, and no clan  
Repels thee, gather<sup>1</sup>d man by man.  
O when thou goest forth in play

## POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

With timber'd woods along thy way,<sup>a</sup>  
None sees thee naked on the plain,  
Though thousands hear thee, nest of rain,  
Loud tsazing breaker of the oak tree's bough,  
A pow'r of God on earth art thou.

1875

### The Cock

(After the Welsh of *sion powel*, c. 1731-1767, in the *Hir a Thoddaid* or 'The Long and Melting Measure')

I heard the homely cock by fits to crow,  
With golden wings, ere dawn began to glow,  
And sing his cheery sounds from high to low,  
Mild in the morn, amid the glitt'ring snow;  
Sweet as the nightingale,<sup>1</sup>I trow, thou art.  
To thy bold heart, be joy without a woe.

1876

<sup>1</sup> The Welsh has 'And its tune is a sweeter song than the cuckoo's'.

## GLOSSARY

- Alassen, lest.**  
 Aller, the alder tree.  
 A-stuuded (as of a waggon), with wheels sunk fast into soft ground.  
**A-stogged**, with feet stuck fast in mud.  
**A-strout**, stiff stretched.  
 Athirt, athwart.  
 Avore, before.  
 Axan, ashes (of fire).
- Barken, a stock-yard or cow-yard.  
 Blooth, blossom.  
 Brocks, broken pieces [as of food).
- Caddie, a muddle; a puzzling plight.  
 Clips, to dasp.  
 Clote, yellow water-lily.
- Dather, to bewilder.  
 Doust, dust.  
 Drong, a narrow way.  
 Drmigh, through.  
 Durn, side post of a doorway.
- Egrass, aftermath.**  
**Eltrot, cowparsley.**  
**Emmet, an ant,**
- Emmetbut, an an thill.  
 Fall, autumn.  
 Fay, to succeed.  
 Frith, brushwood.
- Gil'cup, buttercup (gilt cup).  
**Greyle, bluebell.**
- Hangen, side of a hill.  
 Hansel, *a.* hand gift.  
 Happer, to fall hopping, like hail or apples.  
 Hatch, a half-door.  
**Heft, weight.**  
**Hele, to pour.**  
 Ho, to be anxious.  
 Humstruni, a homemade musical instrument with strings.  
 Hayward, the warden whose duty it was to protect the right of common. He would 'drive the common', i.e. drive all the stock into a corner and impound those beasts whose owners had no right of common.
- Kern, to grow into fruit.  
**Knap**, a hillock.

## GLOSSARY

**Lawn, unploughed land.**

**Leane, a lane.**

**Lease, to glean.**

**Leaze, an unmown field,**  
stocked through the  
**spring and summer.**

**Lew, sheltered from the**  
wind.

Lewth, lewness.

Litsome, lightsome, gay.

Litty, light and brisk of  
body.

**Maesh, moss.**

**Ment, to signify.**

**Me'th, mirth.**

**Mid, might.**

**Mither ho, come hither.**

A call to a horse on the  
road.

Moot, the stump and  
roots of a felled tree. .

**Nesh, soft.**

**Nesthooden, the hooding**  
over a nest, as a wren's.

Nitch, a load.

Nunch, luncheon.

Nut (of a wheel), the  
stock or nave.

Oves, eaves.

**Panic, to pant.**

**Parrock, a small enclosed**  
field.

Pa'sels, parcels of hay  
into which the rollers  
(q.v.) were scattered.

**Peaviers, flag-stones.**

Plim, to swell up.

Plow, a waggon [aplough  
for ploughing is a zull).

**Plounce, a strong plunge.**

Pocks, big peaked heaps  
of hay into which the  
dryingweales, orridges,  
made up of the pa'sels,  
were put up when there  
was fear of rain.

Rathe, early.

Reaves, the ladder-like  
framework attached to  
the sides of a waggon,  
to uphold the load ex-  
tended laterally over  
the wheels.

**Reely, to dance a reel.**

Rig, to climb in play or  
wantonness.

Robinhood, red campion.

Roller, in haymaking the  
shape into which the  
drying grass was first  
raked after being ted-  
ded and turned.

**Rout, a rut.**

**Ruf, a roof.**

**Ruffen, roofing.**

**Scute, to shoot along.**

## GLOSSARY

- Scroff, small bits *of* dead wood fallen under trees, or leavings under wood piles or faggots.
- Shrouds, heads of trees.
- Snags, small pea-big sloes.
- Snead, a scythe stem.
- Sock, a short sigh.
- Spike, lavender.
- Sprack, active, quick.
- Spuddle, to dig slight!:  
and incontinuously
- Staddle, a bed, or a frame for ricks.
- Stannen, a stall in a fair or market.
- Stout, the gadfly.
- Stunpoll, a stone head, blockhead.
- Sumple, supple.
- Tile, toil.
- Tine, (i) to kindle; (ii) to fence in ground.
- Tutty, a nosegay.
- Tueil, see Tile.
- Vea't, a cheese-vat.
- Vinny Cheese, cheese with blue mould.
- Vuzz, Vuzzen, furze, gorse.
- Was, to stir.
- Wea'le, in haymaking a ridge of hay. See pa'sel and ponk.
- Whiver, to hover, quiver.
- Whog, said to horses to make them move to the driver's right.
- Widdieks, small twigs or brushwood.
- Zull, a plough.

## GLOSSARY

### PRONUNCIATION

In the collected edition of the Dorset poems (1879) Barnes gave 'a few hints on Dorset word-shapes'. The main sounds are:

1. ee in beet
2. e, a sound between 1 and 3
3. a in mate
4. i in birth
5. a in father
6. aw in awe
7. o in dote
8. oo in rood.

In his notation:

- ai, ay, as in maid, May, combines 5 and 1.
- ea, short as in had, mead, combines 1 and 4.
- ea, long as in leade, meade, combines 1 and 3.
- ea expresses 2, as in meat,
- wo. as in bwold, expresses the long o, 7.

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