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THE SHORTER
POEMS
OF
ROBERT BRIDGES
ENLARGED EDITION

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1931

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PREFACE

A FEW weeks before his death, Robert Bridges sanctioned the publication of this new edition of his *Shorter Poems*, and left some general directions as to which poems from his later books should be added to the original selection.

This volume is a reprint of vol. ii of the *Poetical Works of Robert Bridges* (originally published by Smith & Elder in 1899, now published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford) together with selections from *Later Poems*, collected in 1912, *October & other Poems*, 1920, and *New Verse*, 1926, as follows:

From *Later Poems*, Nos. 1—15.

From *October & other Poems*, the first section—all dated 1913—(omitting two humorous pieces), and the last section, (except *To Burns*) of various dates. The middle section of War poems is omitted, except *The Chivalry of the Sea*, *Gheluelt*, *Trafalgar Square*, and *Christmas Eve*, 1917.

From *New Verse*, eight poems from Part III, viz. Nos. 10-16 and No 22, all dated 1921

M. M. B.

1931

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BOOK I

DEDICATED
TO
H. E. W.

I

ELEGY

CLEAR and gentle stream !
Known and loved so long
That hast heard the song,
And the idle dream
Of my boyish day ;
While I once again
Down thy margin stray,
In the selfsame strain
Still my voice is spent,
With my old lament
And my idle dream,
Clear and gentle stream !

Where my old seat was
Here again I sit,
Where the long boughs knit
Over stream and grass
A translucent eaves:
Where back eddies play
Shipwreck with the leaves,
And the proud swans stray,
Sailing one by one
Out of stream and sun,
And the fish lie cool
In their chosen pool.

POEMS

Many an afternoon
Of the summer day
Dreaming here I lay ;
And I know how soon,
Idly at its hour,
First the deep bell hums
From the minster tower,
And then evening comes,
Creeping up the glade,
With her lengthening shade,
And the tardy boon,
Of her brightening moon.

Clear and gentle stream !
Ere again I go
Where thou dost not flow,
Well does it beseem
Thee to hear again
Once my youthful bong,
That familiar strain
Silent now so long :
Be as I content
With my old lament
And my idle dream,
Clear and gentle steam.

II

ELEGY

THE wood is bare: a river-mist is steeping
The trees that winters chill of life bereaves :
Only their stiffened boughs break silence, weeping
Over then fallen leaves;

That lie upon the dank earth brown and rotten,
Miry and matted in the soaking wet ;
Forgotten with the spring, that is forgotten
By them that can forget.

Yet it was here we walked when ferns were springing,
And through the mossy bank shot bud and blade •—
Here found in summer, when the birds were singing,
A green and pleasant shade.

'Twas here we loved in sunnier days and greener;
And now, in this disconsolate decay,
I come to see her where I most have seen her,
And touch the happier day.

For on this path, at every turn and corner,
The fancy of her figure on me falls:
Yet walks she with the slow step of a mourner,
Nor hears my voice that calls.

So through my heart there winds a track of feeling,
A path of memory, that is all her own:
Whereto her phantom beauty ever stealing
Haunts the sad spot alone.

About her steps the trunks are bare, the branches
Drip heavy tears upon her downcast head ;
And bleed from unseen wounds that no sun stanches,
For the year's sun is dead.

And dead leaves wrap the fruits that summer planted :
And birds that love the South have taken wing,
The wanderer, loitering o'er the scene enchanted,
Weeps, and despairs of spring.

III

POOR withered rose and dry,
 Skeleton of a rose,
Risen to testify
 To love's sad close:

Treasured for love's sweet sake,
 That of joy past
Thou might'st again awake
 Memory at last.

Yet is thy perfume sweet;
 Thy petals red
Yet tell of summer heat,
 And the gay bed :

Yet, yet recall the glow
 Of the gazing sun,
When at thy bush we two
 Joined hands in one.

But, rose, thou hast not seen,
 Thou hast not wept
The change that passed between,
 Whilst thou hast slept.

To me thou seemest yet
 The dead dream's thrall :
While I live and forget
 Dream, truth and all.

Thou art more fresh than I,
 Rose, sweet and red :
Salt on my pale cheeks lie
 The tears I shed. .

IV'

THE CLIFF-TOP

THE cliff-top has a carpet
 Of lilac, gold and green :
 The blue sky bounds the ocean
 The white clouds scud between.

A flock of gulls are wheeling
 And wailing lound my seat ;
 Above my head the heaven,
 The sea beneath my feet.

The Ocean.

Were I a cloud I'd gather
 My skuts up in the air,
 And fly I well know whither,
 And rest I well know wheie.

As pointed the star surely,
 The legend tells of old,
 Where the wise kings might offer
 Myrih, frankincense, and gold;

Above the house I'd hover
 Where dwells my love, and wait
 Till haply I might spy her
 Throw back the garden-gate.

There in the summer evening
 I would bedeck the moon ;
 I would float down and screen her
 From the sun's rays at noon ;

And if her flowers should languish,
 Or wither in the drought,
 Upon her tall white lilies
 I'd pour my heart's blood out :

So if-she wore one only,
 And shook not out the rain,
 Were I a cloud, O cloudlet,
 I had not lived in vain.

A Chud.

But were I thou, O ocean,
 I would not chafe and fret
 As thou, because a limit
 To thy desires is set.

I would be blue, and gentle,
 Patient, and calm, and see
 If my smiles might not tempt her,
 My love, to come to me.

I'd make my depths transparent,
 And still, that she should lean
 O'er the boat's edge to ponder
 The sights that swam between.

I would command strange creatures,
 Of bright hue and quick fin,
 To stir the water near her,
 And tempt her bare arm in.

I'd teach her spend the summer
 With me : and I can tell,
 That, were J thou, O ocean,
 My love should love me well.

* * *

But on the mad cloud scudded,
 The breeze it blew so stiff;
 And the sad ocean bellowed,
 And pounded at the cliff.

V

I HEARD a linnet courting
His lady in the spring:
His mates were idly sporting,
Nor stayed to hear him sing
His song of love.—
I fear my speech distorting
His tender love.

The phrases of his pleading
Were full of young delight;
And she that gave him heeding
Interpreted aright
His gay, sweet notes,—
So sadly marred in the reading,—•
His tender notes.

And when he ceased, the hearer
Awaited the refrain,
Till swiftly perching nearer
He sang his song again,
His pretty song :—
Would that my verse spake clearer
His tender song'

Ye happy, airy creatures!
That in the merry spring
Think not of what misfeatures
Or cares the year may bring ;
But unto love
Resign your simple natures,
To tender love.

VI

DEAR lady, when thou frownest,
 And my true love despisebt,
 And all thy vows disownest
 That sealed my venture wisest;
 T think thy pride's displeasuie
 Neglects a matchless treasure
 Exceeding price and measure.

 But when again thou smilest,
 And love for love retumest,
 And fear with joy beguilest,
 And takest truth m earnest;
 Then, though I sheer adore thee,
 The sum of my love for thee
 Seems pooi, scant, and unworthy.

VII

I WILL not let thee go.
 Ends all our month-long love in this ?
 Can it be summed up so,
 Quit in a single kiss ?
 I will not let thee go.
 I will not let thee go.
 If thy words' breath could scare thy deeds,
 As the soft south can blow
 And toss the feathered seeds,
 Then might I let thee go.
 I will not let thee go.
 Had not the gieat sun seen, I might;
 Or were he reckoned slow
 To bring the false to light,
 Then might I let thee go.

I will not let thee go.

The stars that crowd the summer skies
Have watched us so below
With all their million eyes,
I daie not let thee go.

I will not let thee go.

Have we not chid the changeful moon,
Now rising late, and now
Because she set too soon,
And shall I let thee go ?

I will not let thee go.

Have not the young flowers been content,
Plucked ere their buds could blow,
To seal our sacrament ?
I cannot let thee go.

I will not let thee go.

I hold thee by too many bands:
Thou sayest farewell, and lo !
I have thee by the hands,
And will not let thee go.

VIII

I FOUND to-day out walking
The flower my love loves best.
What, when I stooped to pluck it,
Could dare my hand arrest ?

Was it a snake lay curling
About the root's thick crown ?
Or did some hidden bramble
Tear my hand reaching down ?

There was no snake uncurling,
And no thorn wounded me;
'Twas my heart checked me, sighing
She is beyond the sea.

IX

A POPPY grows upon the shore,
Bursts her twin cup in summer late:
Her leaves are glaucous-green and hoar,
Her petals yellow, delicate.

Oft to her cousins turns her thought,
In wonder if they care that she
Is fed with spray for dew, and caught
By every gale that sweeps the sea.

She has no lovers like the red,
That dances with the noble corn:
Her blossoms on the waves are shed,
Where she stands shivering and forlorn.

X

SOMETIMRS when my lady sits by me
My rapture's so great, that I tear
My mind from the thought that she's nigh me,
And strive to forget that she's there.
And sometimes when she is away
Her absence so sorely does try me,
That I shut to my eyes, and assay
To think she is there sitting by me.

XI

LONG are the hours the sun is above,
But when evening comes I go home to my love.
I'm away the daylight hours and more,
Yet she comes not down to open the door.
She does not meet me upon the stair,—
She sits in my chamber and waits for me there.
As I enter the room she does not move :
I always walk straight up to my love;
And she lets me take my wonted place
At her side, and gaze in her dear dear face.
There as I sit, from her head thrown back
Her hair falls straight in a shadow black.
Aching and hot as my tired eyes be,
She is all that I wish to see.
And in my wearied and toil-dinned ear,
She says all things that I wish to hear.
Dusky and dusker grows the room,
Yet I see her best in the darker gloom.
When the winter eves are early and cold,
The firelight hours are a dream of gold.
And so I sit here night by night,
In rest and enjoyment of love's delight.
But a knock at the door, a step on the stair
Will startle, alas, my love from her chair.
If a stranger comes she will not stay :
At the first alarm she is off and away.
And he wonders, my guest, usurping her throne,
That I sit so much by myself alone.

XII

WHO has not walked upon the shore,
And who does not the morning know,
The day the angry gale is o'er,
The hour the wind has ceased to blow ?

The horses of the stiong south-west
Are pastured round his tropic tent,
Careless how long the ocean's bieast
Sob on and sigh for passion spent.

The fnghtencd birds, that fled inland
To house in rock and tower and tiee,
Are gathenng on the peaceful strand,
To tempt again the sunny sea ;

Whereon the timid ships steal out
And laugh to find their foe asleep,
That lately scattered them about,
And drave them to the fold like sheep.

The snow-white clouds he northward chased
Break into phalanx, line, and band :
All one way to the south they haste,
The south, their pleasant fatherland.

From distant hills their shadows creep,
Arrive in turn and mount the lea,
And flit across the downs, and leap
Sheer off the chff upon the sea ;

And sail and sail far out of sight.
But still I watch their fleecy trains,
That piling all the south with light,
Dapple in France the fertile plains.

XIII

I MADE another song,
In likeness of my love:
And sang it all day long,
Around, beneath, above ;
I told my secret out,
That none might be in doubt.

I sang it to the sky,
That veiled his face to hear
How far her azure eye
Outdoes his splendid sphere ;
But at her eyelids' name
His white clouds fled for shame.

I told it to the trees,
And to the flowers confest,
And said not one of these
, Is like my lily drest;
Nor spathe nor petal dared
Vie with her body bared.

I shouted to the sea,
That set his waves a-prance;
Her floating hair is free,
Free are her feet to dance ;
And for thy wrath, I swear
Her frown is more to fear.

And as in happy mood
I walked and sang alone,
At eve beside the wood
I met my love, my own :
And sang to her the song
I had sung all day long.

XIV

ELEGY

ON A LADY, WHOM GRIEF FOR THE DEATH OF HER
BETROTHED KILLED

ASSEMBLE, all ye maidens, at the door,
And all ye loves, assemble; far and wide
Proclaim the bridal, that proclaimed before
Has been deferred to this late eventide :

For on this night the bride,
The days of her betrothal over,
Leaves the parental hearth for evermore;
To-night the bride goes forth to meet her lover.

Reach down the wedding vesture, that has lain
Yet all unvisited, the silken gown :
Bring out the bracelets, and the golden chain
Her dearer friends provided: sere and brown
Bring out the festal crown,
And set it on her forehead lightly:
Though it be withered, twine no wreath again ;
This only is the crown she can wear lightly.

Cloke her in ermine, for the night is cold,
And wrap her warmly, for the night is long',
In pious hands the flaming torches hold,
While her attendants, chosen from among
Her faithful virgin throng,
May lay her in her cedar litter,
Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,
Roses, and lilies white that best befit her.

Sound flute and tabor, that the bridal be
Not without music, nor with these alone;

But let the viol lead the melody,
 With lesser intervals, and plaintive moan
 Of sinking semitone ;,
 And, all in choir, the virgin voices
 Rest not from singing in skilled harmony
 The song that aye the bridegroom's ear rejoices.

Let the priests go befoie, arrayed in white,
 And let the dark-stoled minstrels follow slow,
 Next they that bear her, honoured on this night,
 And then the maidens, in a double row.
 Each singing soft and low,
 And each on high a torch upstaying:
 Unto her lover lead her forth with light,
 With music, and with singing, and with praying.

'Twas at this sheltering hour he nightly came,
 And found her trusty window open wide,
 And knew the signal of the timorous flame,
 That long the restless curtain would not hide
 Her form that stood beside;
 As scarce she dared to be delighted,
 Listening to that sweet tale, that is no shame
 To faithful lovers, that their hearts have plighted.

But now for many days the dewy grass
 Has shown no markings of his feet at morn :
 And watching she has seen no shadow pass
 The moonlit walk, and heard no music borne
 Upon her ear foilorn.
 In vain has she looked out to greet him ;
 He has not come, he will not come, alas !
 So let us bear her out where she must meet him.

Now to the river bank the priests are come:
 The bark is ready to receive its freight:
 Let some prepare her place therein, and some
 Embark the litter with its slender weight:

The lest stand by in state,

And sing her a safe passage over!

While she is oared across to her new home,
 Into the arms of her expectant lover.

And thou, O lover, that art on the watch,
 Where, on the banks of the forgetful streams,
 The pale indifferent ghosts wander, and snatch
 The sweeter moments of their broken dreams,--

Thou, when the torchlight gleams,

When thou shalt see the slow procession,

And when thine ears the fitful music catch,

Rejoice, for thou art near to thy possession.

XV

RONDEAU

His poisoned shafts, that fresh he dips
 In juice of plants that no bee sips,
 He takes, and with his bow renown'd
 Goes out upon his hunting ground,
 Hanging his quiver at his hips.

He draws them one by one, and clips
 Their heads between his fingei-tips,
 And looses with a twanging sound
 His poisoned shafts.

BOOK II

TO
THE MEMORY OF
G. M. H.

Muse.

WILL Love again awake,
That lies asleep so long ?

Poet.

O hush ! ye tongues that shake
The diowsy night with song.

Muse.

It is a lady fair
Whom once he deigned to praise,
That at the door doth dare
Her sad complaint to raise.

Poet.

She must be fair of face,
As bold of heart she seems,
If she would match her grace
With the delight of dreams.

Must.

Her beauty would surpuse
Gazers on Autumn eves,
Who watched the broad moon lise
Upon the scattered sheaves.

Poet.

O sweet must be the voice
He shall descend to hear,
Who doth in Heaven rejoice
His most enchanted ear.

Muse.

The smile, that rests to play
Upon her Hp, foretells
What musical array
Tiicks her sweet syllables.

Poet.

And yet her smiles have danced
In vain, if her discourse
Win not the soul entranced
In divine intercourse.

Muse.

She will encounter all
This trial without shame,
Her eyes men Beauty call,
And Wisdom is her name.

Poet.

Throw back the portals then,
Ye guards, your watch that keep,
Love will awake again
That lay so long asleep.

II

A PASSER-BY

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest ?
Ah ! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hailing,
Wilt thóu glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou
knowest,

Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:

I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,

And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,

Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:

Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-
capped, grandest

Peak, that is over the feathery palms more fair

Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou
standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,

I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine

That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,

Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.

But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is
thine,

As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,

'From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line

In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

III

LATE SPRING EVENING

I SAW the Virgin-mother clad in green,

Walking the sprinkled meadows at sundown ;

While yet the moon's cold flame was hung between

The day and night, above the dusky town :

I saw her brighter than the Western gold.

Whereto she faced in splendour to behold.

Her dress was greener than the tenderest leaf
That trembled in the sunset glare aglow:
Herself more delicate than is the brief,
Pink apple-blossom, that May showers lay low.
And more delicious than's the earliest streak
The blushing rose shows of her crimson cheek.

As if to match the sight that so did please,
A music enteied, making passion fain:
Three nightingales sat singing in the trees,
And praised the Goddess for the fallen ram ;
Which yet their unseen motions did arouse,
Or parting Zephyrs shook out from the boughs.

And o'er the treetops, scattered in mid air,
The exhausted clouds, laden with cumson light
Floated, or seemed to sleep ; and, highest the~e,
One planet broke the lingering ranks of night;
Daring day's company, so he might spy
The Virgin-queen once with his watchful eye.

And when I saw her, then I worshipped her,
And said,—O bounteous Spring, O beauteous Spring,
Mother of all my years, thou who dost stir
My heart to adore thee and my tongue to sing,
Flower of my fruit, of my heart's blood the fire,
Of all my satisfaction the desire !

How art thou every year more beautiful,
Younger for all the winters thou hast cast:
And I, for all my love grows, grow more dull,
Decaying with each season overpast!
In vain to teach him love must man employ thee,
The more he learns the less he can enjoy thee.

IV -

WOOING

I KNOW not how I came,
New on my knightly journey,
To win the fairest dame
That graced my maiden tourney.

Chivalry's lovely prize
With all men's gaze upon her,
Why did she free her eyes
On me, to do me honoui ?

Ah ! ne'er had I my mind
With such high hope delighted,
Had she not first inclined,
And with her eyes invited.

But never doubt I knew,
Having their glance to cheer me,
Until the day joy grew
Too great, too sure, too near me.

When hope a fear became,
And passion, grown too tender,
Now trembled at the shame
Of a despised surrender;

And where my love at fust
Saw kindness in her smiling,
I read her pride, and cuised
The arts of her beguiling.

Till winning less than won,
And liker wooed than wooing,
Too late I turned undone
Away from my undoing;

And stood beside the door,
Whereto she followed, making
My hard leave-taking more
Hard by her sweet leave-taking.

Her speech would have betrayed
Her thought, had mine been colder ;
Her eyes distress had made
A lesser lover bolder.

But no ! Fond heart, distrust,
Cried Wisdom, and consider:
Go free, since go thou must;—
And so farewell I bid her.

And brisk upon my way
I smote the stroke to sever.
And should have lost that day
My life's delight for ever:

But when I saw her start
And turn aside and tremble;—
Ah ! she was true, her heart
I knew did not dissemble.

V

THERE is a hill beside the silver Thames,
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine:
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeplly the thickets to his floods decline.

Straight trees in every place
Their thick tops interlace,
And pendant branches trail their foliage fine
Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows:
 His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade,
 Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
 Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.

His winter floods lay bare
 The stout roots in the air :

His summer streams are cool, when they have played
 Among their fibrous hair,

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
 And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
 The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
 Robbing the golden market of the bees :

And laden barges float
 By banks of myosote ;

And scented flag and golden flower-de-lys
 Delay the loitering boat.

And on this side the island, where the pool
 Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
 The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
 And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass;

Where spreading crowfoot mars
 The drowning nenuphars,

Waving the tassels of her silken grass
 Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing glows,
 Not the white water-lily spoked with gold;
 Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
 On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold:

Yet should her roots but try
 Within these deeps to lie,

Not her long reaching stalk could ever hold
 Her waxen head so high.

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery;
 And dieams, or falls asleep,
 While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
 Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care
Upon a staff plopping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare:
 As from a buried day
 Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow,—and unaware
 He passeth on his way.

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream :
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam;
 Or watch, as fades the light,
 The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
 And glorify the night.

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames ?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow!
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow :
 Lest ere I come the while
 Strange feet your shades defile;
Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow
 Within your guardian isle.

VI

A WATER-PARTY

LET us, as by this verdant bank we float,
 Search down the matge to find some shady pool
 Where we may rest awhile and moor our boat, '
 And bathe our tied limbs in the waters cool.
 Beneath the noonday sun,
 Swiftly, O nver, run !

Here is a mirror for Narcissus, see !
 I cannot sound it, plūm̄bing with my oar.
 Lay the stern in beneath this bowenng tree !
 Now, stepping on this stump, we aie ashore.
 Guard, Hamadryades,
 Our clothes laid by your tices!

How the biids warble in the woods ! I pick
 The waxen lilies, diving to the root.
 But swim not far in the stieam, the weeds grow thick.
 And hot on the bare head the sunbeams shoot.
 Until oui sport be done,
 O merry buds, sing on!

If but to-night the sky be cleai, the moon
 Will serve us well, for she is near the full
 We shall row safely home ; only too soon,—
 So pleasant 'tis, whether we float O1 pull.
 To guide us through the night,
 O summer moon, shine bright!

VII

THE DOWNS

O BOLD majestic downs, smooth, fair and lonely;

O still solitude, only matched in the skies:

Perilous in steep places,

Soft in the level races,

Where sweeping in phantom silence the cloudland flics ;

With lovely undulation of fall and rise;

Entrenched with thickets thorned,

By delicate miniature dainty flowers adorned !

I climb your crown, and lo! a sight surprising

Of sea in front uprising, steep and wide :

And scattered ships ascending

To heaven, lost in the blending

Of distant blues, where water and sky divide,

Urging their engines against wind and tide,

And all so small and slow

They seem to be wearily pointing the way they would

go.

The accumulated murmur of soft plashing,

Of waves on rocks dashing and searching the sands,

Takes my ear, in the veering

Baffled wind, as rearing

Upright at the cliff, to the gullies and rifts he stands;

And his conquering surges scour out over the lands;

While again at the foot of the downs

He masses his strength to recover the topmost crowns.

VIII

SPRING

ODE I

INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY

AGAIN with pleasant green
 Has Spring renewed the wood,
 And where the bare trunks stood
 Are leafy arbours seen;
 And back on budding boughs
 Come birds, to court and pair,
 Whose rival amorous vows
 Amaze the scented air.

The freshets are unbound,
 And leaping from the hill,
 Their mossy banks refill
 With streams of light and sound :
 And scattered down the meads,
 From hour to hour unfold
 A thousand buds and beads
 In stars and cups of gold.

Now hear, and see, and note,
 The farms are all astir,
 And every labourer
 Has doffed his winter coat;
 And how with specks of white
 They dot the brown hillside,
 Or jaunt and sing outright
 As by their teams they stride.

They sing to feel the Sun
Regain his wanton strength ;
To know the year at length
Rewards their labour done;
To see the rootless stake
They set bare in the ground,
Burst into leaf, and shake
Its grateful scent around.

Ah now an evil lot
Is his, who toils for gain,
Where crowded chimneys stain
The heavens his choice forgot;
'Tis on the blighted trees
That deck his garden dim,
And in the tainted breeze,
That sweet spring comes to him.

Far sooner I would choose
The life of brutes that bask,
Than set myself a task,
Which inborn powers refuse:
And rather far enjoy
The body, than invent
A duty, to destroy
The ease which nature sent;
I And country life I praise,
' And lead, because I find
The philosophic mind
Can take no middle ways;
She will not leave her love
To mix with men, her art
Is all to strive above
The crowd, or stand apart.

Thrice happy he, the rare
Prometheus, who can play
With hidden things, and lay
New realms of nature bare ;
Whose venturous step has trod
Hell underfoot, and won
A crown from man and God
For all that he has done.—•

That highest gift of all,
Since crabbed fate did flood
My heart with sluggish blood,
I look not mine to call;
But, like a truant freed,
Fly to the woods, and claim
A pleasure for the deed
Of my inglorious name :

And am content, denied
The best, in choosing right;
For Nature can delight
Fancies unoccupied
With ecstasies so sweet
As none can even guess,
Who walk not with the feet
Of joy in idleness.

Then leave your joyless ways,
My friend, my joys to see.
The day you come shall be
The choice of chosen days :
You shall be lost, and learn
New being, and forget
The world, till your return
Shall bring your first regret.

IX

SPRING

ODE II

REPLY

BEHOLD ! the radiant Spring,
In splendour decked anew,
Down from her heaven of blue
Returns on sunlit wing:
The zephyrs of her train
In fleecy clouds disport,
And birds to greet her reign
Summon their silvan court.

And here in street and square
The prisoned trees contest
Her favour with the best,
To robe themselves full fair:
And forth their buds provoke,
Forgetting winter brown,
And all the mire and smoke
That wrapped the dingy town.

Now he that loves indeed
His pleasure must awake,
Lest any pleasure take
Its flight, and he not heed ;
For of his few short years
Another now invites
His hungry soul, and cheers
His life with new delights.

And who loves Nature more
; Than he, whose painful art
Has taught and skilled his heart
To read her skill and lore ?
Whose spirit leaps more high,
Plucking the pale primrose,
Than his whose feet must fly
The pasture where it grows ?

One long in city pent
Forgets, or must complain :
But think not I can stain
My heaven with discontent;
Nor wallow with that sad,
Backsliding herd, who cry
That Truth must make man bad,
And pleasure is a lie.

Rather while Reason lives
To mark me from the beast,
I'll teach her serve at least
To heal the wound she gives:
Nor need she strain her powers
Beyond a common flight,
To make the passing hours
Happy from mom till night.

Since health our toil rewards,
And strength is labour's prize,
I hate not, nor despise
The work my lot accords;
Nor fret with fears unkind
The tender joys, that bless
My hard-won peace of mind.
In hours of idleness.

Then what charm company
Can give, know I,—if wine
Go round, or thioats combine
To set dumb music free.
Or deep in wmtertide
When winds without make moan,
I love my own fireside
Not least when most alone.

Then oft I turn the page
In which our country's name,
Spoiling the Greek of fame,
Shall sound in every age :
Or some Terentian play
Renew, whose excellent
Adjusted folds betray
How once Menander went.

Or if grave study suit
The yet unweaned biain,
Plato can teach again,
And Socrates dispute;
Till fancy m a dream
Confront their souls with mine,
Crowning the mind supreme,
And her delights divine.

While pleasure yet can be
Pleasant, and fancy sweet,
I bid all care retreat
From my philosophy;
Which, when I come to try
Your simpler life, will find,
I doubt not, joys to vie
With those I leave behind.

X

ELEGY

AMONG THE TOMBS

SAD, sombre place, beneath whose antique yews
 I come, unquiet soirows to control;
 Amid thy silent mossgrown graves to muse
 ,With my neglected solitary soul;
 And to poetic sacfness care confide,
 Trusting sweet Jvlelancholy for my guide :
 They will not ask why in thy shades I stray,
 Among the tombs finding my rare delight,
 Beneath the sun at indolent noonday,
 Or in the windy moon-enchanted night, -
 Who have once reined in their steeds at any shrine,
 And given them water from the well divine.—
 The orchards are all ripened, and the sun
 Spots the deserted gleanings with decay ;
 The seeds are perfected : his work is done,
 And Autumn lingers but to outsmile the May ;
 Bidding his tinted leaves glide, bidding clear
 Unto clear skies the birds applaud the year.
 Lo, here I sit, and to the world I call,
 The woild my solemn fancy leaves behind,
 Come ! pass within the inviolable wall,
 ,Comepiide, come pleasure, come distracted mind;
 | Within the fated refuge, hither, turn,
 And learn your wisdom ere 'tis late to learn.
 Come with me now, and taste the fount of tears ;
 For many eyes have sanctified this spot,
 Where grief's unbroken lineage endears
 The charm untimely Folly injures not,

And slays the intruding thoughts, that overleap
The simple fence its holiness doth keep.

Read the worn names of the forgotten dead,
Their pompous legends will no smile awake ;
Even the vainglorious title o'er the head
Wins its pride pardon for its sorrow's sake ;
And carven Loves scorn not their dusty prize,
Though fallen so far from tender sympathies.

Here where a mother laid her only son,
Here where a lover left his bride, below
The treasured names their own are added on
To those whom they have followed long ago :
Sealing the record of the tears they shed,
That ' where their treasure there their hearts are fled/

Grandfather, father, son, and then again
Child, grandchild, and great-grandchild laid beneath,
Numbered in turn among the sons of men,
And gathered each one in his turn to death :
While he that occupies their house and name
To-day,—to-morrow too their grave shall claim.

And where are all their spirits ? Ah ! could we tell
The manner of our being when we die,
And see beyond the scene we know so well
(The country that so much obscured doth lie !
With brightest visions our fond hopes lepair,
Or crown our melancholy with despair;

From death, still death, still would a comfort come:
Since of this world the essential joy must fall
In all distributed, in each thing some,
In nothing all, and all complete in all;
Till pleasure, ageing to her full increase,
Puts on perfection, and is throned in peace.

Yea, sweetest peace, unsought-for, undesired,
 Loathed and misnamed, 'tis thee I worship here :
 Though in most black habiliments attired,
 Thou art sweet peace, and thee I cannot fear.
 Nay, were my last hope quenched, I here would sit
 And praise the annihilation of the pit.

Nor quickly disenchanted will my feet
 Back to the busy town return, but yet
 Linger, ere I my loving friends would greet,
 Or touch their hands, or share without regret
 The warmth of that kind hearth, whose sacred ties
 Only shall dim with tears my dying eyes.

XI

DEJECTION

WHEREFORE to-night so full of care,
 My soul, revolving hopeless strife,
 Pointing at hindrance, and the bare
 Painful escapes of fitful life ?

Shaping the doom that may befall
 By precedent of terror past :
 By love dishonoured, and the call
 Of friendship slighted at the last ?

By treasured names, the little store
 That memory out of wreck could save
 Of loving hearts, that gone before
 Call their old comrade to the grave ?

O soul, be patient: thou shalt find
 A little matter mend all this;
 Some strain of music to thy mind,
 Some praise for skill not spent amiss.

Again shall pleasure overflow
 Thy cup with sweetness, thou shalt taste
 Nothing but sweetness, and shalt grow
 Half sad for sweetness run to waste.

O happy life ! I hear thee sing,
 O rare delight of mortal stuff!
 I praise my days for all they bring,
 Yet are they only not enough.

XII

MORNING HYMN

O GOLDEN Sun, whose ray
 My path illumeth:
 Light of the circling day,
 Whose night is birth and death:

That dost not stint the prime
 Of wise and strong, nor stay
 The changeful ordering time,
 That brings their sure decay:

Though thou, the central sphere,
 Dost seem to turn around
 Thy creature world, and near
 As father fond art found;

Thereon, as from above
 To shine, and make rejoice
 With beauty, life, and love,
 The garden of thy choice,

To dress the jocund Spring
With bounteous promise gay
Of hotter months, that bring
The full perfected day;

To touch with richest gold
The ripe fruit, ere it fall;
And smile through cloud and cold
On Winter's funeral.

Now with resplendent flood
Gladden my waking eyes,
And stir my slothful blood
To joyous enterprise.

Arise, arise, as when
At first God said LIGHT BE !
That He might make us men
With eyes His light to see.

Scatter the clouds that hide
The face of heaven, and show
Where sweet Peace doth abide,
Where Truth and Beauty grow.

Awaken, cheer, adorn,
Invite, inspire, assure
The joys that praise thy morn,
The toil thy noons mature:

And soothe the eve of day,
That darkens back to death ;
O golden Sun, whose ray
Our path illumineth!

XIII

I HAVE loved flowers that fade,
Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemored scents:
A honeymoon delight,—
A joy of love at sight,
That ages in an hour:—
My song be like a flower!

I have loved airs, that die
Before their charm is writ
Along a liquid sky
Trembling to welcome it.
Notes, that with pulse of fire
Proclaim the spirit's desire,
Then die, and are nowhere :—
My song be like an air!

Die, song, die like a breath,
And wither as a bloom :
Fear not a flowery death,
Dread not an airy tomb !
Fly with delight, fly hence!
'Twas thine love's tender sense
To feast; now on thy bier
Beauty shall shed a tear.

BOOK III

TO
R. W. D.

I

O MY vague desires!
Ye lambent flames of the soul, her offspring fires:
That are my soul herself in pangs sublime
Rising and flying to heaven before her time;

What doth tempt you forth
To drown in the south or shiver in the frosty north ?
What seek ye or find ye in your random flying,
Ever soaring aloft, soaring and dying ?

Joy, the joy of flight!
They hide in the sun, they flare and dance in the night;
Gone up, gone out of sight: and ever again
Follow fresh tongues of lire, fresh pangs of pain,

Ah ! they burn my soul,
The fires, devour my soul that once was whole :
She is scattered in fiery phantoms day by day,
But whither, whither ? ay whither ? away, away! .

Could I but control
These vague desires, these leaping flames of the soul:
Could I but quench the fire : ah ! could I stay
My soul that flieth, alas, and dieth away!

II

LONDON SNOW

WHEN men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,

Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing ;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down :

Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.

All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven ;

And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;

The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air ;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.

Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing; ,

Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
' O look at the trees!' they cried, ' O look at the trees!'

With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder:

When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.

For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow ;
 And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
 Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go :
 But even for them awhile no cares encumber
 Their minds diverted ; the daily word is unspoken,
 The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
 At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the
 charm they have bioken.

III

THE VOICE OF NATURE

I STAND on the cliff and watch the veiled sun paling
 A silver field afar in the mournful sea,
 The scourge of the surf, and plaintive gulls sailing
 At ease on the gale that smites the shuddering lea:
 Whose smile severe and chaste
 June never hath stirred to vanity, nor age defaced.
 In lofty thought strive, O spirit, for ever:
 In courage and strength pursue thine own endeavour.
 Ah ! if it were only for thee, thou restless ocean
 Of waves that follow and roar, the sweep of the tides ;
 Wer't only for thee, impetuous wind, whose motion
 Precipitate all o'errides, and turns, nor abides:
 For you sad birds and fair,
 Or only for thee, bleak cliff, erect in the air;
 Then well could I lead wisdom in every feature,
 O well should I understand the voice of Nature.
 But far away, I think, in the Thames valley,
 The silent river glides by flowery banks:
 And birds sing sweetly in branches that arch an alley
 Of cloistered trees, moss-grown in their ancient ranks:

Where if a light air stray,
 >Tis laden with hum of bees and scent of may.
 Love and peace be thine, O spirit, for ever:
 Serve thy sweet desire : despise endeavour.

And if it were only for thee, entranced river,
 That scarce dost rock the lily on her airy stem,
 Or stir a wave to murmur, or a rush to quiver;
 Wer't but for the woods, and summer asleep in them :
 For you my bowers green,
 My hedges of rose and woodbine, with walks between,
 Then well could I read wisdom in every feature,
 O well should I understand the voice of Nature.

IV

ON A DEAD CHIID

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

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

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

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and holds it:
 But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heartbreaking
 and stiff;

Yet feels to my hand as if

'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that
 enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing,—

Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed '—
 Propping thy wise, sad head,

Thy iim, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet! doth the change content thee?—Death,
 whither hath he taken thee?

To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of
 this?

The vision of which I miss,

Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee
 and awaken thee?

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us

To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
 Unwilling, alone we embark,

And the things we have seen and have known and
 have heard of, fail us.

V

THE PHILOSOPHER TO HIS MISTRESS

BECAUSE thou canst not see,
 Because thou canst not know
 The black and hopeless woe
 That hath encompassed me:

Because, should I confess
The thought of my despair
My words would wound thee less
Than swords can hurt the air:

Because with thee I seem
As one invited near
To taste the faery cheer
Of spirits in a dream;
Of whom he knoweth nought
Save that they vie to make
All motion, voice and thought
A pleasure for his sake:

Therefore more sweet and strange
Has been the mystery
Of thy long love to me,
That doth not quit, nor change,
Nor tax my solemn heart,
That kisseth in a gloom,
Knowing not who thou art
That givest, nor to whom.

Therefore the tender touch
Is more; more dear the smile:
And thy light words beguile
My wisdom overmuch:
And O with swiftness fly
The fancies of my song
To happy worlds, where I
Still in thy love belong.

VI *

HASTE on, my joys ! your treasure lies
In swift, unceasing flight.
O haste: for while your beauty flies
I seize your full delight.
Lo! I have seen the scented flower,
Whose tender stems I cull,
For her brief date and meted hour
Appear more beautiful.

O youth, O strength, O most divine
For that so short ye prove ;
Were but your rare gifts longer mine,
Ye scarce would win my love.
Nay, life itself the heart would spurn,
Did once the days restore
The days, that once enjoyed return,
Return—ah ! nevermore.

VII

INDOLENCE

WE left the city when the summer day
Had verged already on its hot decline,
And charmed Indolence in languor lay
In her gay gardens, 'neath her towers divine:
' Farewell,' we said, ' dear city of youth and dream !'
And in our boat we stepped and took the stream.

All through that idle afternoon we strayed
Upon our proposed travel well begun,
As loitering by the woodland's dreamy shade,
Past shallow islets floating in the sun,
Or searching down the banks for rarer flowers
We lingered out the pleasurable hours.

Till when that loveliest came, which mowers home
Turns from their longest labour, as we steered
Along a straitened channel flecked with foam,
We lost our landscape wide, and slowly neared
An ancient bridge, that like a blind wall lay
Low on its buried vaults to block the way.

Then soon the narrow tunnels broader showed,
Where with its arches three it sucked the mass
Of water, that in swirl thereunder flowed,
Or stood piled at the piers waiting to pass;
And pulling for the middle span, we drew
The tender blades aboard and floated through.

But past the bridge what change we found below!
The stream, that all day long had laughed and played
Betwixt the happy shires, ran dark and slow,
And with its easy flood no murmur made:
And weeds spread on its surface, and about
The stagnant margin reared their stout heads out.

Upon the left high elms, with giant wood
Skirting the water-meadows, interwove
Their slumbrous crowns, overshadowing where they
stood
The floor and heavy pillars of the grove:
And in the shade, through reeds and sedges dank,
A footpath led along the moated bank.

Across, all down the right, an old brick wall,
Above and o'er the channel, red did lean;
Here buttressed up, and bulging there to fall,
Tufted with grass and plants and lichen green;
And crumbling to the flood, which at its base
Slid gently nor disturbed its mirrored face.

Sheer on the wall the houses rose, their backs
 All windowless, neglected and awry,
 With tottering coins, and crooked chimney stacks;
 And here and there an unused door, set high
 Above the fragments of its mouldering stair,
 With rail and broken step led out on air.

Beyond, deserted wharfs and vacant sheds,
 With empty boats and barges moored along,
 And lafts half-sunken, fringed with weedy shieds,
 And sodden beams, once soaked to season strong.
 No sight of man, nor sight of life, no stioke,
 No voice the somnolence and silence bioke.

Then I who rowed leant on my oar, whose dnp
 Fell without sparkle, and I rowed no more;
 And he that steered moved neither hand nor lip,
 But turned his wondering eye from shore to shore;
 And our trim boat let her swift motion die,
 Between the dim reflections floating by.

VIII '

I PRAISE the tender flower,
 That on a mournful day
 Bloomed in my garden bower
 And made the wintei gay.
 Its loveliness contented
 My heart tormented.

I praise the gentle maid
 Whose happy voice and smile
 To confidence betrayed
 My doleful heart awhile:
 And gave my spirit deploring
 Fresh wings for soaring;.

The maid for very fear
 Of love I durst not tell :
 The rose could never hear,
 Though I bespake her well :
 So in my song I bind them
 For all to find them.

'IX

A WINTER'S night with the snow about ;
 'Twas silent within and cold without :
 Both father and mother to bed were gone :
 The son sat yet by the fire alone.
 He gazed on the fire, and dreamed again
 Of one that was now no more among men :
 As still he sat and never aware
 How close was the spirit beside his chair.
 Nay, sad were his thoughts, for he wept and said
 Ah, woe for the dead ! ah, woe for the dead !
 How heavy the earth lies now on her breast,
 The lips that I kissed, and the hand I pressed.
 The spirit he saw not, he could not hear
 The comforting word she spake in his ear :
 His heart in the grave with her mouldering clay
 No welcome gave—and she fled away.

X

MY bed and pillow are cold,
 My heart is faint with dread,
 The air hath an odour of mould,
 I dream I lie with the dead :
 I cannot move,
 O come to me, love,
 Or else I am dead.

The feet I hear on the floor
 Tread heavily overhead:
 O Love, come down to the door,
 Come, Love, come, ere I be dead:
 Make shine thy light,
 O Love, in the night;
 Or else I am dead.

XI

O THOU unfaithful, still as ever dearest,
 That in thy beauty to my eyes appearest,
 In fancy rising now to re-awaken
 My Jove unshaken;

All thou'st forgotten, but no change can free thee,
 No hate unmake thee; as thou wert I see thee,
 And am contented, eye from fond eye meeting
 Its ample greeting.

O thou my star of stars, among things wholly
 Devoted, sacred, dim and melancholy,
 The only joy of all the joys I cherished
 That hast not perished,

Why now on others squand'rest thou the treasure,
 That to be jealous of is still my pleasure:
 As still I dream 'tis me whom thou invitest,
 Me thou dehghtest ?

But day by day my joy hath feebler being
 The fading picture tires my painful seeing,
 And faery fancy leaves her habitation
 To desolation.

Of two things open left for lovers parted
'Twas thine to scorn the past and go hghthearted:
But I would ever dream I still possess it,
And thus caress it.

XII

THOU didst delight my eyes:
Yet who am I ? nor first
Nor last nor best, that durst
Once dream of thee for prize;
Nor this the only time
Thou shalt set love to rhyme.

Thou didst delight my ear:
Ah I little praise ; thy voice
Makes other hearts rejoice,
Makes all ears glad that hear;
And short my joy : but yet,
O song, do not forget.

For what wert thou to me ?
How shall I say ? The moon,
That poured her midnight noon
Upon his wrecking sea ;—
A sail, that for a day
Has cheered the castaway.

' XIII

JOY, sweetest lifeborn joy, where dost thou dwell ?
Upon the formless moments of our being
Flitting, to mock the ear that heareth well,
To escape the trained eye that strains in seeing,
Dost thou fly with us whither we are fleeing;
Or home in our creations, to withstand
Blackwinged death, that slays the making hand ?

The making mind, that must untimely perish
 Amidst its work which time may not destroy,
 The beauteous forms which man shall love to cherish,
 The glorious songs that combat earth's annoy ?
 Thou dost dwell here, I know, divinest Joy : '
 But they who build thy towers fair and strong,
 Of all that toil, feel most of care and wrong.

Sense is so tender, O and hope so high,
 That common pleasures mock their hope and sense;
 And swifter than doth lightning from the sky
 The ecstasy they pine for flashes hence,
 Leaving the darkness and the woe immense,
 Wherewith it seems no thread of life was woven,
 Nor doth the track remain where once 'twas cloven..

And heaven and all the stable elements
 That guard God's purpose mock us, though the mind
 Be spent in searching: for his old intents
 We see were never for our joy designed:
 They shine as doth the bright sun on the blind,
 Or like his pensioned stars, that hymn above
 His praise, but not toward us, that God is Love.

For who so well hath wooed the maiden hours
 As quite to have won the worth of their rich show,
 To rob the night of mystery, or the flowers
 Of their sweet delicacy ere they go ?
 Nay, even the dear occasion when we know,
 We miss the joy, and on the gliding day
 The special glories float and pass away.

Only life's common plod: still to repair
 The body and the thing which pensheth:

The soil, the smutch, the toil and ache and wear,
The grinding enginry of blood and breath,
Pain's random darts, the heartless spade of death ;
All is but grief, and heavily we call
On the last terror for the end of all.

Then comes the happy moment: not a stir
In any tree, no portent in the sky:
The morn doth neither hasten nor defer,
The morrow hath no name to call it by,
But life and joy are one,—we know not why,—
As though our very blood long breathless lam
Had tasted of the breath of God again.

And having tasted it I speak of it,
And praise him thinking how I trembled then
When his touch strengthened me, as now I sit
In wonder, reaching out beyond my ken,
Reaching to turn the day back, and my pen
Urging to tell a tale which told would seem
The witless phantasy of them that dream.

But O most blessed truth, for truth thou art,
Abide thou with me till my life shall end.
Divinity hath surely touched my heart;
I have possessed more joy than earth can lend:
I may attain what time shall never spend.
Only let not my duller days destroy
The memory of thy witness and my joy.

XIV

THE full moon from her cloudless skies
Turneth her face, I think, on me;
And from the hour when she doth rise
Till when she sets, none else will see.

One only other ray she hath,
 That makes an angle close with mine,
 And glancing down its happy path
 Upon another spot doth shine.

But that ray too is sent to me,
 For where it lights there dwells my heart:
 And if I were where I would be,
 Both rays would shine, love, where thou art.

XV

AWAKE, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!
 The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
 It leaps in the sky: unnsen lustres slake
 The o'ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake !

She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee;
 Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
 Already they watch the path thy feet shall take :
 Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake !

And if thou tany from her,—if this could be,—
 She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee;
 For thee would unashamed herself forsake:
 Awake to be loved, my heart, awake, awake!

Awake, the land is scattered with light, and see,
 Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree :
 And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake ;
 Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

Lo all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
 She looketh and saith, ' O sun, now bring him to me.
 Come more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
 And awake my heart to be loved : awake, awake! '

POEMS

XVI

SONG

I LOVE my lady's eyes
 Above the beauties rare
 She most is wont to prize,
 Above her sunny hair,
 And all that face to face
 Her glass repeats of grace.

For those are still the same
 To her and all that see:
 But oh ! her eyes will flame
 When they do look on me:
 And so above the rest
 I love her eyes the best.

Now say, [*Say, O say ! saith the music*]
 who likes my song ?—
 I knew you by your eyes,
 That rest on nothing long,
 And have forgot surprise;
 And stray [*Stray, O stray / saith the music*]
 as mine will stray,
 The while my love 's away.

XVII

SINCE thou, O fondest and truest,
 Hast loved me best and longest,
 And now with trust the strongest
 The joy of my heart renewest;

Since thou art dearer and dearer
 While other hearts grow colder,
 And ever, as love is older,
 More lovingly drawest nearer:

Since now I see in the measure
 Of all my giving and taking,
 Thou wert my hand in the making,
 The sense and soul of my pleasure;

The good I have ne'er repaid thee
 In heaven I pray be recorded,
 And all thy love rewarded
 By God, thy master that made thee.

XVIII

THE evening darkens over.
 After a day so bright
 The windcapt waves discover
 That wild will be the night.
 There's sound of distant thunder.

The latest sea-birds hover
 Along the cliffs sheer height;
 As in the memory wander
 Last fluttenngs of delight,
 White wings lost on the white.

There^Ts not a ship in sight;
 And as the sun goes under
 Thick clouds conspire to cover
 The moon that should rise yonder.

XIX

O YOUTH whose hope is high,
Who dost to Truth aspire,
Whether thou live or die,
O look not back nor tire.

Thou that art bold to fly
Through tempest, flood and fire.
Nor dost not shrink to try
Thy heart in torments dire :

If thou canst Death defy,
If thy Faith is entire.
Press onward, for thine eye
Shall see thy heart's desire.

Beauty and love are nigh,
And with their deathless quire
Soon shall thine eager cry
Be numbered and expire.

BOOK IV

TO
L. B. C. L. M.

I

I LOVE all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them ;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making ;
Altho' to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

II

MY spirit sang all day
O my joy.
Nothing my tongue could say,
Only My joy *I*

My heart an echo caught—
O my joy—
And spake, Tell me thy thought,
Hide not thy joy.

My eyes gan peer around,—
O my joy—
What beauty hast thou found ?
Shew us thy joy.

My jealous ears grew whist ;—
 O my joy—
 Music from heaven is 't,
 Sent for our joy ?
 She also came and heard ;
 O my joy,
 What, said she, is this word ?
 What is thy joy ?
 And I replied, O see,
 O my joy,
 'Tis thee, I cried, 'tis thee:
 Thou art my joy.

III

THE upper skies are palest blue
 Mottled with pearl and fretted snow :
 With tattered fleece of inky hue
 Close overhead the stormclouds go.
 Their shadows fly along the hill
 And o'er the crest mount one by one :
 The whitened planking of the mill
 Is now in shade and now in sun.

IV

THE clouds have left the sky,
 The wind hath left the sea,
 The half-moon up on high
 Shrinketh her face of dree.
 She lightens on the comb
 Of leaden waves, that roar
 And thrust their hurried foam
 Up on the dusky shore

Behind the western bars
 The shrouded day retreats,
 And unperceived the stars
 Steal to their sovran seats.

And whiter grows the foam,
 The small moon lightens moie;
 And as I turn me home,
 My shadow walks before.

V

LAST WEEK OF FEBRUARY, 1890

HARK to the merry birds, haik how they sing!

Although 'tis not yet spring

And keen the air ;

Hale Winter, half resigning ere he go,

Doth to his heiress shew

His kingdom fair.

In patient russet is his forest spread,

All bright with bramble red,

With beechen moss

And holly sheen : the oak silver and stark

Sunneth his aged bark

•And wrinkled boss.

But neath the ruin of the withered brake

Primroses now awake

From nursing shades :

The crumpled carpet of the dry leaves brown

Avails not to keep down

The hyacinth blades.

The hazel hath put forth his tassels ruffed ;
 The willow's flossy tuft
 Hath slipped him free:
 The rose amid her ransacked orange hips
 Braggeth the tender tips
 Of bowers to be.

A black rook stirs the branches here and there,
 Foraging to repair
 His broken home:
 And hark, on the ash-boughs ! Never thrush did sing
 Louder in praise of spring,
 When spring is come.

VI

APRIL, 1885

WANTON with long delay the gay spring leaping cometh;
 The blackthorn starreth now his bough on the eve of
 May:
 All day in the sweet box-tree the bee for pleasure
 hummeth :
 The cuckoo sends afloat his note on the air all day.
 Now dewy nights again and rain in gentle shower
 At root of tree and flower have quenched the winter'b
 drouth :
 On high the hot sun smiles, and banks of cloud uptower
 In bulging heads that crowd for miles the dazzling south.

VII

GAy Robin is seen no more :
 He is gone with the snow,
 For winter is o'er
 And Robin will go.

In need he was fed, and now he is fled
 Away to his secret nest.
 No more will he stand
 Begging for crumbs,
 No longer he conies
 Beseeching our hand
 And showing his breast
 At window and dooi :—
 Gay Robin is seen no more.

Blithe Robin is heard no more:
 He gave us his song
 When summer was o'er
 And winter was long:
 He sang for his bread and now he is fled
 Away to his secret nest.
 And there in the green
 Early and late
 Alone to his mate
 He pipeth unseen
 And swelleth his breast;
 For us it is o'er:—
 Blithe Robin is heard no more.

VIII

SPRING goeth all in white,
 Crowned with milk-white may :
 In fleecy flocks of light
 O'er heaven the white clouds stray:
 White butterflies in the air;
 White daisies prank the ground :
 I The cherry and hoary pear
 Scatter their snow around.

IX

MY eyes for beauty pine,
 My soul for Goddess grace:
 No other care nor hope is mine;
 To heaven I turn my face.
 One splendour thence is shed
 From all the stars above :
 'Tis named when God's name is said,
 'Tis Love, 'tis heavenly Love.
 And every gentle heart,
 That burns with true desire,
 Is lit from eyes that minor pait
 Of that celestial fire.

X

O LOVE, my muse, how was 't for me
 Among the best to dare,
 In thy high courts that bowed the knee
 With sacrifice and prayer ?
 Their mighty offerings at thy shrine
 Shamed me, who nothing bore :
 Their suits were mockeries of mine,
 I sued for so much more.
 Full many I met that crowned with bay
 In triumph home returned,
 And many a master on the way
 Proud of the prize I scorned,
 I wished no garland on my head
 Nor treasure in my hand ;
 My gift the longing that me led,
 My prayer thy high command,

My love, my muse ; and when I spake
Thou mad'st me thine that day,
And more than hundred hearts could take
Gav'st me to bear away.

XI

LOVE on my heart from heaven fell,
Soft as the dew on flowers of spring,
Sweet as the hidden drops that swell
Their honey-throated chahcing.

Now never from him do I part,
Hosanna evermore I cry:
Haste his savour in my heart,
And bid all piaise him as do I.

Without him noughtsoever is,
Nor was afore, nor e'er shall be:
Nor any other joy than his
Wish I for mine to comfort me.

XII

THE hill pines were sighing,
Overcast and chill was the day:
A mist in the valley lying
Blotted the pleasant May.

But deep in the glen's bosom
Summer slept in the fire
Of the odorous gorse-blossorn
And the hot scent of the brier.

A ribald cuckoo clamoured,
And out of the copse the stroke
Of the iron axe that hammered
The iron heart of the oak.

Anon a sound appalling,
As a hundred years of pride
Crashed, in the silence falling:
And the shadowy pine-trees sighed.

XIII

THE WINDMILL

THE green corn waving in the dale,
The ripe grass waving on the hill:
I lean across the paddock pale
And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
Cut thro' the air : with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Beside his sacks the miller stands
On high within the open door:
A book and pencil in his hands,
His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave the wind
Is busy with his work to-day:
From whencesoe'er, he comes to grind ;
He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin,
The circling millstones faster flee,
The shuddering timbers groan within,
And down the shoot the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
 And doth not much his work overlook:
 He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
 The figures in his dusty book.

XIV

WHEN June is come, then all the day
 I'll sit with my love in the scented hay:
 And watch the sunshot palaces high,
 That the white clouds build in the breezy sky.

She singeth, and I do make her a song,
 And read sweet poems the whole day long:
 Unseen as we lie in our haybuilt home.
 O life is delight when June is come. \ ~

XV

THE pinks along my garden walks
 Rave all shot forth their summer stalks,
 Thronging their buds 'mong tulips hot,
 And blue forget-me-not.

Their dazzling snows forth-bursting soon
 Will lade the idle breath of June :
 And waken thro' the fragrant night
 To steal the pale moonlight.

The nightingale at end of May
 Lingers each year for their display;
 Till when he sees their blossoms blown,
 He knows the spring is flown.

June's birth they greet, and when their bloom
 Dislustres, withering on his tomb,
 Then summer hath a shortening day;
 And steps slow to decay.

XVI

FIRE of heaven, whose starry arrow
 Pierces the veil of timeless night:
 Molten spheres, whose tempests narrow
 Their floods to a beam of gentle light,
 To charm with a moon-ray quenched from fire
 The land of delight, the land of desire !
 Smile of love, a flower planted,
 Sprung in the garden of joy that art:
 Eyes that shine with a glow enchanted,
 Whose spreading fires encircle my heart,
 And warm with a noon-ray drenched in fire
 My land of delight, my land of desire !

XVII"

THE idle life I lead
 Is like a pleasant sleep,
 Wherein I rest and heed
 The dreams that by me sweep.
 And still of all my dreams
 In turn so swiftly past,
 Each in its fancy seems
 A nobler than the last.
 And every eve I say,
 Noting my step in bliss,
 That I have known no day
 In all my life like this.

XVIII

ANGEL spirits of sleep,
White-robed, with silver hair,
In your meadows fair,
Where the willows weep,
And the sad moonbeam
On the gliding stream
Writes her scattered dream;

Angel spirits of sleep,
Dancing to the weir
In the hollow roar
Of its waters deep ;
Know ye how men say
That ye haunt no more
Isle and grassy shore
With your moonlit play ;
That ye dance not here,
White-robed spirits of sleep,
All the summer night
Threading dances light ?

XIX

ANNIVERSARY

WHAT is sweeter than new-mown hay,
Fresher than winds o'er-sea that blow,
Innocent above children's play,
Fairer and purer than winter snow,
Frolic as are the morns of May ?

—If it should be what best I know !

What is richer than thoughts that stray
 From reading of poems that smoothly flow ?
 What is solemn like the delay
 Of concords linked in a music slow
 Dying thro' vaulted aisles away ?
 —If it should be what best I know !

What gives faith to me when I pray,
 Setteth my heart with joy aglow,
 Filleth my song with fancies gay,
 Maketh the heaven to which I go,
 The gladness of earth that lasteth for aye ?
 —If it should be what best I know!

But tell me thou—'twas on this day
 That first we loved five years ago—
 If 'tis a thing that I can say,
 Though it must be what best we know.

XX

THE summer trees are tempest-torn,
 The hills are wrapped in a mantle wide
 Of folding rain by the mad wind borne
 Across the country side.

His scourge of fury is lashing down
 The delicate-ranked golden corn,
 That never more shall rear its crown
 And curtsy to the morn.

There shews no care in heaven to save
 Man's pitiful patience, or provide
 A season for the season's slave,
 Whose trust hath toiled and died.

So my proud spirit in me is sad,
A wreck of fairer fields to mourn,
The ruin of golden hopes she had,
My delicate-ranked corn.

XXI

THE birds that sing on autumn eves
Among the golden-tinted leaves,
Are but the few that true remain
Of budding May'b rejoicing train.
Like autumn flowers that brave the frost,
And make their show when hope is lost,
These 'mong the fruits and mellow scent
Mourn not the high-sunned summer spent.
Their notes thro' all the jocund spring
Were mixed in merry musicking:
They sang for love the whole day long,
But now their love is all for song.
Now each hath perfected his lay
To praise the year that hastes away :
They sit on boughs apart, and vie.
In single songs and rich reply:
And oft as in the copse I hear
These anthems of the dying year,
The passions, once her peace that stole,
With flattering love my heart console.

XXII

WHEN my love was away,
Full three days were not sped,
I caught my fancy astray
Thinking if she were dead,

And I alone, alone:
It seemed in my misery
In all the world was none
Ever so lone as I.

I wept; but it did not shame
Nor comfort my heart: away
I rode as I might, and came
To my love at close of day.

The sight of her stilled my fears,
My fairest-hearted love:
And yet in her eyes were tears :
Which when I questioned of,

O now thou art come, she cried,
'Tis fled: but I thought to day
I never could here abide,
If thou wert longer away.

XXIII

I THE storm is over, the land hushes to rest:
'The tyrannous wind, its strength fordone,
Is fallen back in the west
To couch with the sinking sun.
The last clouds fare
With fainting speed, and their thin streamers fly
In melting drifts of the sky.
Already the birds in the air
Appear again; the rooks return to their haunt,
And one by one,
Proclaiming aloud their care,
Renew their peaceful chant.

Torn and shattered the trees their branches again reset,
 They trim afresh the fair
 Few green and golden leaves withheld from the storm,
 And awhile will be handsome yet.
 To-morrow's sun shall caress
 Their remnant of loveliness :
 In quiet days for a time
 Sad Autumn lingering warm
 Shall humoui their faded prime.

But ah ! the leaves of summer that lie on the ground !
 What havoc ! The laughing timbrels of June, , ,
 That curtained the birds' cradles, and screened their
 song,

That sheltered the cooing doves at noon,
 Of airy fans the delicate throng,—
 Torn and scattered around:
 Far out afield they he,
 In the watery furrows die,
 In grassy pools of the flood they sink and drown,
 Green-golden, orange, vermilion, golden and brown,
 The high year's flaunting crown
 Shattered and trampled down.

The day is done : the tired land looks for night:
 She prays to the night to keep
 In peace her nerves of delight:
 While silver mist upstealeth silently,
 And the broad cloud-driving moon in the clear sky
 Lifts o'er the firs her shining shield,
 And in her tranquil light
 Sleep falls on forest and field.
 See ! sleep hath fallen : the trees are asleep :
 The night is come. The land is wrapt in sleep.

XXIV

YE thrilled me once, ye mournful strains,
Ye anthems of plaintive woe,
My spirit was sad when I was young;
Ah sorrowful long-ago!
But since I have found the beauty of joy
I have done with proud dismay;
For howsoe'er man hug his care
The best of his art is gay.
And yet if voices of fancy's choir
Again in mine ear awake
Your old lament, 'tis dear to me still,
Nor all for memory's sake:
'Tis like the dirge of sorrow dead,
Whose tears are wiped away;
Or drops of the shower, when rain is o'er
That jewel the brightened day.

XXV

SAY who is this with silvered hair,
So pale and worn and thin,
Who passeth here, and passeth there,
And looketh out and in ?
That useth not our garb nor tongue,
And knoweth things untold :
Who teacheth pleasure to the young,
And wisdom to the old ?
No toil he maketh his by day,
No home his own by night;
But wheresoe'er he take his way,
He killeth our delight.

Since he is come there's nothing wise
 Nor fair in man or child,
 Unless his deep divining eyes
 Have looked on it and smiled.

Whence came he hither all alone
 Among our folk to spy ?

There's nought that we can call our own,
 Till he shall hap to die.

And I would dig his grave full deep
 Beneath the churchyard yew,
 Lest thence his wizard eyes might peep
 To mark the things we do.

XXVI

CROWN Winter with green,
 And give him good drink
 To physic his spleen
 Or ever he think.

His mouth to the bowl,
 His feet to the fire ;
 And let him, good soul,
 No comfort desire.

So merry he be,
 I bid him abide:
 And merry be we
 This good Yuletide.

XXVII

THE snow lies sprinkled on the beach,
 And whitens all the marshy lea:
 The sad gulls wail adown the gale,
 The day is dark and black the sea.

Shorn of their crests the blighted waves
 With driven foam the offing fleck:
 The ebb is low and barely laves
 The red rust of the giant wreck.

On such a stony, breaking beach
 My childhood chanced and chose to be:
 'Twas here I played, and musing made
 My friend the melancholy sea.

He from his dim enchanted caves
 With shuddering roar and onrush wild
 Fell down in sacrificial waves
 At feet of his exulting child.

Unto a spirit too light for fear
 His wrath was mirth, his wail was glee :—
 My heart is now too fixed to bow
 Tho' all his tempests howl at me :

For to the gain life's summer saves,
 My solemn joy's increasing store,
 The tossing of his mournful waves
 Makes sweetest music evermore.

XXVIII

MY spirit kisseth thine,
 My spirit embraceth thee:
 I feel thy being twine
 Her graces over me,

In the life-kindling fold
 Of God's breath ; where on high,
 In furthest space untold
 Like a lost world I he:

And o'er my dreaming plains
 Lightens, most pale and fair,
 A moon that never wanes ;
 Or more, if I compare,

Like what the shepherd sees
 On- late mid-winter dawns,
 When thro' the branched trees,
 O'er the white-frosted lawns,

The huge unclouded sun,
 Surprising the world whist,
 Is all uprisen thereon,
 Golden with melting mist.

XXIX

ARIEL, 0,—my angel, my own,—
 Whither away then art thou flown
 Beyond my spirit's dominion ?
 That makest my heart run over with rhyme,
 Renewing at will my youth for a time,
 My servant, my pretty minion.

Now indeed I have cause to mourn,
 Now thou returnest scorn for scorn :
 Leave me not to my folly:
 For when thou art with me is none so gay
 As I, and none when thou'rt away
 Was ever so melancholy.

XXX

LAUS DEO

LET praise devote thy work, and skill employ
Thy whole mind, and thy heart be lost in joy.
Well-doing bringeth pride, this constant thought
Humility, that thy best done is nought.
Man doeth nothing well, be it great or small,
Save to praise God ; but that hath saved all:
For God requires no more than thou hast done,
And takes thy work to bless it for his own.

BOOK V

TO
M. G. K.

I

THE WINNERS

BETWIXT two billows of the downs
The little hamlet lies,
And nothing sees but the bald crowns
Of the hills, and the blue skies.

Clustering beneath the long descent
And grey slopes of the wold,
The red roofs nestle, overspent
With lichen yellow as gold.

We found it in the mid-day sun
Basking, what time of year
The thrush his singing has begun,
Ere the first leaves appear.

High from his load a woodman pitched
His faggots on the stack:
Knee-deep in straw the cattle twitched
Sweet hay from crib and rack:

And from the barn hard by was borne
A steady muffled dm,
By which we knew that threshed coin
Was winnowing, and went in.

The sunbeams on the motey air
Streamed through the open door,
And on the brown arms moving bare,
And the grain upon the floor.

One turns the crank, one stoops to feed
The hopper, lest it lack,
One in the bushel scoops the seed,
One stands to hold the sack.

We watched the good grain rattle down,
And the awns fly in the draught;
To see us both so pensive grown
The honest labourers laughed:

Meriy they were, because the wheat
Was clean and plump and good,
Pleasant to hand and eye, and meet
For market and for food.

It chanced we from the city were,
And had not gat us free
In spirit from the store and stir
Of its immensity:

But here we found ourselves again.
Where humble harvests bring
After much toil but little grain,
'Tis merry winnowing.

II

THE AFFLICTION OF RICHARD

LOVE not too much. But how,
When thou hast made me such,
And dost thy gifts bestow,
How can I love too much ?

Though I must fear to lose,
And drown my joy in care,
With all its thorns I choose
The path of love and prayer.

Though thou, I know not why,
Didst kill my childish trust,
That breach with toil did I
Repair, because I must:

And spite of frightening schemes,
With which the fiends of Hell
Blasphe me thee in my dreams,
So far I have hoped well.

But what the heavenly key,
What marvel in me wrought
Shall quite exculpate thee,
I have no shadow of thought.

What am I that complain ?
The love, from which began
My question sad and vain,
Justifies thee to man.

III

SINCE to be loved endures,
To love is wise :
Earth hath no good but yours,
Brave, joyful eyes:

Earth hath no sin but thine,
Dull eye of scoin :
O'er thee the sun doth pine
And angels mourn.

IV

THE GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER

Now thin mists temper the slow-ripening beams
Of the September sun: his golden gleams
On gaudy flowers shine, that prank the rows
Of high-grown hollyhocks, and all tall shows
That Autumn flaunteth in his bushy bowers;
Where tomtits, hanging from the drooping heads
Of giant sunflowers, peck the nutty seeds;
And in the feathery aster bees on wing
Seize and set free the homed flowers,
Till thousand stars leap with their visiting:
While ever across the path mazily flit,
Unpiloted in the sun,
The dreamy butterflies
With dazzling colours powdered and soft glooms,
White, black and crimson stripes, and peacock eyes,
Or on chance flowers sit,

With idle effort plundering one by one
The nectaries of deepest-throated blooms.

With gentle flaws the western breeze
Into the garden saileth,
Scarce here and there stirring the single trees,
For his sharpness he vaileth:
So long a comrade of the bearded corn,
Now from the stubbles whence the shocks are borne,
O'er dewy lawns he turns to stray,
As mindful of the kisses and soft play
Wherewith he enamoured the light-hearted May,
Ere he deseited her;
Lover of fragrance, and too late repents ;
Nor more of heavy hyacinth now may drink,
Nor spicy pink,
Nor summei's rose, nor garnered lavender,
But the few lingering scents
Of streaked pea, and gillyflower, and stocks
Of courtly purple, and aromatic plox.

And at all times to hear are drowsy tones
Of dizzy flies, and humming drones,
With sudden flap of pigeon wings in the sky,
Or the wild cry
Of thirsty rooks, that scour ascare
The distant blue, to watering as they fare
With creaking pinions, or—on business bent,
If aught their ancient polity displease,—
Come gathering to their colony, and there
Settling in ragged parliament,
Some stormy council hold in the high trees.

V

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
When first we kissed beside the thorn,
So strangely sweet, it was not strange
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell—let truth be told—
That love will change in growing old;
Though day by day is nought to see,
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
Quite to forget what once he was,
Nor even in fancy to recall
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
So deep in summer floods is drowned,
I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
How love so young could be so sweet.

VI

LARKS

WHAT voice of gladness, hark!
In heaven is ringing ?
From the sad fields the lark
Is upward winging.

High through the mournful mist that blots our day
Their songs betray them soaring in the grey.
See them! Nay, they

In sunlight swim ; above the furthest stain
Of cloud attain ; their hearts in music rain
Upon the plain.

Sweet birds, far out of sight
Your songs of pleasure
Dome us with joy as bright
As heaven's best azure.

VII

THE PALM WILLOW

SEE, whirling snow sprinkles the starved fields,
The birds have stayed to sing ;
No covert yet their fairy harbour yields.
When cometh Spring ?
Ah in their tiny throats what songs unborn
Are quenched each morn.
The lenten lihes, through the frost that push.
Their yellow heads withhold :
The woodland willow stands a lonely bush
Of nebulous gold ;
There the Spring-goddess cowers in faint attire
Of frightened fire.

VIII

ASIAN BIRDS

IN this May-month, by grace
of heaven, things shoot apace.

The waiting multitude
of fair boughs in the wood,
How few days have arrayed
their beauty in green shade.

What have I seen or heard ?
it was the yellow bird
Sang in the tree: he flew
a flame against the blue
Upward he flashed. Again,
hark ! 'tis his heavenly stiaïn.

Another ! Hush ! Behold,
many, like boats of gold,
From waving branch to branch
their any bodies launch.
What music is like this,
where each note is a kiss ?

The golden willows lift
their boughs the sun to sift:
Their sprays they droop to screen
the sky with veils of green,
A floating cage of song,
where feathered lovers throng.

How the delicious notes
come bubbling from their throats !
Full and sweet how they are shed
like round pearls from a thread!

The motions of their flight
are wishes of delight.

Healing their song I trace
the secret of their grace.

Ah, could I this fair time
so fashion into rhyme,
The poem that I sing
would be the voice of spring.

IX

JANUARY

COLD is the winter day, misty and dark:

The sunless sky with faded gleams is rent;
And patches of thin snow outlying, mark
The landscape with a dear disfigurement.

The trees their mournful branches lift aloft:

The oak with knotty twigs is full of trust,
With bud-thronged bough the cherry in the croft;
The chestnut holds her gluey knobs upthrust.

No birds sing, but the starling chaps his bill

And chatters mockingly; the newborn lambs
Within their stiawbuilt fold beneath the hill
Answer with plaintive cry their bleating dams.

Their voices melt in welcome dreams of spring,

Green grass and leafy trees and sunny skies:
My fancy decks the woods, the thrushes sing,
Meadows are gay, bees hum and scents arise.

And God the Maker doth my heart grow bold

To praise for wintry works not understood,
Who all the worlds and ages doth behold,
Evil and good as one, and all as good.

X

A ROBIN

FLAME-THROATED robin on the topmost bough
Of the leafless oak, what singest thou ?
Hark ! he telleth how—
' Spung is coming now; Spring is coming now.

Now ruddy are the elm-tops against the blue sky,
The pale larch donneth her jewelry;
Red fir and black fir sigh,
And I am lamenting the year gone by.

The bushes where I nested are all cut down,
They are felling the tall trees one by one,
And my mate is dead and gone,
In the winter she died and left me lone.

She lay in the thicket where I fear to go;
For when the March-winds after the snow
The leaves away did blow,
She was not there, and my heart is woe :

And sad is my song, when I begin to sing,
As I sit in the sunshine this merry spring:
Like a withered leaf I cling
To the white oak-bough, while the wood doth ring

Spring is coming now, the sun again is gay;
Each day like a last spring's happy day.'—
Thus sang he; then from his spray
He saw me listening and flew away.

XI

I NEVER shall love the snow again

 Since Maurice died :

With'corniced drift it blocked the lane,

And sheeted in a desolate plain

 The country side.

The trees with silvery rime bedight

 Their branches bare.

By day no sun appeared ; by night

The hidden moon shed thievish light

 In the misty air.

We fed the birds that flew around

 In flocks to be fed :

No shelter in holly or brake they found.

The speckled thrush on the frozen ground

 Lay frozen and dead.

We skated on stream and pond ; we cut

 The cunching snow

To Doric temple or Arctic hut ;

We laughed and sang at nightfall, shut

 By the fireside glow.

Yet grudged we our keen delights before

 Maurice should come.

We said, In-door or out-of-door

We shall love life for a month or more,

 When he is home.

They brought him home; 'twas two days late

 For Christmas day : if

Wrapped in white, in solemn state,

A flower in his hand, all still and straight

 Our Maurice lay.

And two days ere the year outgave
 We laid him low.
 The best of us truly were not brave,
 When we laid Maurice down in his grave
 Under the snow.

A11

NIGHTINGALES

BEAUTIFUL must be the mountains whence ye come,
 And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams, wheie-
 Ye learn your song: [from
 Where are those starry woods ? O might I wander there,
 Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
 Bloom the year long!

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the
 streams :

Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
 A thro of the heart,
 Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
 No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
 For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
 We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
 As night is withdrawn [of May,
 From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs
 Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
 Welcome the dawn.

XIII

A SONG of my heart, as the sun peered o'er the sea,
 Was born at morning to me:
 And out of my treasure-house it chose
 A melody, that arose
 Of all fair sounds that I love, remembered together
 In one, and I knew not whether
 From waves of rustling wheat it was,
 Recoveringly that pass:
 Or a hum of bees in the queenly robes of the lime :
 Or a descant in pairing time
 Of warbling birds : or watery bells
 Of rivulets in the hills :
 Or whether on blazing downs a high lark's hymn
 Alone in the azure dim :
 Or a sigh of pines, when the midnight world
 Is solitary and cold :
 Or a lapping river-ripple all day chiding
 The bow of my wherry gliding
 Down Thames, between his flowery shores
 Re-echoing to the oars:
 Or anthem notes, wherever in arched quires
 The unheeded music twines,
 And, centuries by, to the stony shade
 Flies following and to fade:
 Or a homely prattle of children's voices gay
 'Mong garden joys at play :
 Or a sundown chaunting of solemn rooks :
 Or memory of my books,
 Which hold the words that poets in many a tongue
 To the irksome world have sung:

Or the voice, my happy lover, of thee
 Now separated from me.
 A ruby of fire in the burning sleep of my brain
 Long hid my thought had lain,
 Forgotten dreams of a thousand days
 Ingathering to its rays,
 The light of life in darkness tempering long ;
 Till now a perfect song,
 A jewel of jewels it leapt above
 To the coinal of my love.

XIV

FOUNDER'S DAY. A SECULAR ODE ON THE NINTH
 JUBILEE OF ETON COLLEGE

CHRIST and his Mother, heavenly maid,
 Mary, in whose fair name was laid
 Eton's corner, bless our youth
 With truth, and purity, mother of truth !

O ye, 'neath breezy skies of June,
 By silver Thames's lulling tune,
 In shade of willow or oak, who try
 The golden gates of poesy ;

Or on the tabled sward all day
 Match your strength in England's play
 Scholars of Henry, giving grace
 To toil and force in game or race;

Exceed the prayer and keep the fame
 Of hirrij the sorrowful king, who came

Here in his realm a realm to found,
Where he might stand for evei crowned.

Or whether with naked bodies flashing
Ye plunge in the lashing weir, or dashing
The oais of cedar skiffs, ye strain
Round the rushes and home again ;—

Or what pin suit soe'er it be
That makes your mingled presence free,
When by the schoolgate 'neath the limes
Ye muster waiting the lazy chimes ;

May Peace, that conquereth sin and death,
Temper for you her sword of faith ;
Crown with honour the loving eyes,
And touch with miith the mouth of the wise.

Here is eternal spng : for you
The very stais of heaven are new ;
And aged Fame again is born,
Fresh as a peeping ilowcr of morn.

For you shall Shakespeare's scene unroll,
Mozart shall steal your ravished soul,
Homer his bardic hymn reheaise,
Virgil recite his maiden verse.

Now learn, love, have, do, be the best;
Each in one thing excel the rest:
Strive; and hold fast this truth of heaven—
To him that hath shall more be given.

Slow on your dial the shadows creep,
So many hours for food and sleep,
So many hours till study tire,
So many hours for heart's desire.

These suns and moons shall memory save,
Mirrors bright for her magic cave,
Wherein may steadfast eyes behold
A self that groweth never old.

O in such prime enjoy youi lot,
And when ye leave regret it not;
With wishing gifts in festal state
Pass ye the angel-sworded gate.

Then to the world let shine your light,
Children in play be lions in fight,
And match with red immortal deeds
The victory that made ring the meads :

Or by firm wisdom save your land
From giddy head and grasping hand :
IMPROVE THE BEST ; so shall your sons
Better what ye have bettered once.

Send them here to the court of grace
Bearing your name to fill your place :
Ye in their time shall live again
The happy dream of Henry's reign :

And on his day your steps be bent
Where, saint and king, crowned with content,
He biddeth a prayer to bless his youth
With truth, and purity, mother of truth.

XV

THE north wind came up yesternight
 With the new year's full moon,
 And rising as she gained her height,
 Grew to a tempest soon.
 Yet found he not on heaven's face
 A task of cloud to clear ;
 There was no speck that he might chase
 Off the blue hemisphere,
 Nor vapour from the land to drive :
 The frost-bound county held
 Nought motionable or alive,
 That 'gainst his wrath rebelled.
 There scarce was hanging in the wood
 A shrivelled leaf to reave ;
 No bud had burst its swathing hood
 That he could rend or grieve:
 Only the tall tree-skeletons,
 Where they were shadowed all,
 Wavered a little on the stones,
 And on the white church-wall
 —Like as an artist in his mood,
 Who reckons all as nought,
 So he may quickly paint his nude,
 Unutterable thought:
 I So Nature in a frenzied hour
 By day or night will show
 Dim indications of the power.
 That doometh man to woe-

Ah, many have my visions been,
 And some I know full well:
 I would that all that I have seen
 Were fit for speech to tell.—

And by the churchyard as I came,
 It seemed my spirit passed
 Into a land that hath no name,
 Grey, melancholy and vast;
 Where nothing comes : but Memory, -
 The widowed queen of Death,
 Reigns, and with fixed, sepulchral eye
 All slumber bamsheth.
 Each grain of writhen dust, that drapes
 That sickly, staring shore,
 Its old chaotic change of shapes
 Remembers evermore.
 And ghosts of cities long decayed,
 And ruined shnnes of Fate
 Gather the paths, that Time hath made
 Foolish and desolate.
 Nor winter there hath hope of spring,
 Nor the pale night of day,
 Since the old king with scorpion sung
 Hath done himself away.

* * *

The mom was calm ; the wind's last breath
 Had fal'n : in solemn hush
 The golden moon went down beneath
 The dawnmg's crimson flush.

XVI

NORTH WIND IN OCTOBER

IN the golden glade the chestnuts are fallen all;
From the séred boughs of the oak the acorns fall:
The beech scatters her ruddy fire;
The lime hath stripped to the cold,
And standeth naked above her yellow attire :
The larch thinneth her spire
To lay the ways of the wood with cloth of gold.

Out of the golden-green and white
Of the biake the fir-trees stand upright
In the forest, of flame, and wave aloft
To the blue of heaven their blue-green tuftings soft.

But swiftly in shuddering gloom the splendours fail,
As the harring North-wind beareth
A cloud of skirmishing hail
The grieved woodland to smite:
In a hunicane through the trees he teareth,
Raking the boughs and the leaves rending,
And whistleth to the descending
Blows of his icy flail.
Gold and snow he mixeth in spite,
And whirleth afar; as away on his winnowing flight
He passeth, and all again for awhile is bright.

XVII

FIRST SPRING MORNING

A CHILD'S POEM

LOOK ! Look! the spring is come:
O feel the gentle air,
That wanders thro' the boughs to burst
The thick buds everywhere !
The birds are glad to see
The high unclouded sun :
Winter is fled away, they sing,
The gay time is begun.

Adown the meadows green
Let us go dance and play,
And look for violets in the lane,
And ramble far away
To gather primroses,
That in the woodland grow.
And hunt for oxlips, or if yet
The blades of bluebells show:

There the old woodman gruff
Hath half the coppice cut,
And weaves the hurdles all day long
Beside his willow hut.
We'll steal on him, and then
Startle him, all with glee
Singing our song of winter fled
And summer soon to be.

XVIII

A VILLAGER

THERE was no lad handsomer than Willie was
The day that he came to father's house:
There was none had an eye as soft an' blue
As Willie's was, when he came to woo.

To a labouring life though bound thee be,
An' I on my father's ground live free,
I'll take thee, I said, for thy manly giace,
Thy gentle voice an' thy loving face.

'Tis forty years now since we were wed :
We are ailing an' grey needs not to be said:
But Willie's eye is as blue an' soft
As the day when he wooed me in father's croft.

Yet changed am I in body an' mind,
For Willie to me has ne'er been kind:
Memly drinking an' Mngmg with the men
He 'ud come home late six nights o' the se'n.

An' since the children be grown an' gone
He 'as shunned the house an' left me lone:
An' less an' less he brings me in
Of the little he now has strength to win.

The roof lets through the wind an' the wet,
An' master won't mend it with us m's debt:
An' all looks every day more worn,
An' the best of my gowns be shabby an' torn.

No wonder if words hav' a-grown to blows;
 That matters not while nobody knows:
 For love him I shall to the end of life,
 An' be, as I swore, his own true wife.

An' when I am gone, he'll turn, an' see
 His folly an' wrong, an' be sorry for me :
 An' come to me there in the land o' bliss
 To give me the love I looked for in this.

XIX

WEEP not to-day: why should this sadness be ?
 Learn in present fears
 To o'ermaster those tears
 That unhindered conquer thee.

Think on thy past valour, thy future praise:
 Up, sad heart, nor faint
 In ungracious complaint,
 Or a prayer for better days.

Daily thy life shortens, the grave's dark peace
 Draweth surely nigh,
 When good-night is good-bye;
 Foi the sleeping shall not cease.

Fight, to be found fighting: nor far away
 Deem, nor strange thy doom.
 Like this sorrow 'twill come,
 And the day will be to-day.

NEW POEMS

1899

ECLOGUE 1
THE MONTHS

BASIL AND EDWARD

MAN hath with man on eaith no holier bond
Than that the Muse weaves with her dreamy thread :
Nor e'er was such transcendent love more fond
Than that which Edward unto Basil led,
Wandering alone across the woody shires
To hear the living voice of that wide heart,
To see the eyes that read the world's desires,
And touch the hand that wrote the roving rhyme.
Diverse their lots as distant were their homes,
And since that early meeting, jealous Time
Knitting their loves had held then lives apart.

But now again were these fine lovers met
And sat together on a rocky hill
Looking upon the vales of Somerset,
Where the far sea glcamM o'er the bosky combes,
Satisfying their spirits the livelong day
With various mirth and revelation due
And delicate intimacy of delight,
As there in happy indolence they lay
And drank the sun, while round the breezy height
Beneath their feet rabbit and listless ewe

Nibbled the scented herb and grass at will.

Much talked they at their ease; and at the last
Spoke Edward thus, ' 'Twas on this very hill
This time of the year,—but now twelve years are past,—
That you provoked in verse my younger skill
To praise the months against your rival song;
And ere the sun had westered ten degrees
Our rhyme had brought him thro' the Zodiac.
Have you remembered ? '—Basil answer'd back,
' Guest of my solace, how could I forget ?
Years fly as months that seem'd in youth so long.
The precious life that, like indifferent gold
Is disregarded in its worth to hold
Some jewel of love that God therein would set,
It passeth and is gone.'—' And yet not all'
Edward replied: 'The passion as I please
Of that past day I can to-day recall;
And if but you, as I, remember yet
Your part thereof, and will again rehearse,
For half an hour we may old Time outwit.'
And Basil said, ' Alas for my poor verse!
What happy memory of it still endures
Will thank your love: I have forgotten it.
Speak you my stanzas, I will ransom yours.
Begin you then as I that day began,
And I will follow as your answers ran.'

JANUARY

Ed. The moon that mounts the sun's deseited way,
Turns the long winter night to a silver day;
But setteth golden in face of the solemn sight
Of her lord arising upon a world of white.

FEBRUARY

Ba. I have in my heart a vision of spung begun
In a sheltering wood, that feels the kiss of the sun:
And a thrush adareth the melting day that dies
In clouds of purple afloat upon saffron skies.

MARCH

Ed. Now carol the birds at dawn, and some new lay
Announceth a homecome voyager eveiy-day.
Beneath the tufted shallows the streamlet thrills
With the leaping trout and the gleam of the daffodils.

APRIL

Ba. Then laugheth the year; with flowers the
meads are bright;
The bursting branches are tipped with flames of light:
The landscape is light; the dark clouds flee above,
And the shades of the land are a blue that is deep as love.

MAY

Ed. But if you have seen a village all red and old
In cherry-orchards a-sprinkle with white and gold,
By a hawthorn seated, or a witchelm flowering high,
A gay breeze making not in the waving rye !

JUNE

Ba. Then night retires from heaven; the high
winds go
A-sailing in cloud-pavilions of cavern'd snow.
O June, sweet Philomel sang thy cradle-lay;
In rosy revel thy spirit shall pass away.

JULY

Ed. Heavy is the green of the fields, heavy the
trees
With foliage hang, drowsy the hum of bees
In the thundrous air: the crowded scents lie low:
Thro' tangle of weeds the river lunneth slow.

AUGUST

Ba. A reaper with dusty shoon and hat of straw
On the yellow field, his scythe in his armes brow:
Beneath the tall grey trees resting at noon
From sweat and swink with scythe and dusty shoon.

SEPTEMBER

Ed. Earth's flaunting flower of passion fadeth fair
To ripening fruit in sunlit veils of the air,
As the art of man makes wisdom to glorify
The beauty and love of life born else to die.

OCTOBER

Ba. On frosty morns with the woods aflame, down,
down
The golden spoils fall thick from the chestnut ciown.
May Autumn in tranquil glory her nches spend,
With mellow apples her orchard-branches bend.

NOVEMBER

Ed. Sad mists have hid the sun, the land is forlorn:
The plough is afield, the hunter wmdeth his horn.
Dame Prudence lookcth well to her winter stores,
And many a wise man finds his pleasure indoors.

DECEMBER

Ba. I pray thee don thy jerkm of olden time,
 Bung us good ice, and silver the trees with rime;
 And I will good cheer, good music and wine bestow,
 When the Christmas guest comes galoping over the
 snow.

Thus they in verse alternate sang the year
 For rabbit shy and listless ewe to hear,
 Among the grey rocks on the mountain green
 Beneath the sky in fair and pastoral scene,
 Like those Sicilian swains, whose done tongue
 After two thousand years is ever young,—•
Sweet the pine s murmur, and, shepherd, siveet thy pipe,—
 Or that which gentle Virgil, yet unripe,
Of Tityrus sang under the spreading beech
 And gave to rustic clowns immortal speech,
 By rocky fountain or on flowery mead
 Bidding their idle Hocks at will to feed,
 While they, retreated to some bosky glade
 Together told their loves, and as they played
 Sang what sweet thing soe'er the poet feigned:
 But these were men when good Victoria reigned,
 Poets themselves, who without shepherd gear
 Each of his native fancy sang the year.

ECLOGUE II

GIOVANNI DUPRÈ

*LAWRENCE AND RICHARD**Lawrence*

LOOK down the liver—against the western sky—
 The Ponte Santa Trinita—what throng
 Slowly trails o'er with waving banners high,
 With foot and horse! Surely they bear along
 The spoil of one whom Florence honoureth:
 And haik! the drum, the trumpeting dismay,
 The wail of the triumphal march of death.

Richard

'Twill be the funeral of Giovanni Dupre
 Wending to Santa Croce. Let us go
 And see what relic of old splendour cheers
 The dying ritual.

Lawrence

They esteem him well
 To lay his bones with Michael Angelo.
 Who might he be?

Richard

He too a sculptor, one
 Who left a work long to resist the years.

Lawrence

You make me question further.

Richard

I can tell
 All as we walk. A poor woodcarver's son,
 Prenticed to cut his father's rude designs
 (We have it from himself), maker of shrines,
 In his mean workshop in Siena dreamed;

And saw as gods the artists of the earth,
 And long'd to stand on their immortal shoie,
 And be as they, who in his vision gleam'd
 Dowering the world with grace for evermore.
 So, taxing rest and leisure to one aim,
 The boy of single will and inbred skill
 Rose step by step to academic fame.

Lawrence

Do T not know him then ? His figures fill
 The tympana o'er Santa Croce's gate ;
 In the museum too, his Cam, that stands
 A left-handed discobolos

Richard

So great
 His vogue, that elder art of classic worth
 Went to the wall to give his statues room ;
 And last—his county's praise could do no more—
 He cut the stone that honoured good Cavour,

Lawrence

I have seen the things.

Richard

He, finding in his hands
 His life-desire possess'd, fell not in gloom,
 Nor froth'd in vanity: his Sabbath eam'd
 He look'd to spend in meditative rest :
 So laying chisel by, he took a pen
 To tell his story to his countrymen,
 And prove (he did it) that the flower of all,
 Rarest to attain, is in the power of all.

Lawrence

Yet nought he ever made, that I have learn'd,
 In wood or stone deserved, nay not his best,

The Greek or Tuscan name for beautiful.
 'Twas level with its praise, had force to pull
 Favour from fashion.

Richard

Yet he made one thing
 Worthy of the lily city in her spring ;
 For while in vain the forms of beauty he aped,
 A perfect spirit in himself he shaped ;
 And all his lifetime doing less than well
 Where he profess'd nor doubted to excel,
 Now, where he had no scholarship, but diew
 His art from love, 'twas better than he knew:
 And when he sat to write, lo ! by him stood
 The heavenly Muse, who smiles on all things good;
 And for his truth's sake, for his stainless mind,
 His homely Jove and faith, she now grew kind,
 And changed the crown, that from the folk he got,
 For her green laurel, and he knew it not.

Lawrence

Ah ! Love of Beauty ! This man then mistook
 Ambition for her ?

Richard

In simplicity
 Erring he kept his truth ; and in his book
 The statue of his grace is fair to see.

Lawrence

Then buried with their great he well may be.

Richard

And number'd with the saints, not among them
 Who painted saints. Join we his requiem.

ECLOGUE III

FOURTH OF JUNE AT ETON

*RICHARD AND GODFREY**Richard*

BENEATH the wattled bank the eddies swarm
 In wandering dimples o'er the shady pool:
 The same their chase as when I was at school;
 The same the music, where in shallows warm
 The current, sunderM by the bushy isles,
 Returns to join the mam, and struggles free
 Above the willows, gurgling thro' the piles:
 Nothing is changed, and yet how changed are we!
 —What can bring Godfrey to the Muses' bower ?

Godfrey

What but brings you ? The festal day of the year;
 To live in boyish memoies for an hour;
 See and be seen: tho' you come seldom here.

Richard

Dread of the pang it was, fear to behold
 What once was all myself, that kept me away.

Godfrey

You miss new pleasures coveting the old.

Richard

They need have prudence, who in courage lack;
 'Twas that I might go on I looked not back.

Godfrey

Of all our company he, who, we say,
 Fruited the laughing flower of hbeityJ

Richard

Ah ! had I my desire, so should it be.

Godfrey

Nay, but I know this melancholy mood :
'Twas your poetic fancy when a boy.

Richard

For Fancy cannot live on real food:
In youth she will despise familiar joy
To dwell in mournful shades ; as they grow real,
Then buildeth she of joy her far ideal.

Godfrey

And so perverteth all. This stream to me
Sings, and in sunny ripples lingeringly
The water saith ' Ah me! where have I leapt ?
Into what garden of life ? what banks are these,
What secret lawns, what ancient towers and trees ?
Where the young sons of heav'n, with shouts of play
Or low delighted speech, welcome the day,
As if the poetry of the earth had slept
To wake in ecstasy. O stay me ! alas '
Stay me, ye happy isles, ere that I pass
Without a memory on my sullen course
By the black city to the tossing seas ! '

Richard

So might this old oak say ' My heart is sere;
With greater effort every year I force
My stubborn leafage: soon my branch will crack,
And I shall fall or perish in the wrack;
And here another tree its crown will rear,
And see for centuries the boys at play:
And 'neath its boughs, on some fine holiday,
Old men shall prate as these/ Come see the game

Godfrey

Yes, if you will. 'Tis all one picture fair.

Richard

Made in a mirror, and who looketh there
Must see himself. Is not a dream the same ?

Godfrey

Life is a dream

Richard

And you, who say it, seem
Dreaming to speak to a phantom in a dream.

IV

ELEGY

THE SUMMFR-HOUSE ON THE MOUND

How well my eyes remember the dim path !
My homeing heait no happier playground hath.
I need not close my lids but it appears
Through the bewilderment of forty years
To tempt my feet, my childish feet, between
Its leafy walls, beneath its arching green;
Fairer than dream of sleep, than Hope more fair
Leading to dreamless sleep her sister Care.

There grew two fellow limes, two rising ties,
Shadowing the lawn, the summer haunt of bees,
Whose stems, engraved with many a russet scar
From the spear-hurhngs of our mimic war,

Pillar'd the portico to that wide walk,
A mossy terrace of the native chalk
Fashion'd, that led thro' the dark shades around
Straight to the wooden temple on the mound.
There live the memories of my early days,
There still with childish heart my spirit plays;
Yea, terror-stricken by the fiend despair
When she hath fled me, I have found her there;
And there 'tis ever noon, and glad suns bring
Alternate days of summer and of spring,
With childish thought, and childish faces bright,
And all unknown save but the hour's delight.

High on the mound the ivied arbour stood,
A dome of straw upheld on rustic wood:
Hidden in fern the steps of the ascent,
Whereby unto the southern front we went,
And from the dark plantation climbing free,
Over a valley look'd out on the sea.

That sea is ever bright and blue, the sky
Serene and blue, and ever white ships he
High on the horizon steadfast in full sail,
Or nearer in the roads pass within hail
Of naked brigs and barques that windbound ride
At their taut cables heading to the tide.

There many an hour I have sat to watch ; nay, now
The brazen disk is cold against my blow,
And in my sight a circle of the sea
Enlarged to swiftness, where the salt waves flee,
And ships in stately motion pass so near
That what I see is speaking to my ear:
I hear the waves dash and the tackle strain,
The canvas flap, the rattle of the chain

That runs out thro' the hawse, the clank of the winch
Winding the rusty cable inch by inch,
Till half I wonder if they have no care,
Those sailors, that my glass is brought to bear
On all their doings, if I vex them not
On every petty task of their rough lot
Prying and spying, searching eveiy craft
From painted truck to gunnel, fore and aft,—
Thro' idle Sundays as I have watch'd them lean
Long hours upon the rail, or neath its screen
Prone on the deck to lie outstretch'd at length,
Sunk in renewal of their weaned strength.

But what a feast of joy to me, if some
Fast-sailing frigate to the Channel come
Back'd here her topsail, or brought gently up
Let from her bow the splashing anchor drop,
By faint contrary wind suy'd in her cruise,
The *Phaethon* or dancing *Arethuse*,
Or some immense three-decker of the line,
Romantic as the tale of Troy divine;
Ere yet our iron age had doom'd to fall
The towering freeboard of the wooden wall,
And for the engines of a mightier Mars
Clipp'd their wide wings, and dock'd their soaring spars.
The gale that in their tackle sang, the wave
That neath their gilded galleries dasht so brave
Lost then their merriment, nor look to play
With the heavy-hearted monsters of to-day.

One noon in March upon that anchoring ground
Came Napier's fleet unto the Baltic bound:
Cloudless the sky and calm and blue the sea,
As round Saint Margaret's chrT mysteriously,

Those murderous queens walking in Sabbath sleep
Glided in line upon the windless deep :
For in those days was first seen low and black
Beside the full-ngg'd mast the strange smoke-stack,
And neath their stern revolv'd the twisted fan.
Many I knew as soon as I might scan,
The heavy *Royal George*, the *Acre* bright,
The *Hogue* and *Ajax*, and could name aright
Others that I remember now no more ;
But chief, her blue flag flying at the fore,
With fighting guns a hundred thirty and one,
The Admiral ship *The Duke of Wellington*,
Whereon sail'd George, who in her gig had flown
The silken ensign by our sisters sewn.
The iron Duke himself,—whose soldier fame
To England's proudest ship had given her name.
And whose white hairs in this my earliest scene
Had scarce more honoured than accustom'd been,—
Was two years since to his last haven past:
I had seen his castle-flag to fall half-mast
One morn as I sat looking on the sea,
When thus all England's grief came first to me,
Who hold my childhood favoured that I knew
So well the face that won at Waterloo.

But now 'tis other wars, and other men ;—
The year that Napier sail'd, my years were ten—
Yea, and new homes and loves my heart hath found:
A priest has there usurped the ivied mound,
The bell that call'd to horse calls now to prayers,
And silent nuns tread the familiar stairs.
Within the peach-clad walls that old outlaw,
The Roman wolf, scratches with privy paw.

v

O LOVE, I complain,
Complain of thee often,
Because thou dost soften
My being to pam:

Thou makest me fear
The mind that createth,
That loves not nor hateth
In justice austere;

Who, ere he make one,
With millions togeth,
And lightly destroyeth
Whate'er is begun.

An' wer't not for thee
My glorious passion,
My heart I could fashion
To sternness, as he.

But thee, Love, he made
Lest man should defy him,
Connive and outvie him,
And not be afraid :

Nay, thee, Love, he gave
His terrors to cover,
And turn to a lover
His insolent slave.

VI

THE SOUTH WIND

THE south wind rose at dusk of the winter day,
 The warm breath of the western sea
 Circling wrapp'd the isle with his cloke of cloud,
 And it now reach'd even to me, at dusk of the day,
 And moan'd in the branches aloud:
 While here and there, in patches of dark space,
 A star shone forth from its heavenly place,
 As a spark that is borne in the smoky chase;
 And, looking up, there fell on my face—
 Could it be drops of rain
 Soft as the wind, that fell on my face ?
 Gossamers light as threads of the summer dawn,
 Suck'd by the sun from midmost calms of the main
 From groves of coral islands secretly drawn,
 O'er half the round of earth to be driven,
 Now to fall on my face
 In silky skeins spun from the mists of heaven.

Who art thou, in wind and darkness and soft rain
 Thyself that robest, that bendest in sighing pineb^r
 To whisper thy truth ? that usest for signs
 A hurried glimpse of the moon, the glance of a star
 In the rifted sky ?
 Who ait thou, that with thee I
 Woo and am wooed ?
 That robing thyself in darkness and soft rain
 Choolest my chosen solitude,
 Coming so far
 To tell thy secret again,

As a mother her child, in her folding arm
 Of a winter night by a flickering fire,
 Telleth the same tale o'er and o'er
 With gentle voice, and I never tire,
 So imperceptibly changeth the charm,
 As Love on buried ecstasy buildeth his tower,
 —Like as the stem that beareth the flower
 By trembling is knit to power ;—
 Ah ! long ago
 In thy first rapture I renounced my lot,
 The vanity, the despondency and the woe,
 And seeking thee to know
 Well was't for me, and eveimore
 I am thine, I know not what.

For me thou seekest ever, me wondering a day
 In the eternal alternations, me
 Free for a stolen moment of chance
 To dream a beautiful dream
 In the everlasting dance
 Of speechless worlds, the unsearchable scheme,
 To me thou findest the way,
 Me and whomsoe'er
 I have found my dream to share
 Still with thy chaim encircling ; even to-night
 To me and my love in darkness and soft ram
 Under the sighing pines thou comest again,
 And staying our speech with mystery of delight,
 Of the kiss that I give a wonder thou makest,
 And the kiss that I take thou takest.

VII

* I CLIMB the mossy bank of the glade :
My love awaiteth me in the shade.

She holdeth a book that she never heedeth :
In Godde's work her spirit readeth.

She is all to me, and I to her:
When we embrace, the stars confer.

O my love, from beyond the sky
I am calling thy heart, and who but I ?

Fresh as love is the breeze of June,
In the dappled shade of the summer noon.

Catullus, throwing his heart away,
Gave fewer kisses every day.

Heracleitus, spending his youth
In search of wisdom, had less of truth.

Flame of fire was the poet's desire :
The thinker found that life was fire.

O my love ! my song is done:
My kiss hath both their fires in one.

VIII

To my love I whisper, and say
 Knowvest thou why I love thee '—Nay :
 Nay, she saith; O tell me again.—

When in her ear the secret I tell,
 She smileth with joy incredible—

Ha she is vain—O Nay-
 Then tell us '—Nay, O nay.

v

But this is in my heart,
 That Love is Nature's perfect art,
 And man hath got his fancy hence,
 To clothe his thought in forms of sense.

Fair are thy works, O man, and fair
 Thy dreams of soul in garments rare,
 Beautiful past compare,
 Yea, godlike when thou hast the skill
 To steal a stir of the heavenly thrill:

But O, have care, have care !
 'Tis envious even to dare :
 And many a fiend is watching well
 To flush thy reed with the fire of hell.

IX

MY delight and thy delight
Walking, like two angels white,
In the gardens of the night:

My desire and thy desire
Twining to a tongue of fire,
Leaping live, and laughing higher ;
Thro' the everlasting strife
In the,,mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun
Hath the secret of the sun.

Love can tell, and love alone,
Whence the million stars were strewn,
Why each atom knows its own,
How, in spite of woe and death,
Gay is life, and sweet is breath :

This he taught us, this we knew,
Happy in his science true,
Hand in hand as we stood
Neath the shadows of the wood,
Heart to heart as we lay
In the dawning of the day.

X

SEPTUAGESIMA

Now all the windows with frost are blinded,
As punctual day with greedy smile
Lifts like a Cyclops evil-minded
His ruddy eyeball over the isle.

In an hour 'tis paled, in an hour ascended
A dazzling light in the cloudless gey.
Steel is the ice ; the snow unblended
Is trod to dust on the white highway.

The lambkins frisk ; the shepherd is melting
Drink for the ewes with a fire of stiauw :
The red flames leap at the wild air pelting
Bitteily thro' the leafless shaw.

Around, from many a village steeple
The sabbath-bells hum over the snow :
I give a blessing to parson and people
Across the fields as away I go.

Over the hills and over the meadows
Gay is my way till day be done:
Blue as the heaven are all the shadows,
And every light is gold in the sun.

XI

THE sea keeps not the Sabbath day,
His waves come rolling evermore ;
His noisy toil grindeth the shore,
And all the cliff is drencht with spiy.

Here as we sit, my love and I,
Under the pine upon the hill,
The sadness of the clouded sky,
The bitter wind, the gloomy roar,
The seamew's melancholy cry
With loving fancy suit but ill.

We talk of moons and cooling suns,
Of geologic time and tide,
The eternal sluggards that abide
While our fair love so swiftly runs,

Of nature that doth half consent
That man should guess her dreary scheme
Lest he should live too well content
In his fair house of mirth and dream :

Whose labour irks his ageing heait,
His heart that wearies of desire,
Being so fugitive a part
Of what so slowly must expire.

She in her agelong toil and care
Persistent, wearies not nor stays,
Mocking alike hope and despair.

—Ah, but she too can mock our praise,
Enchanted on her brighter days,

Days, that the thought of grief refuse,
Days that are one with human art,
Woithy of the Virgihan muse,
Fit for the garety of Mozart.

XII

RIDING adown the country lanes
One day in spring,
Heavy at heart with all the pains
Of man's imagining :—

The mist was not yet melted quite
Into the sky:
The small round sun was dazzling white,
The merry larks sang high:

The grassy northern slopes were laid
In sparkling dew,
Out of the slow-retreating shade
Turning from bleep anew :

Deep in the sunny vale a burn
Ran with the lane,
O'erhung with ivy, moss and fern
It laughed in joyful strain :

And primroses shot long and lush
Their clustered cream:
Robin and wren and amorous thrush
Carol'd above the stream :

The stillness of the lenten air
 Call'd into sound
 The motions of all life that were
 In field and farm around:

So fair it was, so sweet and bright
 The jocund Spring
 Awoke in me the old delight
 Of man's imagining,

Riding adown the country lanes:
 The larks sang high.—
 O heart! for all thy griefs and pains
 Thou shalt be loth to die.

XIII

PATER FILIO

SENSE with keenest edge unused,
 Yet unsteel'd by scathing fire;
 Lovely feet as yet unbruised
 On the ways of dark desire;
 Sweetest hope that lookest smiling
 O'er the wilderness defiling !

Why such beauty, to be blighted
 By the swarm of foul destruction ?
 Why such innocence delighted,
 When sin stalks to thy seduction ?
 All the litanies e'er chaunted
 Shall not keep thy faith undaunted.

I have pray'd the sainted Morning
 To unclasp her hands to hold thee;
 From resign'd Eve's adorning
 Stol'n a robe of peace to enfold thee ;
 With all charms of man's contriving
 Arm'd thee for thy lonely striving.

Me too once unthinking Nature,
 —Whence Love's timeless mockery took me,—
 Fashion'd so divine a creature,
 Yea, and like a beast forsook me.
 I forgave, but tell the measure
 Of her crime in thee, my treasure.

XIV

NOVEMBER

THE lonely season in lonely lands, when fled
 Are half the birds, and mists lie low, and the sun
 Is rarely seen, nor strayeth far from his bed;
 The short days pass unwelcomed one by one.

Out by the ricks the mantled engine stands
 Crestfallen, deserted,—for now all hands
 Are told to the plough,—and ere it is dawn appear
 The teams following and crossing far and near,
 As hour by hour they broaden the brown bands
 Of the striped fields; and behind them firk and prance
 The heavy rooks, and daws grey-pated dance :
 As awhile, surmounting a crest, in sharp outline
 (A miniature of toil, a gem's design,)
 They are pictured, horses and men, or now near by
 Above the lane they shout lifting the share,

By the trim hedgerow bloom'd with purple air;
Where, under the thorns, dead leaves in huddle lie
Packed by the gales of Autumn, and in and out
The small wrens glide
With a happy note of cheer,
And yellow amoretts flutter above and about,
Gay, familiar in fear.

And now, if the night shall be cold, across the sky
Linnets and twites, in small flocks helter-skelter,
All the afternoon to the gardens fly,
From thistle-pastures hurrying to gam the shelter
Of American rhododendron or cherry-laurel:
And here and there, near chilly setting of sun,
In an isolated tree a congregation
Of starlings chatter and chide,
Thicket as summer leaves, in ganulous quarrel:
Suddenly they hush as one,—
The tree top springs,—
And off, with a whirr of wings,
They fly by the score
To the holly-thicket, and there with myriads more
Dispute for the roosts ; and from the unseen nation
A babel of tongues, like running water unceasing,
Makes live the wood, the flocking cries increasing,
Wrangling discoindantly, incessantly,
While falls the night on them self-occupied;
The long dark night, that lengthens slow,
Deepening with Winter to starve grass and tree,
And soon to bury in snow
The Earth, that, sleeping 'neath her frozen stole,
Shall dream a dream crept from the sunless pole
Of how her end shall be.

XV

WINIER NIGHTFALL

THE day begins to droop,—

Its course is done:

But nothing tells the place

Of the setting sun.

The hazy daikness deepens,

And up the lane

You may hear, but cannot see,

The homing wain.

An engine pants and hums

In the farm hard by :

Its lowering smoke is lost

In the lowering sky.

The soaking branches drip,

And all night through

The dropping will not cease

In the avenue.

A tall man there in the house

Must keep his chair:

He knows he will never again

Breathe the spring air :

His heart is worn with work ;

He is giddy and sick

If he rise to go as far

As the nearest rick:

He thinks of his morn of life,

His hale, strong years;

And braves as he may the night

Of darkness and tears.

XVI

SINCE we loved,—(the earth that shook
 As we kissed, fresh beauty took)—
 Love hath been as poets paint,
 Life as heaven is to a saint;

All my joys my hope excel,
 All my work hath prospered well,
 All my songs have happy been,
 O my love, my life, my queen.

XVII

WHEN Death to either shall come,—
 I pray it be first to me,—
 Be happy as ever at home,
 If so, as I wish, it be.

Possess thy heart, my own ;
 And sing to the child on thy knee,
 Or read to thyself alone
 The songs that I made for thee.

XVIII

WISHES

I wiSH'D to sing thy grace, but nought
 Found upon earth that could compare :
 Some day, maybe, in heaven, I thought,—
 If I should win the welcome there,—

There might I make thee many a song:
 But now it is enough to say
 I ne'er have done our life the wrong
 Of wishing for a happier day.

XIX

A LOVE LYRIC

WHY art thou sad, my dearest ?
What terror is it thou fearest,
Braver who art than I
The fiend to defy ?

Why art thou bad, my dearest ?
And why in tears appearest,
Closer than I that wert
At hiding thy hurt ?

Why art thou sad, my dearest,
Since now my voice thou hearest ?
Who with a kiss restore
Thy valour of yore.

XX

ΕΡΩΣ

WHY hast thou nothing in thy face ?
Thou idol of the human race,
Thou tyrant of the human heart,
The flower of lovely youth that art;
Yea, and that standest in thy youth
An image of eternal Truth,
With thy exuberant flesh so fair,
That only Pheidias might compare,
Ere from his chaste marmoreal form
Time had decayed the colours warm;
Like to his gods in thy proud dress
Thy starry sheen of nakedness.

Surely thy body is thy mind,
 For in thy face is nought to find,
 Only thy soft unchnsten'd smile,
 That shadows neither love nor guile,
 But shameless will and power immense,
 In secret sensuous innocence.

O king of joy, what is thy thought?
 I dream thou knowest it is nought,
 And wouldst in darkness come, but thou
 Makest the light where'er thou go
 Ah yet no victim of thy giace,
 None who e'er long'd for thy embrace,
 Hath cared to look upon thy face.

XXI

THE FAIR BRASS

AN effigy of brass
 Tiodden by careless feet
 Of worshippers that pass,
 Beautiful and complete,

Lieth in the sombre aisle
 Of this old church unwreckt,
 And still from modern style
 Shielded by kind neglect.

It shows a warrior arm'd :
 Across his iron breast
 His hands by death are charmed
 To leave his sword at rest,

Wherewith he led his men
 Oversea, and smote to hell

The astonisht Saiacen,
Nor doubted he did well.

Would we could teach our sons
His trust in face of doom,
Or give our bravest ones
A comparable tomb:

Such as to look on shrives
The heait of half its care ;
So in each line suivives
The spirit that made it fair ;

So fair the characters,
With which the dusty scroll,
That tells his title, stirs
A requiem for his soul.

Yet dearer far to me,
And brave as he are they,
Who fight by land and sea
For England at this day ;

Whose vile memorials,
In mournful marbles gilt,
Deface the beauteous walls
By growing glory built:

Heirs of our antique shrines,
Sires of our future fame,
Whose starry honour shines
In many a noble name

Across the deathful days,
Link'd in the brotherhood
That loves our country's praise,
And lives for heavenly good,

XXII

THE DUTEOUS HEART

SPIRIT of grace and beauty,
Whom men so much miscall;
Maidenly, modest duty,
I cry thee fair befall !

Pity for them that shun thee,
Sorrow for them that hate,
Glory, hath any won thee
To dwell in high estate!

But rather thou deghtest
To walk in humble ways,
Keeping thy favour brightest
Uncrowned by foolish praise;

In such retirement dwelling,
Where, hath the wordhng been.
He straight returneth telling
Of sights that he hath seen,

Of simple men and truest
Faces of girl and boy ;
The souls whom thou enduest
With gentle peace and joy.

Fair from my song befall thee,
Spirit of beauty and grace !
Men that so much miscall thee
Have never seen thy face.

XXIII

THE IDLE FLOWERS

I HAVE sown upon the fields
Eyebright and Pimpernel,
And Pansy and Poppy-seed
Ripen'd and scattered well,

And silver Lady-smock
The meads with light to fill,
Cowslip and Butteicup,
Daisy and Daffodil;

King-cup and Fleur-de-lys
Upon the marsh to meet
With Comfrey, Watermint,
Loose-strife and Meadowsweet;

And all along the stream
My care hath not forgot
Crowfoot's white galaxy
And love's Forget-me-not:

And where high grasses wave
Shall great Moon-daisies blink,
With Rattle and Sorrel sharp
And Robin's ragged pink.

Thick on the woodland floor
Gay company shall be,
Primrose and Hyacinth
And frail Anemone,

Perennial Strawberry-bloom,
Woodsorrel's pencilled veil,
Dishevel'd Willow-weed
And Orchis purple and pale,

Bugle, that blushes blue,
And Woodruff's snowy gem,
Proud Foxglove's finger-bells
And Spurge with milky stem.

High on the downs so bare,
Wheie thou dost love to climb,
Pink Thrift and Milkwott are,
Lotus and scented Thyme ;

And in the shady lanes
Bold Arum's hood of green,
Heib Robert, Violet,
Starwort and Celandine;

And by the dusty road
Bedstraw and Mullein tall,
With red Valerian
And Toadflax on the wall,

Yarrow and Chicory,
That hath for hue no like,
Silene and Mallow mild
And Agrimony's spike,

Blue-eyed Veronicas
And grey-faced Scabious
And downy Silverweed
And striped Convolvulus:

Harebell shall haunt the banks,
And thro* the hedgerow peer
Withwind and Snapdragon
And Nightshade's flower of fear.

And where men never sow,
Have I my Thistles set,
Ragwort and stiff Wormwood
And straggling Mignonette,

Bugloss and Burdock rank
And prickly Teasel high,
With Umbels yellow and white,
That come to kexes dry.

Pale Chlora shalt thou find,
Sun-lovingCentaury,
Cranesbill and Smjunwort,
Cmquefoil and Betony:

Shock-headed Dandelion,
That drank the fire of the sun
Hawkweed and Mangold,
Cornflower and Campion.

Let Oak and Ash grow strong,
Let Beech her branches spread j
Let Grass and Barley throng
And waving Wheat for bread;

Be share and sickle bright
To labour at all hours;
For thee and thy delight
I have made the idle flowers,

But now 'tis Winter, child,
And bitter northwinds blow,
The ways are wet and wild,
The land is laid in snow.

XXIV

DUNSTONE HILL

A COTTAGE built of native stone
Stands on the mountain-moor alone,
High from man's dwelling on the wide
And solitary mountain-side,

The purple mountain-side, where all
The dewy night the meteors fall,
And the pale stars musically set
To the watery bells of the rivulet,

And all day long, purple and dun,
The vast moors stretch beneath the sun,
The wide wind passeth fresh and hale,
And whining giose and blackcock sail.

Ah, heavenly Peace, where dost thou dwell ?
Surely 'twas here thou hadst a cell,
Till flaming Love, wandering astray
With fuiy and blood, drove thee away.—

Far down across the valley deep
The town is hid in smoky sleep,
At moonless nightfall wakening slow
Upon the dark with lurid glow:

Beyond, afar the widening view
Merges into the soften'd blue,
Cornfield and forest, hill and stream,
Fair England in her pastoral dieam.

To one who looketh from this hill
Life seems asleep, all is so still :
Nought passeth save the travelling shade
Of clouds on high that float and fade:

Nor since this landscape saw the sun
Might other motion o'er it run,
Till to man's scheming heart it came
To make a steed of steel and flame.

Him may you maik in every vale
Moving beneath his fleecy trail,
And tell whene'er the motions die
Where every town and hamlet lie.

He gives the distance life to-day,
Rushing upon his level'd way
From man's abode to man's abode,
And mocks the Roman's vaunted toad,

Which o'er the moor purple and dun
Still wanders white beneath the sun,
Deserted now of men and lone
Save for this cot of native stone.

There ever by the whiten'd wall
Standeth a maiden fair and tall,
And all day long in vacant dream
Watcheth afar the flying steam.

XXV

SCREAMING TARN

THE saddest place that e'er I saw
Is the deep tarn above the inn
That crowns the mountain-road, whereby
One southward bound his way must win.

Sunk on the table of the ridge
From its deep shores is nought to see :
The unresting wind lashes and chills
Its shivering ripples ceaselessly.

Three sides 'tis banked with stones aslant,
And down the fourth the rushes grow,
And yellow sedge fringing the edge
With lengthen'd image all arow.

'Tis square and black, and on its face
When noon is still, the muror'd sky
Looks daik and further from the earth
Than when you gaze at it on high.

At mid of night, if one be there,
—So say the people of the hill—
A fearful shriek of death is heard,
One sudden scream both loud and shrill.

And some have seen on stilly nights,
And when the moon was clear and round,
Bubbles which to the surface swam
And burst as if they held the sound.—

'Twas in the days ere hapless Charles
Losing his crown had lost his head,
This tale is told of him who kept
The inn upon the watershed:

He was a lowbred ruin'd man
Whom lawless time,s set free from fear:
One evening to his house there rode
A young and gentle cavalier.

With curling hair and linen fan
And jewel-hilted sword he went;
The horse he rode he had ridden far,
And he was with his journey spent.

He asked a lodging for the night,
His valise from his steed unbound,
He let none bear it but himself
And set it by him on the ground.

' Here 's gold or jewels,' thought the host,
' That's carrying south to find the king.'
He chattered many a loyal word,
And scraps of royal airs gan sing.

His guest thereat grew more at ease
And o'er his wine he gaye a toast,
But little ate, and to his room
Carried his sack behind the host.

' Now rest you well,' the host he said,
But of his wish the word fell wide;
Nor did he now forget his son
Who fell in fight by Cromwell's side.

Revenge and poverty have brought
Full gentler heart than his to crime;
And he was one by nature rude,
Born to foul deeds at any time.

With unshod feet at dead of night
In stealth he to the guest-room crept,
Lantern and dagger in his hand,
And stabbed his victim while he slept.

But as he stiuck a scream there came,
A feaiful scream so loud and shrill :
He whelm'd the face with pillows o'er,
And lean'd till all had long been still.

Then to the face the flame he held
To see there should no life remain :—
When lo ! his brutal heart was quell'd :
'Twas a fair woman he had slain.

The tan upon her face was paint,
The manly hair was torn away,
Soft was the breast that he had pierced ;
Beautiful in her death she lay.

His was no heart to faint at crime,
Tho' half he wished the deed undone.
He pulled the valise from the bed
To find what booty he had won.

He cut the straps, and pushed within
His murderous fingers to their theft.
A deathly sweat came o'er his brow,
He had no sense nor meaning left.

He touched not gold, it was not cold,
It was not hard, it felt like flesh.
He drew out by the curling hair
A young man's head, and murder'd fiesh;

A young man's head, cut by the neck.
But what was dreader still to see,
Her whom he had slain he saw again,
The twain were like as like can be.

Brother and sister if they were,
Both in one shroud they now were wound,—
Across his back and down the stair,
Out of the house without a sound.

He made his way unto the tain,
The night was dark and still and dank;
The ripple chuckling neath the boat
Laughed as he drew it to the bank.

Upon the bottom of the boat
He laid his burden flat and low,
And on them laid the square sandstones
That round about the margin go.

Stone upon stone he weigh'd them down,
Until the boat would hold no more;
The freeboard now was scarce an inch:
He stnpp'd his clothes and push'd from shore

All naked to the middle pool
He swam behind in the dark night;
And there he let the water in
And sank his terror out of sight.

He swam ashore, and donn'd his dress,
 And scidped his bloody fingers clean;
 Ran home and on his victim's steed
 Mounted, and never more was seen.

But to a comrade ere he died
 He told his story guess'd of none:
 So from his lips the crime returned
 To haunt the spot where it was done.

XXVI

THE ISLE OF ACHILLES

(FROM THE GREEK)

Τὸν φίλτατόν σοι παῖδ' ἐμοί τ', Ἀχιλλέα
 ὄφει δόμους ναίοντα νησιωτικούς
 Λευκὴν κατ' ἀκτὴν ἐντὸς Εὐξείνου πύρου.

Eui And 1250,

VOYAGING northwards by the western strand
 Of the Euxine sea we came to where the land
 Sinks low in salt morass and wooded plain:
 Here mighty Ister pushes to the main,
 Forking his turbid flood in channels three
 To plough the sands with which he chokes the sea,

Against his middle arm, not many a mile
 In the offing of black water is the isle
 Named of Achilles, or as Leuke known,
 Which tender Thetis, counselling alone
 With her wise sire beneath the ocean-wave,
 Unto her child's departed spirit gave,

Where he might still his love and fame enjoy,
Through the vain Danaan cause foredone at Troy.
Thither Achilles passed, and long fulfilFd
His earthly lot, as the high gods had will'd,
Far from the rivalries of men, from strife,
From aims, from woman's love and toil of life.
Now of his lone abode I will unfold
What there I saw, or was by others told,

There is in truth a temple on the isle ;
Therein a wooden statue of rude style
And workmanship antique with heaviness of lead:
Else all is desert, uninhabited;
Only a few goats browse the wind-swept rocks,
And oft the stragglers of their starving flocks
Are caught and sacrificed by whomsoever,
Whoever of chance or purpose hither fare :
About the fence lie strewn their bleaching bones.

But in the temple jewels and precious stones,
Upheapt with golden rings and vials lie,
Thankofferings to Achilles, and thereby,
Written or scratched upon the walls in view,
Inscriptions, with the givers' names thereto,
Some in Roman character, some Greek,
As each man in the tongue that he might speak
Wrote verse of praise, or prayer for good to come,
To Achilles most, but to Patroclus some;
For those who strongly would Achilles move
Approach him by the pathway of his love.

Thousands of birds frequent the sheltering shrine,
The dippers and the swimmers of the brine,

Sea-mew and gull and diving cormorant,
Fishers that on the high cliff make their haunt
Sheer inaccessible, and sun themselves
Huddled arow upon the narrow shelves :—
And surely no like wonder ere hath been
As that such birds should keep the temple clean;
But thus they do : at earliest dawn of day
They flock to sea and in the wateis play,
And when they well have wet their plumage light,
Back to the sanctuary they take flight
Splashing the walls and columns with fiesh brine,
Till all the stone doth fairly drip and shine,
When off again they skim asea for more
And soon leturning sprinkle steps and floor,
And sweep all cleanly with their wide-spread wings.

From other men I have learnt further things.
If any of free purpose, thus they tell,
SailVI hither to consult the oracle,—
For oracle there was,—they sacrificed
Such victims as they brought, if such sufficed,
And some they slew, some to the god set free:
But they who driven from their course at sea
Chanced on the isle, took of the goats theieon
And piay'd Achilles to accept his own.
Then made they a gift, and when they had offered once,
If to then question there was no response,
They added to the gift and asked again ;
Yea twice and more, until the god should deign
Answer to give, their offering they renew'd;
Whereby great riches to the shrine ensued.
And when both sacrifice and gifts were made
They worship'd at the shrine, and as they pray'd

Sailors aver that often hath been seen
A man like to a god, of warrior mien,
A beauteous form of figure swift and strong;
Down on his shoulders his light hair hung long
And his full armour was enchast with gold:
While some, who with their eyes might nought
 behold,
Say that with music strange the air was stir'd;
And some there are, who have both seen and heard :
And if a man wish to be favour'd more,
He need but spend one night upon the shore;
To him in sleep Achilles will appear
And lead him to his tent, and with good cheer
Show him all friendliness that men desire;
Patroclus pours the wine, and he his lyre
Takes from the pole and plays the strains thereon
Which Cheiron taught him first on Pehon.

These things I tell as they were told to me,
Nor do I question but it well may be:
For sure I am that, if man ever was,
Achilles was a hero, both because
Of his high birth and beauty, his country's call,
His valour of soul, his early death withal,
For Homer's praise, the crown of human ait;
And that above all praise he had at heart
A gentler passion in her sovran sway,
And when his love died threw his life away,

XXVII

AN ANNIVERSARY

HE

BRIGHT, my beloved, be thy day,
This eve of Summer's fall:
And Autumn mass his flowers gay
To crown thy festival !

SHE

I care not if the morn be bright,
Living in thy love-rays :
No flower I need for my delight,
Being crowned with thy piase.

HE

O many years and joyfully
This sun to thee return ;
Ever all men speak well of thee,
Nor any angel mourn !

SHE

For length of life I would not pray,
If thy life were to seek ;
Nor ask what men and angels say
But when of thee they speak.

HE

Arise ! The sky hath heard my song,
The flowers o'erhear thy praise;
And little loves are waking long
To wish thee happy days.

XXVIII

REGINA CARA

JUBILEE-SONG, FOR MUSIC, 1897

HARK ! The world is full of thy praise,
England's Queen of many days ;
Who, knowing how to rule the free,
Hast given a crown to monarchy.

Honour, Truth and growing Peace
Follow Britannia's wide increase,
And Nature yield her strength unknown
To the wisdom born beneath thy throne !

In wisdom and love fumed is thy fame :
Enemies bow to revere thy name :
The world shall never tire to tell
Praise of the queen that reigned well.

O FFIIX AMMA, DOMINA PRAFCLARA,
AMORE SfMPER CORONABERE
REGINA CARA.

LATER POEMS

I

RECOLLECTIONS OF SOLITUDE

AN ELEGY

ENDED are many days, and now but few
Remain ; since therefore it is happy and true
That memoned joys keep ever their delight,
Like steadfast stars in the blue vault of night,
While hours of pain (among those heavenly speies
Like falling meteors, the martyr's teais)
Dart their long trails at random, and anon,
Ere we exclaim, pass, and for aye are gone ;
Therefore my heed thought will oft restore
The long light-hearted days that are no more,
Save where in her memorial crypt they shine
Spangling the silent past with joy divine.

But why in dieam of this enchanted mood
Should all my boyhood seem a solitude ?
Good reason know I, when I wander there,
In that transmuted scene, why all is fair ;
The woods as when in holiday of spring
Million buds burst, and flowers are blossoming ;
The meadows deep in grass, the fields unshorn
In beauty of the multitudinous corn,
Where the strait alleys hide me, wall'd between
High bloomy stalks and rustling banneis green;

The gardens, too, in dazzling hues full-blown,
With wafted scent and blazing petals strewn ;
The orchards reddening thro' the patient hours,
While idle autumn in his mossy bowers
Inviteth meditation to endear
The sanctuaries of the mellowing year;
And every spot wherein I loved to stray
Hath borrowed radiance of eternal day ;
But why am I ever alone, alone ?
Here in the corner of a field my throne,
Now in the branching chair of some tall tree
Drinking the gale in bird-like liberty;
Or to the seashore wandered in the sun
To watch the fateful waves break one by one;
Or if on basking downs supine I lie
Bathing my spirit in blue calms of the sky;
Or to the liver bank am stolen by night
Harkening unto the moonlit ripple bright
That warbles o'er the shallows of smooth stone;
Why should my memory find me all alone,
When I had such companions every day
Jocund and dear? 'Twixt glimpses of their play
'Tis a vast solitude, wherein I see
Only myself and what I came to be.

Yet never think, dear spirits, if now ye may
Remember aught of that brief earthly day,
Ere ye the mournful Stygian river crost,
From our familiar home too early lost,—
O never think that I your tears forget,
Or that I loved not well, or love not yet.

Nor ye who held my heart in passion's chain,—
As kings and queens succeed in glorious reign—

When, as a man, I made you to outvie
God's work, and, as a god, then set you by
Among the sainted throng in holiest shrine
Of mythic creed and poetry divine;
True was my faith, and still your loves endure,
The jewels of my fancy, bright and pure.

Nor only in fair places do I see
The picture fair now it has ceased to be:
For fate once led me, and myself some days
Did I devote, to dull laborious ways,
By soaring thought detained to tread full low,—
Yea might I say unbeauteous paths of woe
And dreary abodes, had not my youthful spute
Hallow'd each nook with legends of delight.

Ah! o'er that smoky town who looketh now
By winter sunset from the dark hill-brow,
Under the dying trees exultantly
Nursing the sting of human tragedy?
Or in that little room upstairs'd so high,
Where London's roofs in thickest huddle lie,
Who now returns at evening to entice
To his fireside the joys of Paradise?
Once sacred was that hearth, and bright the air;
The flame of man's redemption flickered there,
In worship of those spirits, whose deathless fames
Have thrilled the stars of heaven to hear their names;
They that excelled in wisdom to create
Beauty, with mortal passion conquering fate;
And, mid the sovran powers of elder time,
The loveliness of music and new rhyme,
The masters young that first enthralled me;
Of whom if I should name, whom then but thee,

Sweet Shelley, or the boy whose book was found
Thrust in thy bosom on thy body drowned ?

O mighty Muse, wooer of virgin thought,
Beside thy charm all else counteth as nought;
The revelation of thy smile doth make
Him whom thou lovest reckless for thy sake;
Earthborn of suffering, that knowest well
To call thine own, and with enamouring spell
Feedest the stolen powers of godlike youth
On dear imagination's only truth,
Building with song a temple of desire;
And with the yearning music of thy quire,
In nuptial sacrament of thought and sense
Hallowest for toil the hours of indolence:
Thou in thy melancholic beauty drest,
Subduest ill to serve thy fair behest,
With tragic tears, and sevenfold purified
Silver of mirth ; and with extremest pride,
With secret doctrine and unfathomed lore
Remamest yet a child for evermore,
The only enchantress of the earth that art
To cheer his day and staunch man's bleeding heart.

O heavenly Muse, for heavenly thee we call
Who in the fire of love refinest all,
Accurst is he who heark'neth not thy voice ;
But happy he who, numbered of thy choice,
Walketh aloof from nature's clouded plan :
For all God's world is but the thought of man;
Wherein hast thou re-formed a world apart,
The mutual mirror of his better heart.
There is no foulness, misery, nor sin,

But he who loves finds his desire therein,
And there with thee in lonely commerce lives:
Nay, all that nature gave or fortune gives,
Joys that his spirit is most jealous of,
His only-embraced and best-deserving love,
Who walketh in the noon of heavenly praise,
The troubled godhead of his children's gaze,
Wear thine eternity, and are loved best
By thee transfigured and in thee possest;
Who madest beauty, and from thy boundless store
Of beauty shalt create for evermore.

1900.

II

GAY Marigold is frolic,
She laughs till summer is done;
She hears the Gnllie chirping
All day i' the blazing sun.

But when the pale moon rises,
She fain her face would hide;
For the high Queen of sorrows
Disdains her empty pride.

Fair Primrose haunts the shadow
With children of the Spring,
Till in the bloomy woodland
The nightingale will sing.

And when he lauds the May-night
And spirits thiong the grove,
The moon shines thro' the branches
And floods her heart with love.

III

MATRES DOLOROSAE

YE Spartan mothers, gentle ones,
Of lion-hearted, loving sons,
FaFn, the flower of English youth,
To a barbarous foe in a land uncouth:—

O what a delicate sacrifice!
Unequal the stake and costly the price
As when the queen of Love deplor'd
Her darling by the wild-beast gor'd.

They rode to war as if to the hunt,
But ye at home, ye bore the brunt,
Bore the siege of toiting fears,
Fed your hope on the bread of tears.

Proud and spotless warriors they
With love or sword to lead the way;
For ye had cradled heart and hand,
The commander hearken'd to your command.

Ah, weeping mothers, now all is o'er,
Ye know your honour and mourn no more:
Nor ask ye a name in England's story,
Who gave your dearest for her glory.

May 20, 1902.

IV

A VIGNETTE

AMONG the meadows
lightly going,
With worship and joy
my heart o'erflowing,

Far from town
and toil of living,
To a holy day
my spirit giving, . . .

• * *

Thou tender flower,
I kneel beside thee
Wondering why God
so beautified thee.—

An answering thought
within me springeth,
A bloom of the mind
her vision bringeth.

Between the dim hills'
distant azure
And flowery foreground
of sparkling pleasure

I see the company
of figures sainted,
For whom the picture
of earth was painted,

Those robed seers
 who made man's story
The crown of Nature,
 Her cause his glory.

They walk in the city
 which they have builded,
The city of God
 from evil shielded:

To them for canopy
 the vault of heaven,
The flowery earth
 for carpet is given ;

Whereon I wander
 not unknowing,
With worship and joy
 my heart overflowing.

1901.

V

MILLICENT

THOU dimpled Millicent, of merry guesses,
Strong-hmb'd and tall, tossing thy wayward tiesses,
What mystery of the heart can so surprise
The mirth and music of thy brimming eyes ?

Pale-brow, thou knowest not and diest to learn
The mortal secret that doth in thee burn ;
With look imploring ' If you love me, tell,
What is it in me that you love so well ?*

And suddenly thou stakest all thy charms,
 And leapest on me ; and in thy circling arms
 When almost stifled with their wild embrace,
 I feel thy hot tears sheltering on my face.

1901,

VI

VIVAMUS

WHEN thou didst give thy love to me,
 Asking no more of gods or men
 I vow'd I would contented be,
 If Fate should grant us summers ten.

But now that twice the term is sped,
 And ever young my heart and gay,
 I fear the words that then I said,
 And turn my face from Fate away.

To bid thee happily good-bye
 I have no hope that I can see,
 No way that I shall bravely die,
 Unless I give my life for thee.

1901.

VII

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

LATER POEMS

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

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

VIII

IN still midsummer night
When the moon is late
And the stars all watery and white
For her coming wait,
A spirit, whose eyes are possest
By wonder new,
Passeth—her arms upon her breast
Enwrapt from the dew
In a raiment of azure fold
With diaper
Of flower'd embroidery of gold
Bestarr'd with silver.

The daisy folk are awake
 Their carpet to spread,
 And the thron'd stars gazing on her make
 Fresh crowns for her head,

Netted in her floating hair
 As she drifteth free
 Between star-blossoming air
 And starry lea,

From the silent-shadowM vale
 By the west wind drawn
 Aloft to melt into the pale
 Moonrise of dawn.

1910.

IX

MELANCHOLIA.

THE sickness of desire, that in dark days
 Looks on the imagination of despair,
 Forgetteth man, and stinteth God his piaise;
 Nor but in sleep findeth a cure for care.

Incertainty that once gave scope to dream
 Of laughing enterprise and glory untold,
 Is now a blackness that no stars redeem,
 A wall of terror in a night of cold.

Fool! thou that hast impossibly desired
 And now impatiently despair'st, see
 How nought is changed : Joy's wisdom is attired
 Splendid for others' eyes if not for thee:

Not love or beauty or youth from earth is fled;
 If they delite thee not, 'tis thou art dead.

1904.

X

TO THE PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD

SINCE now from woodland mist and flooded clay
 I am fled beside the steep Devonian shore,
 Nor stand for welcome at your gothic door,
 'Neath the fair tower of Magdalen and May,
 Such tribute, Warren, as fond poets pay
 For generous esteem, I write, not more
 Enhearten'd than my need is, reckoning o'er
 My life-long wanderings on the heavenly way :

But well-befriended we become good friends,
 Well-honour'd honourable; and all attain
 Somewhat by fathering what fortune sends.
 I bid your presidency a long reign,
 True friend; and may your praise to greater ends
 Aid better men than I, nor me in vain.

XI

TO JOSEPH JOACHIM

BELOV'D of all to whom that Muse is dear
 Who hid her spirit of rapture from the Greek,
 Whereby our art excelleth the antique,
 Perfecting formal beauty to the ear;
 Thou that hast been in England many a year
 The interpieter who left us nought to seek,
 Making Beethoven's inmost passion speak,
 Bringing the soul of great Sebastian near.

Their music liveth ever, and 'tis just
 That thou, good Joachim, so high thy skill,
 Rank (as thou shalt upon the heavenly hill)
 Lamel'd with them, for thy ennobling trust
 Remember'd when thy loving hand is still
 And every ear that heard thee stopt with dust.

XII

TO THOS. FLOYD

How fares it, friend, since I by Fate annoy'd
 Left the old home in need of livelier play
 For body and mind? How fare, this many a day,
 The stubborn thews and ageless heart of Floyd?
 If not too well with country sport employ'd,
 Visit my flock, the breezy hill that they
 Choose for their fold; and see, for thence you may,
 From using walls all roofless yet and void,

The lovely city, thronging tower and spire,
 The mind of the wide landscape, dreaming deep,
 Grey-silvery in the vale; a shrine where keep
 Memorial hopes their pale celestial fire:
 Like man's immortal conscience of desire,
 The spirit that watcheth in me ev'n in my sleep.

XIII

LA GLOIRE DE VOLTAIRE

A DIALOGUE IN VERSE

A.

*Je donnerais pour revivre a vmgt arts
L'or de Rothschild, la gloire de Voltaire.*
I like that: Beianger in his piintems,
Voltaire and Rothschild: what three graces there
Foot it together ! But of old Voltaire,
I'd ask what Beranger found so sublime
In that man's glory to adorn his rhyme.
Was it mere fame ?

B.

Nay : for as wide a fame
Was won by the gold-garnering millionaire,
Who in the poet's verse might read his name:
And what is that ? when so much fi oth and scum
Float down the stream of Time (as Bacon saith),
What is that for deliverance from the death ?
Could any sober man be proud to hold
A lease of common talk, or die consoled
For thinking that on lips of fools to come
He'll live with Pontius Pilate and Tom Thumb?
That were more like eternal punishment,
The true fool's Paradise by all consent.
Stranger thought to set a crown on merit.

A.

Man's merit! and to crown it in Voltaire ?
The modest eye, the gentle, fearless heart,

The mouth of peace and truth, the angelic spirit!
Why Arouet wasouffle with the leaven,
Of which the little flock was bid beware;
His very ambition was to play a part;
Indifferent whether he did wrong or right,
So he won credit; eager to deny
A lie that failed, by adding he to lie;
Repaying evil unto seven-times-seven ;
A fount of slander, flattery and spite ;
Vain, irritable; true but to his face
Of mockery and mischievous grimace,
A monkey of the schools, the saints* despair t

B.

Yet for his voice half Europe stood at pause
To hear, and when he spoke rang with applause.

A.

Granted he was a wonder of his kind.
There is a devilish mockery in things
Which only a born devil can enjoy.
True banter is of melancholy mind,
Akin to madness; thus must Shakespeare toy
With Hamlet's reason, ere his fine art dare
Push his relentless humour to the quick;
And so his mortal thrusts pierce not the skin.
But for the superficial bickerings
That poison life and never seem to prick,
The reasonable educated grin,
Truly no wag is equal to Voltaire,
His never-dying ripple, wide and light,
Has nigh the force of Nature: to compare,
'Tis like the ocean when the sky is bright,
And the cold north-wind tickles with surprise

The briny levels of the infinite sea.
 —Shall we conclude his merit was his wit,
 His magic art and versatility ?

B.

And think of those foredoom'd in Dante's pit,
 Who, sunk at bottom of the loathly slough,
 Made the black mud up-bubble with their sighs;
 And all because they were unkind to Mirth,
 And went with smoky heart and gloomy brow
 The while they lived upon the pleasant earth
 In the sweet air that rallies to the sun,
 And ne'er so much as smiled or gave God thanks:
 Surely a sparkle of the Frenchman's fun
 Had rescued all their souls.

4-

I think I see

The Deity who in this Heaven abides,
Le bon Dieu, holding both his aching sides,
 With radiant face of Pan, ruddy and hairy :
 Give him his famous whistles and goat-shanks,
 And then present him to Alighieri.

B.

Nay, 'twixt the Frenchman and the Florentine
 I ask no truce, grave Dante weaving well
 His dark-eyed thought into a song divine,
 Drawing high poetry from heaven and hell—
 And him who lightly mockt at all in turn.

A.

It followed from his mundane thought of art
 That he contemn'd religion : his concern
 Was comfort, taste, and wit: he had no heart

For man's attempt to build and beautify
 His home in Nature; so he set all by
 That wisdom had evolved with purpose kind ;
 Stamped it as folly, or as fraud attacked;
 Never discerning how his callow zest
 Was impiously defiling his own nest;
 Whereas the least philosophy may find
 The truths are the ideas; the sole fact
 Is the long story of man's growing mind.

B.

Upon your thistle now I see my fig—
 Beranger thought of Voltaire as a seer,
 A latter-day John Baptist in a wig ;
 A herald of that furious gospel-storm
 Of words and blood, that made the nations fear;
 When sickening France adulterously sinn'd
 With Virtue, and went mad conceiving wind.
 He ranks him with those captains of reform,
 Luther and Calvin ; who, whate'er they taught,
 Led folk from superstition to free thought.

A.

They did. But whence or whither led Voltaire ?
 The steward with fifty talents given in charge,
 Who spent them on himself, and hv'd at large;
 His only vntue that he did not hide
 The pounds, but squander'd them to serve his pride;
 His praise that, cunning in his generation,
 He of the heavenly treasure did not spare
 To win himself an earthly habitation.

B.

Deny him not this laurel, nor to France
 The apostolate of modern tolerance :

Their Theseus he, who slew the Minotaur,
The Dragon Persecution, in which war
He tipp'd the shafts that made the devil bleed;
And won a victory that hath overcome
Many misdoings in a well-done deed ;
And more, I think, the mind of Christ revealing,
Yea, more of common-sense and human feeling
Than all the Creeds and Bulls of Christendom.

A.

Yet was he only one of them that slew:
The fiend had taken a deadly wound from Bayle ;
And did he 'roar to see his kingdom fail'
'Neath Robespierre, or raise his head anew ?
Nay, Voltaire's teaching never cured the heart:
The lack of human feeling blots his art.
When most his phrase with indignation burns,
Still to the gallery his face he turns.

B.

You bear him hard. Men are of common stuff,
Each hath some fault, and he had faults enough :
But of all slanderers that ever were
A virtuous critic is the most unfair.
In greatness ever is some good to see;
And what is character, unless it be
The colour of persistent qualities,
That, like a ground in painting, balances
All hues and forms, combining with one tone
Whatever lights or shades are on it thrown ?
Now Voltaire had of Nature a rich ground,
Two virtues rarely in conjunction found :
Industry, which no pedant could excel,
He matched with gaiety inexhaustible;

And with heroic courage held these fast,
 As sailors nail their colours to the mast,
 With ruling excellence atoning all.
 Though, for the rest, he still for praise may call;
 Prudent to gam, as generous to share
Le superflui) chose si necessaire ;
 To most a rare companion above scorn,
 To not a few a kind, devoted friend
 Through his long battling life, which in the end
 He strove with good works richly to adoin.
 I have admired, and why should I abuse
 A man who can so long and well amuse ?

A.

To some Parisian art there 's this objection,
 'Tis mediocrity pushed to perfection.

B.

' Judge not, ' say I, ' and ye shall not be judged!'

A.

Let me say, ' praise men, if ye would be praised; '
 Let your unwholesome flattery flow unjudged,
 And with ungrudging measure shall men pour
 Their stifling homage back till ye be crazed,
 And sane men humour you as fools past cure.
 But these wise maxims deal not with the dead,
 'Tis by example that the young are led,
 And judgement owes its kindness but to them;
 Nor will I praise, call you me hard or nice,
 One that degraded art, and varnished vice.
 They that praise ill thereby themselves condemn,

B.

Beranger could not praise.

A.

Few are who can;
 Not he: if ever he assay'd to impart
 A title loftier than his own renown,
 Native irreverence defied his art,
 His fingers soil'd the lustre of his crown.
 Here he adored what he was envious of,
 The vogue and dazzling fashion of the man.
 But man's true praise, the poet's praise, is love.

B.

And that, peihaps, was hardly his affair . . .
 Pray, now, what set you talking of Voltahe?

A.

This only, that in weeding out my shelves,
 In fatherly regard for babes upgrown,
 Until they learn to garden for themselves,
 Much as I like to keep my sets entne,
 When I came out to you I had just thrown
 Three of his precious works behind the fire.

XIV

TO ROBERT BURNS

AN EPISTLE ON INSTINCT

I

THOU art a poet, Robbie Burns,
 Master of words and witty turns,
 Of lilting songs and merry yarns,
 Drinking and kissing:
 There's much in all thy small concerns.
 But more that's missing,

2

The wisdom of thy common sense,
Thy honest hate of vain pretence,
Thy love and wide benevolence
Full often lead thee
Where feeling is its own defence;
Yet while I read thee,

3

It seems but chance that all our race
Trode not the path of thy disgrace,
And, living freely to embrace
The moment's pleasure,
Snatch'd not a kiss of Nature's face
For all her treasure.

4

The feelings soft, the spirits gay
Entice on such a flowery way,
And sovran youth in high heyday
Hath such a fashion
To glorify the bragging sway
Of sensual passion.

5

But rakes Chance and Fortune blind
Had not the power:—Eternal Mind
Led man upon a way designed,
By strait selection
Of pleasurable ways, to find
Severe perfection.

6

For Nature did not idly spend
Pleasure: she ruled it should attend
On every act that doth amend
Our life's condition:

'Tis therefore not well-being's end,
But its fruition.

7

Beasts that inherited delight
In what promoted health or might,
Survived their cousins in the fight:
If some—like Adam—
Prefer'd the wrong tree to the right,
The devil had 'em.

8

So when man's Reason took the reins,
She found that she was saved her pains;
She had but to approve the gams
Of agelong inscience,
And spin it fresh into her biains
As moral conscience.

9

But Instinct in the beasts that live
Is of three kinds; (Nature did give
To man three shakings in her sieve)—
The first is Racial,
The second Self-preservative,
The third is Social.

10

Without the first no race could be,
So 'tis the strongest of the three;
Nay, of such forceful tyranny
'Tis hard to attune it,
Because 'twas never made to agree
To serve the unit:

ii

Art will not picture it, its name
In common talk is utter shame:
And yet hath Reason learn'd to tame
 Its conflagration
Into a sacramental flame
 Of consecration.

12

Those hundred thousand years, ah me!
Of budding soul! What slow degree,
With aim so dim, so true! We see.
 Now that we know them,
Our humble cave-folk ancestry,
 How much we owe them :

13

While with the savage beasts around
They fought at odds, yet underground
Their miserable life was sound;
 Their loves and quarrels
Did well th' ideal bases found
 Of art and morals:

14

One prime distinction, Good and I ll.,
Was all their notion, all their skill;—
But Unity stands next to Nil;—
 Want of analysis
Saved them from doubts that wreck the Will
 With pale paralysis

15

In vain philosophers dispute
' Is Good or Pleasure our pursuit ?'—

The fruit likes man, not man the fruit;
The good that likes him,
The good man's pleasure 'tis to do 't;
That's how it stnkes him.

16

Tho' Science hide beneath her feet
The point where moral reasonings meet,
The vicious circle is complete;
There is no lodgement
Save Aristotle's own retreat,
The just man's judgement.

17

And if thou wert not that just man,
Wild Robin, born to crown his plan,
We shall not for that matter ban
Thy petty treason,
Nor closely thy defection scan
From highest Reason.

18

Thou might'st have lived like Robin Hood
Waylaying Abbots in the wood,
Doing whate'er thee-seemed good,
The law defying,
And 'mong the people's heroes stood
Living and dying:

19

Yet better bow than his thou bendest,
And well the poor man thou befnendest,
And oftentime an ill amendest;
When, if truth touch thee,
Sharply the arrow home thou sendest;
There's none can match thee.

20

So pity it is thou knew'st the teen
Of sad remorse : the Might-have-been
Shall not o'ercloud thy merry scene
 With vain repentance,
Nor forfeit from thy spirit keen
 My friendly sentence.

XV

THE PORTRAIT OF A GRANDFATHER

WITH mild eyes agaze, and lips ready to speak,
Whereon the yearning of love, the warning of wisdom
 plays,

One portrait ever charms me and teaches me when I
 seek:

It is of him whom I, remembering my young days,
Imagine fathering my father; when he, in sonship afore,
Liv'd honouring and obeying the eyes now pictured
 agaze,

 The lips ready to speak, that promise but speak no
 more.

O high parental claim, that were not but for the know-
 ing

O fateful bond of duty, O more than body that bore,
 The smile that guides me to right, the gaze that fol-
 lows my going,

How had I stray'd without thee! and yet how few will
 seek

The spirit-hands, that heaven, in tender-free bestowing,
 Holds to her children, to guide the wandering and
 aid the weak.

And Thee ! ah what of thee, thou lover of men ? if truly
A painter had stell'd thee there, with thy lips ready to
speak,

In all-fathering passion to souls enchanted newly,
—Tenderer call than of sire to son, or of lover to
maiden,—

Ever ready to speak to us, if we will hearken duly,
'Come, O come unto me, ye weary and heavy-laden!'

[1880.]

OCTOBER
AND OTHER POEMS

TO
GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
JAN CHRISTIAAN SMUTS
SOLDIER, STATESMAN, & SEER
WITH THE AUTHOR'S
HOMAGE

I

OC10BKR

APRIL adance in play
met with his lover May
where she came garlanded.
The blossoming boughs overhead
were thnll'd to bursting by
the dazzle from the sky
and the wild music there
that shook the odorous air.

Each moment some new birth
hastened to deck the earth
in the gay sunbeams.
Between their kisses dreams :
And dream and kiss were rife
with laughter of mortal life.

But this late day of golden fall
is still as a picture upon a wall
or a poem in a book lying open unread.
Or whatever else is shrined
when the Virgin hath vanished :
Footsteps of eternal Mind
on the path of the dead

II

THE FLOWERING TREE

WHAT Fairy fanned my dreams
 while I slept in the sun ?
As if a flowering tree
 were standing over me :
Its young stem strong and lithe
 went branching overhead
And willowy sprays around
 fell tasseling to the ground
All with wild blossom gay
 as is the cherry in May
When her fresh flaunt of leaf
 gives crowns of golden green.

The sunlight was enmesh'd
 in the shifting splendour
And I saw through on high
 to soft lakes of blue bky:
Ne'er was mortal slumber
 so lapt in luxury.
Rather—Endymion—
 would I sleep in the sun
Neath the trees divinely
 with day's azure above
When my love of Beauty
 is met by beauty's love.

So I slept enchanted
 under my loving tree
Till from his late resting
 the sweet songster of night

Rousing awaken'd me :
 Then ! this—the birdis note—
Was the voice of thy throat
 which thou gav'st me to kiss.

III

NOEL: CHRISTMAS eve, 1913

Pax hominibus bone voluntatis

A FROSTY Christmas Eve
 when the stars were shining
Fared I forth alone
 where westward falls the hill,
And from many a village
 in the water'd valley
Distant music reached me
 peals of bells aringing:
The constellated sounds
 ran sprinkling on earth's floor
As the dark vault above
 with stars was spangled o'er.

Then sped my thought to keep
 that first Christmas of all
When the shepherds watching
 by their folds ere the dawn
Heard music in the fields
 and marveling could not tell
Whether it were angels
 or the bright stars singing.

Now blessed be the tow'rs
 that crown England so fair
 That stand up strong in prayer
 unto God for our souls:
 Blessed be their founders
 (said I) an' our country folk
 Who are ringing for Chnst
 in the belfries to-night
 With arms lifted to clutch
 the rattling ropes that race
 Into the dark above
 and the mad romping din.

But to me heard afar
 it was starry music
 Angels' song, comforting
 as the comfort of Chiist
 When he spake tenderly
 to his sorrowful flock :
 The old words came to me
 by the riches of time
 Mellow'd and transfigured
 as I stood on the hill
 Hearn'ning in the aspect
 of th' eternal silence.

IV

IN DER FREMDE

AH ! wild-heaited wand'rer
 far in the world away
 Restless nor knowest why
 only thou canst not stay

And now turnest trembling
 hearing the wind to sigh :
 'Twas thy lover calling
 whom thou didst leave forby.

So faint and yet so far
 so far and yet so fain —
 ' Return belov'd to me'
 but thou must onward strain:
 Thy trembling is in vain
 as thy wand'ring shall be.
 What so well thou lovest
 thou nevermore shalt see.

V

THE PHILOSOPHER AND HIS MISTRESS

WE watch'd the wintry moon
 Suffer her full eclipse
 Riding at night's high noon
 Beyond the earth's ellipse.

The conquering shadow quell'd
 Her splendour in its robe:
 And darkling we beheld
 A dim and lurid globe ;

Yet felt thereat no dread,
 Nor waited we to see
 The sullen dragon fled,
 The heav'nly Queen go free.

So if my heart of pain
 One hour o'ershadow thine,
 I fear for thee no stain,
 Thou wilt come forth and shine:

And far my sorrowing shade
 Will slip to empty space
 Invisible, but made
 Happier for that embrace.

VI

NARCISSUS

ALMIGHTY wondrous everlasting
 Whether in a cradle of astral whirlfire
 Or globed in a piercing star thou slumb'rest
 The impassive body of God :
 Thou deep i' the core of earth—Almighty !—
 From numbing stress and gloom profound
 Madest escape in life desirous
 To embroider her thin-spun robe.

'Twas down in a wood—they tell—
 In a running water thou sawest thyself
 Or leaning over a pool: The sedges
 Were twinn'd at the mirror's brim
 The sky was there and the trees—Almighty !—
 A bird of a bird and white clouds floating
 And seeing thou knewest thine own image
 To love it beyond all else.

Then wondering didst thou speak
 Of beauty and wisdom of art and worship
 Didst build the fanes of Zeus and Apollo
 The high cathedrals of Christ:
 All that we love is thine—Almighty!—
 Heart-felt music and lyric song
 Language the eager grasp of knowledge
 All that we think is thine.

But whence?—Beauteous everlasting!—
 Whence and whither? Hast thou mistaken?
 Or dost forget? Look again! Thou seest
 A shadow and not thyself.

VII

OUR LADY

I

GODDESS azure-mantled and aureoled
 That standing barefoot upon the moon
 Or throned as a Queen of the earth
 Tranquilly smilest to hold
 The Child-god in thine arms,
 Whence thy glory? Art not she
 The country maiden of Galilee
 Simple in dowerless poverty
 Who from humble cradle to grave
 Hadst no thought of this wonder?

 When to man dull of heart
 Dawn'd at length graciously
 Thy might of Motherhood
 The starry Truth beam'd on his home;
 Then with insight exalted he gave thee

The trappings—Lady—wherewith his art
 Dehgteth to picture his spirit to sense
 And that grace is immortal.

Fount of creative Love
 Mother of the Word eternal
 Atoning man with God:
 Who set thee apart as a garden enclosed
 From Nature's all-producing wilds
 To rear the richest fruit o' the Life
 Ever continuing out from Him
 Urgent since the beginning.

II

BEHOLD ! Man setteth thine image in the
 height of Heaven
 And hallowing his untemper'd love
 Crowneth and throneth thee ador'd
 (Tranquilly joyous to hold
 The man-child in thine arms)
 God-like apart from conflict to save thee
 To guard thy weak caressive beauty
 With incontaminate jewels of soul
 Courage, patience, and self-devotion:
 All this glory he gave thee.

Secret and slow is Nature
 Imperceptibly moving
 With surely determinate aim :
 To woman it fell to be early in prime
 Ready to labour, mould, and cherish
 The delicate head of all Production
 The wistful late-maturing boy
 Who made Knowing of Being.

Therefore art thou ador'd
 Mother of God in man
 Natunng nurse of power:
 They who adore not thee shall perish
 But thou shalt keep thy path of joy
 Envied of Angels because the All-father
 Called thee to mother his nascent Word
 And complete the creation.

VIII

THE CURFEW TOWER

THRO' innocent eyes at the world awond'ring
 Nothing spake to me more superbly
 Than the round bastion of Windsor's wall

That warding the Castle's southern angle
 An old inheritor of Norman prowess
 Was cali'd by the folk the Curfew Tow'r.

Above the masonry's rugged courses
 A turreted clock of Caroline fashion
 Told time to the town in black and gold.

It charmed the hearts of Henry's scholars
 As kingly a mentor of English story
 As Homer's poem is of Ilion:

Nor e'er in the landscape look'd it fairer
 Than when we saw its white bulk halo'd
 In a lattice of slender scaffoldings.

Month by month on the airy platforms
 Workmen labour'd hacking and hoisting
 Till again the tower was stript to the sun:

The old tow'r ? Nay a new tow'r stood theie
 From footing to battlemented skyline
 And topt with a cap the slice of a cone

Archaeologic and counterfeited
 The smoothest thing in all the high-street
 As Eton scholars to-day may see:

They—wherever else they find their wonder
 And feed their boyhood on Time's enchantment—
 See never the Tow'r that spoke to me.

IX

GHOSIS

MAZING around my mind like moths at a shaded candle
 In my heart like lost bats in a cave fluttering,
 Mock ye the charm whereby I thought reverently to lay
 you,
 When to the wall I nail'd your reticent effigys ?

X

HELL AND HATE

Two demons thrust their arms out over the worl^l,
 Hell with a ruddy torch of fire,
 And Hate with gasping mouth,
 Stnmvg to seize two children fair
 Who play'd on the upper curve of the Earth.

Their shapes were vast as the thoughts of man,
 But the Earth was small
 As the moon's rim appeareth
 Scann'd through an optic glass.

The younger child stood erect on the Earth
As a charioteer in a car
Or a dancer with arm upraised;
Her whole form—barely clad
From feet to golden head—
Leapt brightly against the uttermost azure,
Whereon the stars were splashes of light
Dazed in the gulping beds of space.

The elder might have been stell'd to show
The lady who led my boyish love;
But her face was graver than e'er to me
When I look'd in her eyes long ago,
And the hair on her shoulders fal'n
Nested its luminous biown
I' the downy spring of her wings :
Her figure aneath was screened by the Earth,
Whereoff—so small that was
No footing for her could be—
She appeared to be sailing free
T the glide and poise of her flight.

Then knew I the Angel Faith,
Who was guarding human Love.

Happy were both, of peaceful mien,
Contented as mankind longeth to be,
Not merry as children are;
And showed no fear of the Fiends' pursuit,
As ever those demons clutched in vain ;
And I, who had fear'd awhile to see
Such gentleness in such jéopardy,

Lost fear myself; for I saw the foes
 Were slipping aback and had no hold
 On the round Earth that sped its course.

The painted figures never could move,
 But the artist's mind was there:
 The longer I look'd the more I knew
 They were falling, falling away below
 To the darkness out of sight.

December 16, 1913.

XI

THE CHIVALRY OF THE SEA

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES FISHER,
 LATE STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD,
 LOS 1 IN THE ' INVINCIBLE '

OVER the warring waters, beneath the wandering skies,
 The heart of Britain roameth, the Chivalry of the sea,
 Where Spring never bringeth a flower, nor bird singeth
 in a tree ;

Far, afar, O beloved, beyond the sight of our eyes,
 Over the warring waters, beneath the stormy skies.

Staunch and valiant-hearted, to whom our toil were play,
 Ye man with amour'd patience the bulwarks night and day,
 Or on your iron coursers plough shuddering through the
 Bay,

Or neath the deluge drive the skirmishing sharks of war:
 Venturous boys who leapt on the pinnace and row'd
 from shore,

A mother's tear in the eye, a swift farewell to say,
 And a great glory at heart that none can take away.

Seldom is your home-coming; for aye your pennon flies
 In unrecorded exploits on the tumultuous wave;
 Till, in the storm of battle, fast-thundering upon the foe.
 Ye add your kindred names to the heroes of long-ago,
 And mid the blasting wrack, in the glad sudden death
 of the brave,
 Ye are gone to return no more.—Idly our tears arise;
 Too proud for praise as ye he in your unvisited grave,
 The wide-wai ring water, under the starry skies.

XII

GHELUVELT

EPITAPH ON THE WORCESTERS. OCTOBFER 31, 1914
 ASKESI thou of these graves? They'll tell thee,
 O stranger, in England
 How we Worcesters he where we redeem'd the
 battle.

XIII

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

September, 1917

FOOL that I was: my heart was sore,
 Yea sick for the myriad wounded men,
 The maim'd in the war : I had grief for each one:
 And I came in the gay September sun
 To the open smile of Trafalgar Square;
 Wheie many a lad with a limb fordone
 Loll'd by the lion-guarded column
 That holdeth Nelson statued thereon
 Upright in the air.

The Parliament towers and the Abbey towers,
 The white Horseguards and grey Whitehall,
 He looketh on all,
 Past Somerset House and the river's bend
 To the pillar'd dome of St. Paul,
 That slumbers confessing God's solemn blessing
 On England's glory, to keep it ours—•
 While children true her prowess renew
 And throng from the ends of the earth to defend
 Freedom and honour—till Earth shall end.

The gentle unjealous Shakespeare, I trow,
 In his country tomb of peaceful fame,
 Must feel exiled from life and glow
 If he think of this man with his warrior claim,
 Who looketh o'ei London as if 'twere his own,
 As he standeth in stone, aloft and alone,
 Sailing the sky with one arm and one eye.

XIV

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1917

MANY happy returns, sweet Babe, of the day
 Didst not thou sow good seed in the world, thy field ?
 Cam'st thou to save the poor ? Thy poor yet pine.
 Thousands to-day suffer death-pangs like thine ;
 Our jewels of life are spilt on the ground as dross ;
 Ten thousand mothers stand beneath the cross.
Peace to men of goodwill was the angels' song :
 Now there is fiercer war, worse filth and wiong.
 If thou didst sow good seed, is this the yield ?
 Shall not thy folk be quell'd in dead dismay ?

Nay, with a larger hope we are fed and heal'd
 Than e'er was reveal'd to the saints who died so strong;
 For while men slept the seed had quicken'd unseen.
 England is as a field whereon the corn is green.

Of trial and dark tribulation this vision is born—
 Britain as a field green with the springing corn.
 While we slumber'd the seed was growing unseen.
 Happy returns of the day, dear Babe, we say.

ENGLAND has buried her sins with her fathers' bones.
 Thou shalt be throned on the ruin kingly thrones.
 The wish of thine heart is rooted in carnal mind ;
 For good seed didst thou sow in the world thy field •
 It shall ripen in gold and harvest an hundredfold.
 Peace shall come as a flood upon all mankind ;
 Love shall comfort and succour the poor that are pined.

Wherever our gentle children are wander'd and sped,
 Simple apostles thine of the world to come,
 They carried the living seed of the living Bread,
 The angel-song and the gospel of Christendom,
 That while the nation slept was springing unseen.

So tho' we be sorely stricken we feel no dread:
 Our thousand sons suffer death-pangs like thine:
 It shall ripen in gold and harvest an hundredfold:
 Peace and Love shall hallow our care and teen,
 Shall bind in fellowship all the folk of the earth
 To kneel at thy cradle, Babe, and bless thy birth.

Ring we the bells up and down in country and town,
 And keep the old feast unholpen of preacher or priest,
 Wishing thee happy returns, and thy Mother May,
 Ever happier and happier returns, dear CHRIST, of thy
 day!

XV

POOR CHILD

ON a mournful day
When my heart was lonely,
O'er and o'er my thought
Conned but one thing only,

Thinking how I lost
Wand'nng in the wild-wood
The companion self
Of my careless childhood.

How, poor child, it was
I shall ne'er discover,
But 'twas just when he
Grew to be thy lover,

With thine eyes of trust
And thy mirth, whereunder
All the world's hope lay
In thy heart of wonder.

Now, beyond regrets
And faint memories of thee,
Saddest is, poor child,
That I cannot love thee.

XVI

TO PERCY BUCK

FOLK alien to the Muse have hemm'd us round
And fiends have suck'd our blood: our best delight
Is poison'd, and the year's infective blight
Hath made almost a silence of sweet sound.

But you, what fortune, Percy, have you found
 At Harrow ? doth fair hope your toil requite ?
 Doth beauty win her praise and truth her right,
 Or hath the good seed fal'n on stony ground ?

Ply the art ever nobly, single-soul'd
 Like Brahms, or as you ruled in Wells erewhile,
 —Nor yet the memory of that zeal is cold—
 Where lately I, who love the purer style,
 Enter'd, and felt your spirit as of old
 Beside me, listening in the chancel-aisle.

1904.

XVII

TO HARRY ELLIS WOOLDRIDGE

LOVE and the Muse have left their home, now bare
 Of memorable beauty, all is gone,
 The dedicated charm of Yattendon,
 Which thou wert apt, dear Hal, to build and shaie.

What noble shades are Hitting, who while-cre
 Haunted the ivy'd walls, where time ran on
 In sanctities of joy by reverence won,
 Music and choral grace and studies fair!

These on some kindlier field may Fate restore,
 And may the old house prosper, dispossess
 Of her whose equal it can nevermore

Hold till it crumble: O nay ! and the door
 Will moulder ere it open on a guest
 To match thee in thy wisdom and thy jest.

October, 1905.

XVIII

FORTUNATUS NIMIUM

I HAVE lain in the sun
I have toil'd as I might
I have thought as I would
And now it is night.

My bed full of sleep
My heart of content
For friends that I met
The way that I went.

I welcome fatigue
While frenzy and care
Like thin summer clouds
Go melting in air.

To dream as I may
And awake when I will
With the song of the birds
And the sun on the hill.

Or death—were it death—
To what should I wake
Who loved in my home
All life for its sake ?

What good have I wrought ;
I laugh to have learned
That joy cannot come
Unless it be earned;

For a happier lot
Than God giveth me
It never hath been
Nor ever shall be.

XIX

DEMOCRITUS

JOY of your opulent atoms ! wouldst thou daie
 Say that Thought also of atoms self-became,
 Waving to soul as light had the eye in aim ;
 And so with things of bodily sense compare
 Those native notions that the heavens declare,
 Space and Time, Beauty and God—Praise we his
 name !—

Real ideas, that on tongues of flame
 From out mind's cooling paste leapt unaware ?

Thy spirit, Democritus, orb'd in the eterne
 Illimitable galaxy of night
 Shineth undimm'd where greater splendours burn
 Of sage and poet: by their influence bright
 We are held; and pouring from his quenchless urn
 Christ with immortal love-beams laves the height.

1919.

NEW VERSE

I

BUCH DER LIEDER

BE these the selfsame verses
That once when I was young
Charm'd me with dancing magic
To love their foreign tongue,

Delicate buds of passion,
Gems of a master's art,
That broke forth rivalling Nature
In love-songs of the heart;

Like fresh leaves of the woodland
Whose trembling screens would house
The wanton birdies courting
Upon the springing boughs ?

Alas, how now they are wither'd!
And fallen from the skies
In yellowy tawny crumple
Their tender wreckage lies, .

And all their ravisht beauty
Strewn 'neath my feet to-day
Rustles as I go striding
Upon my wintry way.

II

EMILY BRONTE

'Du hast Diamanten '

THOU hadst all Passion's splendor,
 Thou hadst abounding store
 Of heaven's eternal jewels,
 Beloved ; what wouldst thou more ?

Thine was the frolic freedom
 Of creatures coy and wild,
 The melancholy of wisdom,
 The innocence of a child,

The mailM will of the warrior,
 That buckled in thy breast
 Humility as of Francis,
 The self-surrender of Christ;

And of God's cup thou drankest
 The unmmgled wine of Love,
 Which makes poor mortals giddy
 When they but sip thereof.

What was't to thee thy pathway
 So rugged mean and hard,
 Whereon when Death surprised thee
 Thou gav'st him no regard ?

What was't to thee, enamour'd
 As a red rose of the sun,
 If of thy myriad lovers
 Thou never sawest one ?

Nor if of all thy lovers
 That are and were to be
 None ever had their vision,
 O beloved, of thee,

Until thy silent glory
 Went forth from earth alone,
 Where like a star thou gleamest
 From thine immortal throne.

III

LOW BAROMETER

THE south-wind strengthens to a gale,
 Across the moon the clouds fly fast,
 The house is smitten as with a flail,
 The chimney shudders to the blast.

On such a night, when Air has loosed
 Its guardian grasp on blood and brain,
 Old terrors then of god or ghost
 Creep from their caves to life again;

And Reason kens he herits in
 A haunted house. Tenants unknown
 Assert their squalid lease of sin
 With earlier title than his own.

Unbodied presences, the pack'd
 Pollution and remorse of Time,
 Shpp'd from oblivion reenact
 The horrors of unhouseld crime.

Some men would quell the thing with prayer
Whose sightless footsteps pad the floor,
Whose fearful trespass mounts the stair
Or bursts the lock'd forbidden door.

Some have seen corpses long interr'd
Escape from hallowing control,
Pale charnel forms—nay ev'n have heard
The shrilling of a troubled soul,

That wanders till the dawn hath cross'd
The dolorous dark, or Earth hath wound
Closer her storm-spredd cloke, and thrust
The baleful phantoms underground.

IV

SORROW and joy, two sisters coy,
Aye for our hearts are fighting :
The half our years are teen and tears,
And half are mere delighting.

So when joy's cup is brimm'd full up,
Take no thought o' the morrow:
So fine's your bliss, ye shall not miss
To have your turn wi' sorrow.

And she with ruth will teach you truth,
She is man's very med'cm :
She'll drive us straight to heavV's high gate,
Ay, she can stuff our heads in.

Blush not nor blench with either wench,
Make neither biag nor pother:
God send you, son, enough of one
And not too much o' t'other,

V

THE TRAMPS

A SCHOOLBOY lay one night a-bed
Under his window wide,
When dusk is lovelier than day
In the high summertide ;

The jasmin neath the casement throng'd
Its ivory stars abloom;
With freaking peas and mignonette
Their perfume fill'd the room:

Across the garden and beyond
He look'd out on the skies,
And through black elmen boughs afar
Watch'd where the moon should rise :

A warm rain fed the thirsty earth,
Drops patter'd from the eaves
And from the tall trees as the shower
Fell lispig on their leaves:

His heart was full, and pleasant thoughts
Made music in his mind,
Like separate songs of birds, that are
By general joy combined.

It seem'd the hour had gathered up
For every sense a bliss
To crown the faith of all desire
With one assuaging kiss;

So that he fought with sleep to hold
The rapture while he might,
Lest it should sink and drowning die
Into the blank of night;

Nor kennM it was no passing thing
Nor ever should be pass'd
But with him bide a joy to be
As long as Life should last.

For though young thoughts be quite forgone,
The pleasure of their dream
Can mesh them in its living mood
And draw them in the stream:

So I can fancy when I will
That there I lie intent
To hear the gentle whispering rain
And drink the jasmin scent:

And then there sounds a distant tread
Of men, that night who strode
Along the highway step by step
Approaching down the road,

A company of three or four
That hastening home again
After a Sabbath holiday
Came talking in the rain :

Aloof from all my world and me
They pass aneath the wall,
Till voice and footstep die away
And into silence fall:

Into the maze of my delight
Those blind intruders walk;
And ever I wonder who they be
And of what things they talk.

VI

THE GREAT ELM

FROM a friend's house had I gone forth,
And wandering at will
O'er a wide country West and North
Without or vale or hill,
I came beneath the broken edge
Of higher sloping ground,
Where an old Giant from the ledge
O'erlook'd the landscape round;

A towering Elm that stood alone,
Last of an ancient rank,
And had great barky roots out-thrown
To buttress up the bank;
His rough trunk of two hundred years
In girth a pillar gave
As massive as the Norman piers
That rise in Durham's nave;

But this for stony roof and wall
 Uphving timber held,
 Where never in its forest tall
 Had woodman lopp'd or fellM:
 Above its crown no wind so fierce
 Had warp'd the shapely green,
 And scarce with bated breath might pierce
 Its caves of leafy scieen.

It seem'd in that daik foliage laid
 Suspended thought must dwell;
 As in those boughs that overshadow
 The river-sides of Hell,
 That fabled Elm of Acheron,
 Within the gates of death,
 Which once Æneas look'd upon—
 As Virgil witnesseth—
 Whose leafage the last refuge was
 And haven of mortal dreams,
 That clusteiiing clung thereto because
 They might not pass the streams.

Now suddenly was I aware
 That on the grassy shelf
 A spirit was waiting for me there,
 A coy seraphic elf—
 My other half-self, whom I miss
 In life's familiar moods,
 And ken of only by his kiss
 In sacred solitudes ;
 And for that rare embrace have boine
 With Fate and things distraught,
 The wanhope of my days forlorn,
 My sins, have counted nought.

He is of such immortal kind,
His inwit is so clean,
So conscient with the eternal Mind—
The self of things unseen,
That when within his world I win,
Nor suffer mortal change,
I am of such immortal km
No dream is half so strange.

Alas, I have done myself great wrong
Truckling to human care,
Am shamed to ken myself so strong
And nobler than I dare :
And yet so seldom doth he grant
The comfoit of his grace,
So fickle is he and inconstant
To any time or place,
That since he chose that place and time
To come again to me,
I'd hold him fast by magic rhyme
Forever to that tree :
As there in lavish self-delight,
Godlike and single-souled,
I lay until the dusk of night
Came creeping o'er the wold,

VII

THE SLEEPING MANSION

As our car rustled swiftly
along the village lane,
we caught sight for a moment
of the old house again,

NEW VERSE

Which once I made my home in—•
 ev'n as a soul may dwell -
 enamouring the body
 that she loveth so well :

But I long since had left it ;
 what fortune now befalls
 finds me on other meadows
 by other trees and walls.

The place looked blank and empty,
 a sleeper's witless face
 which to his mind's enchantment
 is numb, and gives no trace.

And to that slumbering mansion
 was I come as a dream,
 to cheer her in her stupor
 and loneliness extreme.

I knew what sudden wonder
 I brought her in my flight;
 what rapturous joy possessed her,
 what peace and soft delight.

VIII

VISION

How should I be to Love unjust
 Since Love hath been so kind to me ?
 O how forget thy tender trust
 Or slight the bond that set me free ?

How should thy spirit's blithe embrace,
 Thy loyalty, have been given in vain,
 From the first beckoning of thy grace
 That made a child of me again,
 And since hath still my manhood led
 Through scathe and trouble hour by hour,
 And in probation perfected
 The explicit fruit of such a flower ?

Not ev'n the Apostles, in the days
 They walked with Christ, lov'd him so well
 As we may now, who ken his praise
 Reading the story that they tell,
 Writ by them when their vision grew
 And he, who fled and thrice denied
 Christ to his face, was proven true
 And gladly for His memory died :
 So strong the Vision, there was none
 O'er whom the Fisher's net was cast,
 Ev'n of the fearfullest not one
 Who would have left Him at the last.

So 'tis with me; the time hath clear'd
 Not dulPd my loving: I can see
 Love's passing ecstasies endear'd
 In aspects of eternity :
 I am like a miser—I can say
 That having hoarded all my gold
 I must grow richer every day
 And die possess'd of wealth untold.

NOTE TO FIRST EDITION OF *SHORTER POEMS*

The poems contained in Book I are my final selection from a volume published in 1873. Those of Book II are from a pamphlet published in 1879. Some of all these are in places corrected. Book III is made up of poems from a pamphlet published in 1880 ; to which are added others of about the same date. Some of these have already appeared in a volume printed for me by my friend the Rev. C. H. Daniel, in 1884. No. 6 was written to a tune by Dr. Howard. No. 19 is a pretty close translation of a poem by Theophile Gautier, which is itself a translation from the English by Thomas Moore in The Epicurean. All the poems in Book IV are now printed for the first time. No. 9 is a translation from a madrigal by Michael Angelo (No. VIII in Guasti). It is from my Comedy The Humours of the Court, in which also No. 16 occurs. No. II is from a Sicilian nona stanza, the first poem in Trucchi's Poesie Italiane inedite. No. 3 is but the initial fragment of a poem which took another shape.

R. B.

YATTENDON, 1890.

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION OF *SHORTER POEMS*

Book V was printed by Mr. Daniel in 1893 and published contemporaneously with an American edition,

according to the requirements of the international copyright law. In passing the proofs of this edition I have altered the first line of No. IO: which being actually descriptive of a robin's song, now appears as such. It was first printed Pink-throated linnet. I have also written and for or in two lines of V. 17, and amended l. 5.

R. B., 1894.

NOTE TO VOL. II OF POETICAL WORKS

In revising my 'shorter poems' for this edition I have corrected a few misprints which seem to have run through the earlier editions; and, though I have refrained from the vanity of trying to improve old work which has been so often printed I have amended one or two lines which seemed peculiarly bad. I hope that the 'new poems' which I have gathered to fill this second volume up to the size of the first, may be found in some respects better than the old. Eclogues 1 and 3 have already appeared in the Cornhill Magazine, and the poems numbered severally 6, 14, 15, and 21, in Mr. Elkm Mathews' Shilling Garland, No. II. 1896. The rest are printed here for the first time; they are of various dates, some of them 'were written this year for this volume.

R. B., Sept. 1899.

NOTE LATER POEMS

Most of these had already been published before they were included in The Poetical Works of Robert Bridges,

excluding the Eight Dramas (*Oxford*, 1912). Thus I, in the *Monthly Review*, Feb. 1903 ; 2, *Country Life*, 1906; 3, *Volunteer Haversack*, 1902; 4, *Poems by A. Buckton* (*Daniel Press*, 1901); 5, 6, *Saturday Review*; 7, *The Sheaf*, June 1902; 8, *English Review*, March 1911 ; 9, *Academy*, Apr, I, 1905; 10, II, *Monthly Review*, June 1904; 13, *Speaker*; 14, *Monthly Review*, March 1902 ; 15, *Wayfarer's Love*, 1904.

NOTE

OCTOBER & OTHER POEMS

Nos. I to 10 in the present volume (together with the two humorous pieces omitted here) were privately printed by Mr. Hornby in 1914. These twelve poems were afterwards published in October and other Poems (Hnneman 1920) where they formed the first section. No. 3 Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913 was sent to the King at Christmas that year, and His Majesty sent it to The Times for publication. The following notes on this poem and on No. 10 are quoted from the author's Notes at the end of October and other Poems.

' Poem 3.—As the metre or scansion of this poem was publicly discussed and wrongly analysed by some who admired its effects, it may be well to explain that it and the three other poems in similar measure, Flowering Tree, In der Fremde, The West Front, are strictly syllabic verse on the model left by Milton in Samson Agonistes; except that his system, 'which depended on exclusion of extra-metrical syllables (that is, syllables which did not admit of resolution by 'elision' into a disyllabic scheme) from all places but the last, still admitted them in

that place, thereby forbidding inversion of the last foot. It is natural to conclude that, had he pursued his inventions', his next step would have been to get rid of this anomaly ; and if that is done, the result is the new rhythms that these poems exhibit. In this sort of prosody rhyme is admitted, like alliteration, as an ornament at will; it is not needed. My four experiments are confined to the twelve-syllable 'verse. It is probably agreed that there are possibilities in that long six-foot line which English poetry has not fully explored.'

Poem 10, ' Hell and Hate.—This poem was written December 16, 1913 It is the description of a little picture hanging in my bedroom, it had been painted for me as a New Tear's gift more than thirty years before, and I described it partly because I never exactly knew 'what it meant. When the 'war broke out I remembered my poem and sent it to The Times, 'where it appeared in the Literary Supplement September 24, 1914.'

NOTE

NEW VERSE

In the Preface to New Verse Robert Bridges explains his grouping of the different versifications into four sections, and he says of Part III (the only section from which poems have been taken for this book) that it is 'all in recognisable old style'. Some of the selected poems had already been published. No. I, Published in the Yale Review, July 1923; and contemporaneously, with a translation into Greek Elegiacs by Francis Pember, In the Nineteenth Century. 2, Published in the London Mercury, June 1923, 6, Published in the Cornhill Magazine, August 1923.

M. M. B., 1931.

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