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POETRY AND APPRECIATION

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MEANING AND STYLE

MODERN ESSAYS, FIRST SERIES, 1939-1941

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POETRY AND APPRECIATION

A SELECTION OF POEMS AND PASSAGES FROM
POETS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY
TO THE PRESENT DAY, FOR CRITICAL
APPRECIATION

BY

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'They wholly mistake the nature of criticism who think its business is principally to find fault. Criticism, as it was first instituted by Aristotle, was meant a standard of judging well; the chiefest part of which is, to observe those excellencies which should delight a reasonable reader.'

JOHN DRYDEN

'What we cannot understand, it is very common, and indeed a very natural thing, for us to undervalue.'

J. G. LOGKHART

'The learning to read poetry takes as much patience and concentration as the learning to write it.'

G. DAY LEWIS

PREFACE

THE aim of this book is threefold : to encourage exact and careful reading ; to develop critical appreciation and discrimination by a detailed analysis of whole poems, and passages taken from longer poems ; to show the development of English poetry from the fourteenth century to the present time.

In the school curriculum of to-day the classics are losing their former position, and, as the editors of *The Poet's Tongue* observe, ' much of the training in the discipline of language which used to fall to Latin and Greek devolves on the English teacher.' Though it is recognised that English might take the place of the classics in training the mind, numerous attractions—news-papers, advertising, magazines, films—exert an ever-increasing influence outside the class-room and make such training more than usually difficult. The popular Press encourages rapid, uncritical reading, and imparts information, which is neither reliable nor profitable, upon a host of subjects. Such reading is too easily assimilated, and gives no real knowledge of anything. Moreover, it tends to make the reader imagine that English is a superficial subject, and that literature can be read carelessly. This slackness of attention may be overcome by demanding a close and intelligent scrutiny of selected poems and extracts of varying difficulty. This is the first purpose. Some questions deal with

theme and content, others ask for a paraphrase of more difficult passages and detailed comment upon the implication of certain words and phrases.

The second and main purpose of the book is concerned with critical appreciation. Here I am greatly indebted to Mr. I. A. Richards, and to my College supervisor, Dr. F. R. Leavis, and the 'Cambridge criticism'—close analysis of words and language—which they have done so much to establish. 'No treatment of poetry', Dr. Leavis says in his introduction to *Revaluation*, 'is worth much that does not keep very close to the concrete : there lies the problem of method. The only acceptable solution, it seemed to me, lay in the extension and adaptation of the method appropriate in dealing with individual poets as such. In dealing with individual poets the rule of the critic is, or should (I think) be, to work as much as possible in terms of particular analysis—analysis of poems or passages, and to say nothing that cannot be related immediately to judgments about producible texts.' The texts in this book represent many different kinds of poetry, but as all poetry consists of words charged with subtle powers of suggestion, it is only through close study of those words, their arrangement and their rhythms, that one can arrive at, and appreciate, the state of mind which created the poem, and decide on its significance and value. This demands discrimination and judgment in reading. The essential is for the student to train himself to perceive and describe differences of quality and kind in language. The glossary has been specially prepared to give help in this direction. It briefly notes the various kinds of poetry, outlines prosody and the chief poetic devices, enumerates

the principal English metres, attempts to give adequate definitions of the main qualities of language and style, suggests some of the more important influences upon poetic style, and finally, defines figures of speech. By constant reference to the glossary a critical vocabulary should be formed, resulting in greater accuracy of expression. The questions on style are arranged so as to decide upon the kind of poetry under consideration, and to discover the poet's intention ; then the versification, language, imagery, figures of speech, tone, feeling, are considered. Thus material is gradually **collected** for a critical appreciation of the poem. The poems and passages have been carefully selected so as to be representative of the individual poet. Severe limits are imposed by this method of particular analysis of short pieces, yet, as Dr. Leavis says, ' the discipline, while not preventing his saying anything that he [the critic] should in the end find himself needing to say, enables him to say it with a force of relevance and an edged economy not otherwise attainable.' What is valuable in this approach to poetry is its concreteness ; the insistence upon words and rhythm gives the student the right starting point, and leads him to a fuller appreciation of the poem studied than is perhaps possible in any other way.

The selected poems are arranged in chronological order so as to show the development of English poetry from the fourteenth century to the present day, and to illustrate the many changes which have taken place. The major poets introduce something new and give vitality to the language. They represent what has been called ' significant development ' and establish a literary tradition.. This has its influence on their lesser

contemporaries and successors whose work may in turn be said to illustrate that tradition. One can establish the relations between them, and trace, say, the associations between Spenser, Milton, and Thomson, Gray, and Collins ; the line of wit from Donne through Marvell to Dryden and Pope ; the Augustan tradition from Pope through Johnson and Goldsmith to Crabbe. Moreover, this arrangement shows the continuity of literature and forms a background for the treatment of some particular period prescribed for intensive study. It also permits comparison and contrast of many varied styles. By reading through these selections the student may become acquainted with many new poets ; a real curiosity may be aroused, and its gratification will be the truest kind of education.

The adequate correction of written work is a burden to most English teachers. These exercises can be prepared beforehand, and then gone through orally in class. Many of the poems should be read aloud, for it has been truly said that * no poetry which when mastered is not better heard than read is good poetry'.

The selections in Part 3 are unsigned. They are to be commented on in regard to quality and style along the lines of approach suggested in Part 2, and assigned to their periods from internal evidence. They are arranged, as far as possible, according to subject, and lend themselves to contrast and comparison. A book list will be found at the end : this is intended to give suggestions for further study.

I must record my indebtedness to the works of Dr. Leavis, and to the *History of English Literature* by E. Legouis and L. Cazamian. I owe a more personal debt

to my wife for continual encouragement, to Mr. E. F. Mettrick for several valuable suggestions, and to Dr. C. A. Hackett for his help with the Introduction.

A. F. S.

TAUNTON, *September* 1938.

NOTE.—In the criticism paper, many examiners merely say, 'Comment on the following poem', and candidates are often left uncertain of the exact requirements. I should like to point out that 'commenting on' is precisely what the student will be doing in working through the questions in this book. These questions are pretty comprehensive ;¹ they ask mostly for certain definite things to be indicated, thus helping to simplify the process of critical appreciation. When the words 'comment', or 'criticize', or 'appreciate' do appear without further elucidation, they must be understood as a formula asking that the various qualities of the poem (thought, feeling, mood, atmosphere, the various attributes of style) should be indicated and discussed. This may make the appreciation of poetry look easy. It must always be remembered that although one can make the critical approach along definite lines, one cannot fully understand a poem by the application of mechanical methods ; and again, all poems cannot be made to fit the same Procrustean bed.

¹ Some of the questions will be recognized as more suitable for scholarship candidates and advanced students ; naturally, these need not be attempted by the average Sixth Form.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

IN the present edition not only have a few errors of pen and press, which found their way into the first, been corrected, but some of the questions on the poems in Part 2 have been revised.

I should like to thank those who have written to point out errors, and to make helpful suggestions for improving the usefulness of this book.

A. F. S.

TAUNTON, 1942.

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Mrs. W. B. Yeats.

1. INTRODUCTION

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH POETRY

LANGUAGE, our chief means of expression and communication, is the most important element in poetry. Many influences have gone to the making of the English language ; its growth has been slow, and at times wavering and indeterminate.

When the Saxon invasions penetrated inland, the Celts were driven to the West, and the country claimed by a people who were to have a strong formative influence on our literature. The Saxons were warriors whose dearest desire was to win glory in battle, so that they might be sung by the wandering poet, or scop, and so live for ever in the sagas of their race. One of these sagas is the great poem *Beowulf*. A manuscript copy was made more than four hundred years after the poem was first sung. During this time many modifications in the language had taken place ; a striking innovation was the quaint blending of Christian with Pagan sentiment, due to the religious feelings of the monk who wrote down this relic of a heathen age. The poem still shows us the main characteristics of Saxon poetry. The language contained a predominance of consonants, which makes the verse sound harsh and rough. The vocabulary was limited. To overcome this, the scop created composite words, such as 'word-

hoard ' for ' speech , ' earth-walker ' for ' traveller ' (a poetical method which we find again in Spenser, Keats, Tennyson). This early poetry seems to be irregular, for it is unrimed, and is built up on the system of four stresses in the line, the emphasis falling on the essential words. This, and the use of alliteration, are the outstanding features. Like all early poetry *Beowulf* was sung ; and rhetorical effect was gained by ornamental and high-sounding language :

Fyrst ford gewat : flota waes on youm,
 bat under beorge. Beornas gearwe
 on stefn stigon ; streamas wundon,
 sund wio sande ; secgas bāron
 on bearm nacan beorhte fraetwe,
 guo-searo geatolic ; guman ût scufon,
 weras on wit-sîo wudu bundenne.

Forth fled the hours : floated on the waves
 The ship cliff-sheltered : shield-bearers ready
 Stood at the stem : the streaming waters
 Brake upon the beach : men bore the treasure
 To the bark's bosom : bright and costly
 With wealth of weapons : on willing journey
 The boat iron-bound was borne to seaward.

Another manuscript of Saxon poetry is a collection of short poems containing *The Seafarer*, which expresses the harsh struggle against Nature. By the end of the sixth century Saxon England had accepted the Christian faith, and saints—not warriors—became the heroes. The first known English poet was Caedmon of Whitby, who, about 670, made a song in honour of the Creation. He turned many passages of the Scriptures into verse and these—known as *Cadmon's Paraphrase*—had a

marked influence upon the Northumbrian poet Cynewulf, who, in the eighth century, wrote *The Christ*. Many scattered poems were collected, and in the tenth century religious poems were mixed with war poems such as *Brunanburh*, which deals with the struggle between the Saxons and the Danes. Up till now Northumbria had exerted the chief influence upon literature. But the invading Danes harassed the North 'until there was not one house of learning left from the Forth to the Humber'. Fortunately, King Alfred saved Wessex from the Danes, and made it the centre of literary education. He translated into the native language much of the History of Bede, and adapted freely from Latin authors, including the philosophy of Boethius. He encouraged men to write in Saxon, especially those who made the records of the kingdom, and their work, known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, was continued nearly a hundred years after the Norman Conquest. In spite of all this zeal, Anglo-Saxon literature began to grow less and less vigorous. The Saxon outlook was gloomy and sombre, dwelling on the worthlessness of earthly things. This temperament was due very largely to the severe climate of the 'storm-swept North' and superstitious fear of Nature's hostility. The tone of their verse was austere, and the stressed alliterative line, monotonous.

The Norman Conquest brought a change of literary ideal. The Normans were French in language and in civilisation. They were a gay and cheerful people, fond of amusement, music, and songs. The poetry sung at the Court was French. When we turn from *Beowulf* to, say, the *Chanson de Roland*, it is like stepping from a dark cave into the sunlight. And so there came a trans-

formation of atmosphere, bringing light, and colour, and vivacity. French literature was simple, youthful, and artistic. The variety, compared with Anglo-Saxon verse, was astonishing. We find narrative, satire, romance, lyric, fable, fabliau, pastourelle ; and the verse forms were as varied as the subjects. On the model of Latin hymns, lines were of equal length, containing a definite number of syllables, and the lines were rimed. Accent, too, was different from Anglo-Saxon verse, falling before the caesura and on the riming word. Rime gave significance to the vowel sounds, which soon became even more important than the consonants. French poems were translated into the native tongue, and Anglo-Saxon words were forced against their nature into a foreign rhythm. The English translators retained the French form—syllable and rime—and the Anglo-Saxon form of alliterative stress was gradually discarded. The speech of the conquerors, generally called Anglo-Norman, had taken the place of Anglo-Saxon, which remained, however, in country districts. Inevitably there was some mingling of the two languages, resulting in a debased speech. This caused many Normans to turn again to Latin, and hampered the development of poetry. Latin was the only common language in the land, where many dialects were spoken, and a debased speech was the language of Court. In 1204, the loss of Normandy turned attention decisively to the native tongue. Anglo-Saxon, or English, as we may now call it, had assimilated many French words, created others in imitation of French and Latin, contracted words to the stressed syllable only, and suppressed many terminations: thus gaining much in clarity and precision. As the

language of the people it had slowly been recovering power. Throughout the thirteenth century French was gradually abandoned and English became the accepted speech. By 1385 it had replaced French in the schools, and in 1399 it was used in Parliament by Henry IV. Meanwhile, prosody had long vacillated between two traditions. There was something of a national reaction back to the Anglo-Saxon form in *Gawain and the Green Knight* and the important work *Piers Plowman*, which begins :

In a somer seson, whan soft was the sonne,
I shop me in shroudes, as I a shepe were,
In habit as an heremite unholy of workes,
Went wide in this world wondres to here.
Ac on a May morning on Malverne Hulle
Me bifel a ferly, of fairy me thoughte ;
I was wery forwandred, and went me to reste
Under a brod banke, by a bornes side ;
And as I lay and lened and loked in the waters,
I slombred in a sleping, it sweyved so merye.

But Chaucer came to effect the perfect union between the English language and French versification. He took the unpoetic dialect of the East Midlands, King's English as it was called, and made it the language of the country. To its vitality he added grace and freshness, and the courtly qualities of France. E. Legouis has said, ' A Frenchman may enter Chaucer's country and be conscious of no change of sky or climate.'

Chaucer was above all a literary artist. He learnt much through translating other poets, introduced thirteen new verse forms, and showed the possibilities of English as a poetic medium. He also expressed a marked reversal of attitude. Instead of the pessimism

of the Anglo-Saxon we find a joyous zest for life ; the poet is assured of the goodness of this world, and shares a common faith in the world to come. There is a feeling of stability and certainty, a feature of so much medieval poetry. This joyousness is shown in poetry, and a typical expression is found in the description of the Squire in the *Prologue* :

Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
 Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.
 Singinge he was, or floytinge, al the day ;
 He was as fresh as is the month of May.

Folk ballads began much earlier than the fifteenth century, but there seemed to be a special impulse for them at that time. They must have been created by some poet, but their significance lies in the fact that they were anonymous, and were sung and memorised by the people, who modified and adapted the original until it may truly be said that it belonged to them, rather than to any individual author. As the ballad circulated, and was passed from generation to generation, further changes would take place in details and topical references, and the verse would become smoother. Ballads are important in poetic development because in them we hear the voice of the people. The poet and the community are identified ; and such poetry is a vital and spontaneous expression. Many of the ballads came from the Scottish Border, the scene of sporadic warfare between Scots and English. The tragic outlook of Anglo-Saxon poetry (from which so many ballads originate) is again revealed. This inherent sadness is bound up with the subjects of love and war. Turning from these themes the author seeks comfort in religion ;

but even here we perceive the dark shadows of superstition. Such poetry was close to common life, and did not limit its appeal to the educated and aristocratic minority. The expression was simple, direct, spontaneous, with a vigour which made Sir Philip Sidney exclaim, writing of *Chevy Chase* in 1581, 'Certainly, I must confess my own barbarousness, I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a Trumpet.' Sidney, speaking as the Renaissance gentleman, goes on to say, 'and yet is it sung but by some blind Crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style ; which, being so evil appavelled in the dust and cobwebs of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?'

The great revival of literature under the influence of the ' gorgeous eloquence of Pindar ' and other classical models continued throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We return to courtly poetry again with the work of Wyatt and Surrey who introduced the lyrical note from Italy. This Italian influence was to prepare the way for the great age of English poetry. But there were other and more important forces at work. The Renaissance marks the beginning of a new world. Medieval religious philosophy emphasised the importance of the after life at the expense of the present, clearly defining the blessedness of Heaven, the nothingness of Earth, and the agonies of Hell. The Renaissance stressed the importance of the present. Life was to be enjoyed here and now. With this change of values man made the exciting discovery of the Earth, and of himself as the centre of a creation no longer cold and hostile,

as to the Anglo-Saxon, but a veritable Bower of Bliss. And so the Humanist stands in the centre of the world, eager for every experience, ready for any voyage of discovery.

Spenser is in many ways the perfect example of the Humanist, and his voyage of discovery led him through the senses to Beauty :

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravisht thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights,
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights
Do kindle love in high conceived sprights ;
I faine to tell the things that I behold,
But feel my wits to faile, and tongue to fold.

From *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*

Spenser also revealed the beauty of the English language, and drew his inspiration from Chaucer as the ' well of English undefyled '. He gave the language a sweetness and fluidity of which it had seemed incapable. These were immense contributions to the development of English poetry. At the same time he reflected the moral seriousness of Protestantism in the lofty purpose of the *Faerie Queene*. The Reformation, by severing allegiance to a foreigner, had emphasised the feeling of nationality, and produced an intense pride of race ; while close reading of the various editions of the Bible influenced both language and thought, and did much to form the Puritan mentality and inculcate the belief that the English were the chosen people. Everywhere there was a fever of passionate enthusiasm. The ballads had made literature democratic ; the theatre continued a universality of appeal. Translations from the

classics widened culture, and influenced considerably poetic development. Patriotism (intensified by the defeat of the Armada), freedom, the reformed religion, the pervading atmosphere of humanism, were all forces acting at a time when almost every versifier was a poet. Shakespeare towers above them all. He expresses in words the subtlest tones of thought and feeling and excels in a fine mastery of concrete images and metaphor. He reminds us of what Aristotle wrote, * The greatest thing of all is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others ; it is also a sign of original genius, since a good metaphor implies the intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars.'

The Elizabethan age was eager for poetry, delighting in wit, fantasy, beauty ; above all in song. For a brief period there was a steady outpouring of fine lyrics, uniting the genius of the people and the artistic sensibility of Humanism.

If the Renaissance gloriously introduced mankind to the modern age, it as decisively closed the door upon the medieval world. Then, there had been an accepted religion providing a common background of belief. This simplified enormously the business of communication, and gave to the poet confidence and certainty. Soon after the first fervour of the Reformation this certainty disappeared. The poet is no longer identified with his world, he is questioning and pondering the significance of human experience and the nature of the spirit. This produces a state of tension and unrest such as now characterises the early seventeenth century. Shakespeare writes his great tragedies ; he is succeeded

by the anarchism of Webster and Middleton. Cynical realism takes the place of the previous idealism. A certain weariness follows the great lyrical outburst. Some poets become didactic, and write in the allegorical manner of Spenser ; others maintain the classical influence. The two great figures of this period—Ben Jonson and John Donne—exert considerable influence on the development of poetry. Jonson was the most learned of the humanists, and principally through him Neo-classicism was introduced, leading to the work of Dryden. Donne, in his poetry expresses the uneasiness of the age. His work has been spoken of as 'the battle-ground between the difficulty of belief and the reluctance to doubt'. He indicates the break which had come at the Reformation when stability was lost. At the same time he greatly increased the range of poetry by giving lyrical expression to the complex workings of his mind. A thought was to him an experience, so that, to use Herbert Read's words, 'there was more poetic value in thought about emotion than in the emotion itself.' Such poetry is far from the simple directness of Chaucer, and lends itself to all kinds of psychological analyses :

Yet, love and hate mee too,
 So, these extreames shall neithers office doe ;
 Love mee, that I may die the gentler way ;
 Hate mee, because thy love is too great for mee ;
 Or let these two, themselves, not me decay ;
 So shall I live, thy Stage, not triumph bee ;
 Lest thou thy love and hate and mee undoe,
To let mee live, O love and hate mee too.

From *The Prohibition*

Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan are all marked by the 'Metaphysical' poetry of Donne. They too are reli-

gious poets, each showing 'the signs of conflict in his verse, finally accepting God through a kind of mysticism. Religion, more particularly Puritanism, completed the work of the Renaissance, and in the poetry of Milton the two meet and fuse, though not without an inner conflict. He declared Spenser to be his master, and his work reveals the struggle between an intense love of beauty, shown in his delight in Nature and in classical mythology, and Puritanism, austere Hebraic in outlook. His natural preferences are apparent in the following passage :

Meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,
That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crown'd,
Her chrystal mirror holds, unite thir streams.
The Birds thir quire apply ; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Led on th' Eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpin gath'ring flow'rs
Herself a fairer Flow'r, by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Geres all that pain
To seek her through the world ; not that sweet Grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
Gastalian Spring might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive ;

where the lines beginning ' Not that fair field ' seem to have a vitality of their own among the heavy stylised movement of the verse. Yet, despite this vitality which is a sign of Milton's real greatness his blank verse was so Latinised that it checked the natural development of speech rhythm, setting up a stylised diction, an incanta-

tion, which remained a potent influence until the nineteenth century.

With the Restoration there came a new mental outlook—one of reflection. The high powers of imaginative creation seem wearied. Now we find an insistence on the intellectual powers. Instead of the urge for self-expression there is a desire for explanation and arrangement. The King and his Court set the fashions for the new order. The exiles brought back with them as models the manners and the literary fashions of France. The aristocratic tradition, which at the Renaissance had taken the place of religion in its care of the arts, is once again established, after the brief interim of the Commonwealth. Such a tradition simplifies communication, for it gives the poet a definite audience. In this atmosphere of exclusiveness and refinement there was time for analysis and critical thought. This produced a revolt against the austerity and restrictions of the Puritans. Satire, as in *Hudibras*, is the weapon which denounces tyranny and cant. Freedom, honesty, and rationalism are the ideals. Dryden is the central figure ; with aristocratic connections, and the Laureateship in 1668, he dominates the literary field. Not only does he adapt the heroic couplet to the satiric mode, but he inaugurates literary criticism, taking stock of the position and stressing the importance of 'plain English' in poetry. He continues the line of wit from Waller, Denham, and Cowley, thus marking a decisive development to the beginning of the eighteenth century, the great Classical Age, already so well begun. The spirit of satire passes from the Restoration to the new age, and we have a further period of

analysis and criticism. Order, balance, restraint—these are the key-words ; there is an insistence on culture, decorum, urbanity. Writers are engrossed in matters of technique, and Pope casts the heroic couplet into its final and incomparable form. In many ways his heroic couplet sums up the Augustan Age :

Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name :
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point : This kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit.—In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear :
Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee ;
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see ;
All Discord, Harmony not understood ;
All partial Evil, universal Good :
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, WHATEVER is, is RIGHT.

From the Revolution of 1688 we may trace the steady rise of the middle class. They maintain the classical ideal but stress moral issues also. Collier had led a crusade against the immorality of the Restoration drama. The proprieties were again observed, as is shown by the motives of social reform behind the *Spectator Papers*. (By now, prose was the more important medium for the 'serious art of writing', and consequently the language continues its main development in prose writing.)

The tradition of Pope is continued by Johnson and Goldsmith. New inspiration, particularly that of Sentiment, is added, and poetry appeals more and

more to the middle class. Classicism has now stiffened into a set of rules and devices. It was not long before many people became dissatisfied with its restrictions. The Spirit, they said, was impoverished by Rationalism. The past is always an escape for those who are not satisfied with the present. So attention was diverted to the Middle Ages. A new interest arose in Chivalry, Gothic, Romance, in the poetry of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, in old Ballads, Legends, and Traditions. Sentiment is given fuller expression in melancholy themes which derive from *Il Penseroso*, and reveals itself in a preoccupation with night, death, and the grave—as in Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *Grave*, Gray's *Elegy*, and Collins's *Ode to Evening*. Above all, there was a return to Nature. The sixteenth century had shown delight in Nature as though in some new discovery. In the seventeenth century, Nature, providing a pleasant background to Man, was still appreciated, and sometimes described. In the early eighteenth century, when the ^c proper study of mankind was man ¹, Nature was ignored. But throughout the century it becomes more significant. Thomson, following the tradition of the Scots poets (Henryson, Dunbar, and Allan Ramsay), describes Nature with an observant eye. Gray adds sentiment to description, as in the first verse of the *Elegy*:

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Collins and Crabbe follow the lead, and Cowper, finding ¹ a soul in all things, and that soul is God ¹, has a definite influence upon Wordsworth. This growing

interest in Nature, and an awakening of the imagination, prepares the way for the Romantic Revival. The great religious movement—that of Methodism—affected the masses and stirred emotions which had become lethargic. This made the public more ready for a poetry which was to appeal to the heart rather than to the mind. There had to be a regeneration of the spirit if literature was to escape from artificiality and imitation.

Many influences lead to the Romantic Revival. There is the natural reaction to the discipline of the Age of Reason. More important are the growth of Sentiment, and the evangelism of the Methodist movement, the re-awakening of the imagination, and the fresh interest in the romantic literature of the Elizabethans. Other vital influences came from abroad. Rousseau had fired the minds of thinkers and turned attention to political and social problems. The French Revolution gave a profound imaginative impulse to the writers of the time. The spirit of freedom was in the air. Enthusiasm was everywhere. The Age of Reason had insisted upon the social virtues, for Classicism itself was impersonal. Now the individual re-asserts himself, Romanticism is strongly egotistical. There is a predominance of the personal, emotional life, and an active re-awakening of the creative impulse. With the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, poetry embarks upon a voyage as enthralling as that of Coleridge's ancient mariner.

Wordsworth, inspired by Coleridge, is the outstanding figure of this Revival, and his work has a fundamental influence upon poetic diction. Of Northern stock, he is dominated by his attitude towards Nature. It is as though the passionate hatred that the Northmen

had felt for Nature is finally exorcised ; and Wordsworth is impelled to state his intense conviction in the beneficent, all-pervading Spirit of the universe.

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

From *Tintern Abbey*

The second generation of romantic poets, accepting Wordsworth's dictum that poetry is ' the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings', is more unrestrained. Shelley revolts against the established Christianity, Byron against all authority. These poets expressed spontaneously their own urgent feelings and desires. Neither Keats nor Shelley was understood by a public which could not adapt itself to such subjective poetry. For the Romantic poet is his own world, moving among dreams and visions, living in the past or the future, in the very elements themselves, king of infinite space. Shelley's ardent spirit speaks to the West Wind :

Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

And Keats discloses his melancholy :

Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath ;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

This excessive individualism, and the morbid strain which runs through so much romantic literature from Coleridge to Beddoes, brought Romanticism into disrepute. It had never been accepted as Classicism had been. The nation was never comfortable with a literature where emotion and imagination were unrestrained.

Changes are rapid in the nineteenth century. It is an age of industrialism, scientific discovery, and expansion. Material prosperity gave a feeling of certainty and power which in turn bred complacency and self-satisfaction. Science began to challenge many established beliefs. Victorian assurance was sorely shaken, and compromise became the key-note of the age. Tennyson, continuing the romantic tradition of Keats,

Milton, and Spenser, rejected the world of industrialism and money-making for one of dreams.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
 With half-dropt eyelid still,
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
 His waters from the purple hill—
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

From *The Lotos-Eaters*

Although we have the energy and optimism of Browning it is fair to say that a poetry of escape became the preoccupation of nineteenth-century poets, particularly of the Pre-Raphaelites. This group of poets moved away from reality to an idealism of dream and vision, using symbolism as a means of expressing their imaginative sensibility. Rossetti, lulled by chloral, broods in a private world':

Vaporous, unaccountable,
 Dreamland lies forlorn of light,
 Hollow like a breathing shell.
 Ah! that from all dreams I might
 Choose one dream and guide its flight!
 I know well
 What her sleep should tell to-night.

From *Love's Nocturn*

Morris escapes to the 'back-toll'd bells of noisy Gamelot', and Swinburne to the 'garden of Proser-

pine'. This aesthetic movement reached its limits in the productions of Wilde, Dowson, and the *Yellow Book*. The writers of the nineties show a passionate interest in workmanship, but like O'Shaughnessy they speak with no impelling voice :

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams ;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams. . .

Art for Art's sake became the motto. This reacted upon the Puritan outlook, which, reappearing as the Non-conformist conscience, found Beauty suspect and the Arts vaguely immoral and useless. Since the aristocratic tradition had decayed with the decline of literary patronage, Art was now still further divorced from life. Poetry continues its decline into modern times.

We find that poetry, unlike prose, has now to face severe difficulties of communication. In medieval times the poet had a common material for his poetry—the folk ballads were very largely the creation of the people themselves. In Elizabethan and Augustan England there was a definite sophisticated audience. By the end of the nineteenth century the lower class, for the most part, had ready access to culture. Cheap editions, book reviews, magazines, the newspaper, all spread information among the masses. With the increase of elementary education everyone acquires a smattering of superficial knowledge. The common people lose the native simplicity of Wordsworth's peasant, without gaining the sophistication of the

Augustan audience. As a result, poetry has lost the appeal which it had in the past. It is hard to see how it can maintain its position against the increasing influence of headlines, slogans, picture papers, the cult of speed ; and against the more dissipating effects of the cinema and the wireless which widen the field of human experience too rapidly to allow development of the sense of wonder or delight. For as G. Day Lewis says, 'poetry is born from magic', and, though the need is perhaps greater than ever, there seems to be little room for magic in a world of statistics, mass-production, gas-masks, and high explosives.

There were many forces shaping the literature of the present century. We may mention the influence of the French Symbolists, and that of Rimbaud, Laforgue, Valery; and, more important still, that of Science. The enormous development in the study of biology, psychology, and sociology is reflected in the wealth of new material, which destroyed the old technique and demanded fresh adaptations of method. So we find much that is experimental. The doctrine of psycho-analysis, first applied by Dr. Sigmund Freud, led to the exploration of the sub-conscious, ' the persistence of the past in the present.' This is shown in the poetry of T. S. Eliot who, with G. M. Hopkins and Wilfred Owen, exerted the greatest influence upon post-war poetry. Arnold had been touched with a melancholy which deepens into pessimism in A. E. Housman and Thomas Hardy, and into the bitterness of disillusionment in the later Yeats. Eliot, writing after the war, found the modern world a waste land. He is conscious of something ' irrecoverably lost'.

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers. . . .

From *The Waste Land*

One has only to compare this with the beginning of Chaucer's *Prologue*—

Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote. . . .

to observe striking differences—one the poetry of a joyful acceptance, the other of a bitter refusal.¹ Eliot achieves a complete break with the Victorian tradition, and makes a fresh start, so that poetry can express psychological subtleties and complexities profounder even than those of Donne and the Metaphysicals. Learning much from the French poets, especially Laforgue, he introduces two outstanding methods of expression—'emotional sequence', and 'the free association of ideas'. As a result, he has had as great an influence on poetry as James Joyce on prose.

The present generation of poets is striving to bridge the gap between poetry and the people, who, because of the widening range of other interests, and the depression of our level of culture, remain apathetic. The poets are trying to reach the lowest common denominator of understanding suitable to the peculiar character of the age, so that their work shall not have an esoteric appeal. W. H. Auden has shifted the stress of the satirist from

¹ See Martin Turncll's *Poetry and Crisis*, pp. 14-18.

the wickedness to the sickness of mankind, and diagnoses humanity with a scalpel. Spender, Day Lewis, and MacNeice show also how all the new material of modern invention from pylons to aeroplanes and traffic lights can be used for poetic purposes. Thus Spender describes the landscape near an aerodrome :

More beautiful and soft than any moth
With burring furred antennae feeling its huge path
Through dusk, the air-liner with shut-off engines
Glides over suburbs and the sleeves set trailing tall
To point the wind. Gently, broadly, she falls
Scarcely disturbing charted currents of air.

Lulled by descent, the travellers across sea
And across feminine land indulging its easy limbs
In miles of softness, now let their eyes trained by watching
Penetrate through dusk the outskirts of this town
Here where industry shows a fraying edge.
Here they may see what is being done.

The constant experimenting with verse forms, and a certain increase in vitality (which can be observed when turning from the Georgian poets to those writing to-day) suggest that there is still a hope for poetry, and we may close this brief outline with the words of G. Day Lewis who says that ' Between the two ideals of poets to-day, social justice and artistic integrity, a foundation should be laid for a poetic future not unworthy of the traditions we have inherited and the society some of us hope for and are fighting for.'

2. A SELECTION OF POEMS AND PASSAGES FROM POETS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT DAY, WITH QUESTIONS ON CRITICAL APPRECIATION

THE following remarks on the critical appreciation of poetry (especially of lyrical poetry) may be helpful.

The total meaning of a poem consists of thought, feeling, attitude, and intention. It is conveyed by the words and their arrangement. The rhythm produced welds the poem together, and gives it a significance beyond any prose rendering. It is only by a close scrutiny of all the qualities of the words (meaning, sound, associations), and also of the ordering of the rhythm, that the poem can be understood, and its value estimated.

First of all, make out the plain prose sense ; consider the verse form, and try to understand the feeling, expressed both through the sense and through the sound and movement of the words. State the first impression the poem makes ; say whether the poem is lyrical, descriptive, satirical, etc., whether it is simple or complex, individual or commonplace. Jot down all words and expressions pointing towards that impression.

Remember that you must judge the poet in accord-

ance with what he is trying to do. He may do anything he pleases, provided he can do it. (Be prepared to revise your pre-suppositions as to what poetry should be.) You must decide whether the sound and metre fit the sense ; and whether the manner of the poet suggests sincerity. Examine the images (metaphors, similes, epithets), and see whether they add emotive power, and whether they elucidate or obscure the meaning. Try to re-live, in your imagination, the experience of the poet (in whatever age he writes). The total rhythm (produced by thought, emotion, associations, desires) will help to convey this experience.

If it really makes us share a valuable emotion a poem is successful, even though it may have external blemishes—bad rimes, weak syntax, etc. It is the experience that matters.

The general impression and the consideration of detail are both necessary in so far as they prepare for the final judgment, which must always be passed upon the poem as a whole.

I

When she had gone from
me
All the rich retinue,
Were bidden to the bridal,
Knights, clerks and commons,
Sheriffs and sheriffs men,
Middlemen, brokers,
No reckoning the rout

I looked and beheld
whose root is false-living,
poor and rich,
jurymen and summoners,
beadles and bailiffs,
victuallers, pleaders ;
that ran at Meeds heels.

They sent Simony	to seal the papers,
That Falsehood and	
Flattery	for their fines held,
To make them over	Meeds dowry for ever.
There was no hall nor	
house	that could harbour the
	people,

And EVERY FIELD WAS FULL OF FOLK.

On a mountain, in midst	at mid-morning tide,
of it,	
They pitched a proud	and ten thousand tents,
pavilion,	
For knights from afar	and for strange comers,
Forjurors, for summoners,	for labourers on farms,
For the flattering Friars,	all the Four Orders,
That all might witness,	what the writing said,
When Meed was married to Falsehood.	

Simony, Law and Juryman	were Meeds nearest
	friends,
But Flattery was the first	to fetch her from her bower,
To give her away	and join her to Falsehood,
When Simony and Lawyer	saw their desire,
They assented thereto	—at Silvers prayer.

Then leaped out Liar,	" A charter, a charter,
%< That Guile with great	hath given them both."
oaths	

And Simony and Lawyer	stood forth both of them
Unfolding the deed	that Falsehood had writ;
Thus they began,	and loud they cried :

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS . . .

" Witness all men	dwelling on the earth,
" Meed is here married,	not for virtue nor rank,
" But—for her goods.	
" Falsehood loveth her,	for he knoweth her riches,
" Flattery Fickle-speech	granteth the pair—
" To be princes in pride,	to despise poverty,
" To backbite, to boast,	to bear false witness,
" To scorn men, to scold	to beget slanders,
men,	
" To be bold to disobey,	to break the Command-
	ments,
" With the kingdom of	
Covetise	and all the coasts about,
" With the island of	
Usury,	I crown these two."

WILLIAM LANGLAND (1330?-1400?),
from *Piers Plowman*

1. What is your first impression on reading this extract?
2. Give a title to the passage, and express the substance briefly in your own words.
3. The episode from which this is taken has been called ' a morality in narrative form '. Can you find any dramatic merit in the passage?
4. Indicate satirical passages. What are the chief objects of the author's hatred?
5. What is the outstanding characteristic of the versification? Is it at all effective?
6. Analyse the rhythm, indicating the system of stressed syllables.
7. ' Langland is neither an artist nor a musician ' (E. Legouis). Discuss in the light of this passage.

2

Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun
Was never of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
Whan he hadde hent king Priam by the berd,
And slayn him (as saith us *Eneydos*),
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighthe,
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns hadde brend Cartage ',
She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende hir-selven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so cryden ye,
As, whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lyves;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my tale agayn :—

This sely widwe, and eek hir doghtres two,
Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
And out at dores sterten they anoon,
And syen the fox toward the grove goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away ;
And cryden, ' Out! harrow! and weylaway!
Ha, ha, the fox!' and after him they ran,
And eek with staves many another man ;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkin with a distaf in hir hand ;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges

So were they fered for berking of the dogges
 And shouting of the men and wimmen eke,
 They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke.
 They yelleden as feendes doon in helle ;
 The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle ;
 The gees for fere flowen over the trees ;
 Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees ;
 So hidous was the noyse, a! *benedicite!*
 Certes, he Jakke Straw, and his mcynnee,
 Ne made never shouteS half so shrille,
 Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,
 As thilkc day was maad upon the fox.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340-1400),
 from *The Nonne Preestes Tale*

1. Make a careful translation of this passage.
2. What do you notice as the chief differences between this and modern English?
3. Examine the versification. What are the chief differences between this and the passage from *Piers Plowman*?
4. Discuss the use of digression. What is its purpose?
5. Point out what you consider humorous passages, and try to classify their appeal.
6. In what ways is this a good narrative style?
7. 'Chaucer's best verses merely note facts, external details, or characteristics of feeling' (E. Legouis). What support do you find here for this statement?

3

Bewailing in my chamber thus allone,
 Despeired of all joye and remedye,
 For-tiret of my thought and wo-begone,
 And to the wyndow gan I walk in hye,

To see the world and folk that went forbye,
As for the tyme though I of mirthis fude
Mycht have no more, to luke it did me glide.

Now was there maid fast by the Touris wall
A gardyn faire, and in the corneris set
Ane herbere grene, with wandis long and small
Railit about, and so with treis set
Was all the place, and hawthorn hegis knet,
That lyf was non walkyng there forbye,
That mycht within scarce any wight aspy.

So thick the beuis and the leves grene
Beschadit all the allyes that there were,
And myddis every herbere mycht be sene
The scharpe grene suete jenekere,
Growing so fair with branchis here and there,
That, as it semyt to a lyf without,
The beuis spred the herbere all about.

And on the smale grene twistis sat
The lytil suete nyghtingale, and song
So loud and clere, the ympnis consecrat
Of luvys use, now soft now lowd among,
That all the gardynis and the wallis rong
Ryght of thaire song, and on the copill next
Of thaire suete armony, and lo the text :—

' Worschippe, ye that loveris bene, this May,
For of your bliss the kalendis are begonne,
And sing with us, away winter, away,
Come somer, come, the suete seson and sonne,

Awake, for schame! that have your hevynis wonne,
 And amourously lift up your hedis all,
 Thank Lufe that list you to his merci call.'

JAMES I OF SCOTLAND (1394-1437),
 from *The King's Quair*

lyf— living thing

beuis = boughs

ympnis — hymns

1. What is the passage about?
2. What various emotions do you find expressed here?
3. Analyse the verse form. Does it suit the subject?
4. Point to any evidence showing that the poet was a close observer of nature.

4

As I was walking all alane
 I heard twa corbies making a mane :
 The tane unto the tither did say,
 ' Whar sail we gang and dine the day? '

' —In behint yon auld fail dyke
 I wot there lies a new-slain knight;
 And naebody kens that he lies there
 But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.

' His hound is to the hunting gane,
 His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
 His lady's ta'en anither mate,
 So we may mak our dinner sweet.

' Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
 And I'll pike out his bonny blue e'en :
 Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair
 We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

' Mony a one for him maks mane.
 But nane sail ken whar he is gane :
 O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
 The wind sail blaw for evermair.'

ANON, *The Twa Corbies*

corbies = ravens
hause = neck

fail = turf
theck — thatch

1. Give the substance of the poem in your own words.
2. What is the attitude behind the poem?
3. Write a short appreciation, indicating the main qualities.

5

' O where have you been, Lord Randal, my son?
 O where have you been, my handsome young man? '—
 ' I have been to the wild wood ; mother, make my
 bed soon,
 For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
 down.'

' Who gave you your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
 Who gave you your dinner, my handsome young man? '
 ' I dined with my sweetheart; mother, make my
 bed soon,
 For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
 down.'

' What had you for dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
 What had you for dinner, my handsome young man? '
 ' I had eels boiled in broth ; mother, make my bed
 soon,
 For I'm weary of hunting, and fain would lie down.'

' And where are your bloodhounds. Lord Randal, my son?

And where are your bloodhounds, my handsome young man? '—

' O they swelled and they died ; mother, make my bed soon,

For Pm weary with hunting, and fain would lie down.'

'O I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!

O I fear you are poisoned, my handsome young man!'—

O yes! I am poisoned ; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain would lie down.'

ANON, *Lord Randal*

1. What kind of poetry is this? What is your opinion of this method of telling a story?

2. What qualities do you find in this poem?

3. ' There is no comment, no criticism, no probing into motives ' (Herbert Read). What does the poem gain, and what does it lose, because of this?

6

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service none tell can ;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! oh! forget not this,
How long ago hath been, and is
The mind that never meant amiss.
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved :
Forget not yet!

(The lover beseecheth his mistress not to forget his
steadfast faith and true intent.)

SIR THOMAS WYATT (1503-1542),
from *TottePs Miscellany*, 1557

1. What kind of poem is this? What are its main features? What impression does it make on you?
2. How does it differ from the previous poems?
3. What is the value of the refrain?
4. What is the poet's mood? How is it conveyed to the reader?
5. Write a brief appreciation of the poem.

7

Alas! so all things now do hold their peace!
Heaven and earth disturbed in no thing :
The beasts, the air, the birds their song do cease ;
The nightes car the stars about doth bring.

Calm is the sea ; the waves work less and less :
 So am not I, whom love, alas ! doth wring,
 Bringing before my face the great increase
 Of my desires, whereat I weep and sing,
 In joy and woe, as in a doubtful ease.
 For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasure bring;
 But by and by, the cause of my disease
 Gives me a pang, that inwardly doth sting.
 When that I think what grief it is again,
 To live and lack the thing should rid my pain.

(A complaint by night of the lover not beloved.)
 HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY (1516-1547),
 from Tottel's *Miscellany*, 1557

1. What kind of poem is this? What particular verse form is used? What are its chief characteristics?
2. What new note do you perceive in this poem?
3. Analyse the rhythm and state the effect produced.
4. What is the value of the closing couplet?
5. Compare this with the poem by Wyatt. Which do you prefer? Why?

8

So Guyon having lost his trustie guyde,
 Late left beyond that Ydle lake, proceedes
 Yet on his way, of none accompanye ;
 And evermore himselfe with comfort feedes
 Of his own vertues and praise-worthie deedes.
 So, long he yode, yet no adventure found,
 Which fame of her shrill trumpet worthy reedes ;
 For still he traveild through wide wastfull ground,
 That nought but desert wilderness shewed all around.

At last he came unto a gloomy glade,
Cover'd with boughs and shrubs from heavens light,
Whereas he sitting found in secret shade
An uncouth, salvage, and uncivile wight,
Of griesly hew and fowle ill favour 'd sight;
His face with smoke was tand, and eies were beard,
His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
His cole-blacke hands did seeme to have been seard
In smythes fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes
 appeard.

His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath enveloped with gold ;
Whose glistring glosse, darkned with filthy dust,
Well yet appeared to have beene of old
A worke of rich entayle and curious mould,
Woven with antickes and wyld ymagery ;
And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
And turned upside downe, to feede his eye
And covetous desire with his huge treasury.

And round about him lay on every side
Great heapes of gold that never could be spent;
Of which some were rude owre, not purifide
Of Mulcibers devouring element;
Some others were new driven, and distent
Into great Ingowes and to wedges square ;
Some in round plates withouten moniment;
But most were stampd, and in their metal bare
Tlje antique shapes of kings and kesars straunge and
 rare.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552-15 9),
from *The Faerie Queene*

1. 'The *Faerie Queene* is essentially a picture gallery.' What is your opinion of the picture of Mammon ?

2. What do you find particularly striking in the following:

- (a) smythes fire-spitting forge,
- (b) woven with antickes and wyld ymagery,
- (c) of Mulcibers devouring element,
- (d) the antique shapes of kings and kesars straunge and rare?

3. 'He writ no language,' said Ben Jonson, who did not like the diction. Point out the merits and defects of Spenser's diction.

4. This has been called 'a perfect stanza'. Examine the verse form in detail, and show how it suits the subject. Why is the alexandrine so effective?

5. Analyse the rhythmic structure of these stanzas, indicating the use of alliteration, vowel-music, and cadence. Discuss the effects obtained.

6. How is the particular atmosphere of the passage achieved?

7. What are the outstanding qualities of this poetic style, destined to have a radical influence on English poetry?

9

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show.
 That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my
 pain,—
 Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her
 know,
 Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,—
 I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe ;
 Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,
 Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
 Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sun-burn'd
 brain.

But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;
 Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blow^rs;
 And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way.

Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,

Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite ;

Fool, said my Muse to me, look in thy heart, and write.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554-1586),

from *Astrophel and Stella*

1. Give the substance in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of: ' the blackest face of woe ', ' my sun-burn'd brain ', ' great with child to speak ', ' biting my truant pen '.

State what makes these expressions effective.

3. What is the verse form? What difference do you notice from that used by Surrey? Do you find the change effective?

4. Explain the full significance of the last line of the poem.

5. Indicate the figures of speech used here. Do they illuminate or obscure the meaning?

6. ' Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain.' Enumerate the main qualities of this poem.

10

What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?

If all the pens that ever poets held

Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,

And every sweetness that inspir'd their hearts,

Their minds, and muses on admired themes ;

If all the heavenly quintessence they still

From their immortal flowers of poesy,

Wherein, as in a mirror, we perceive
 The highest reaches of a human wit;
 If these had made one poem's period,
 And all combin'd in beauty's worthiness,
 Yet should there hover in their restless heads
 One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
 Which into words no virtue can digest.
 But how unseemly is it for my sex,
 My discipline of arms and chivalry,
 My nature, and the terror of my name,
 To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint!
 Save only that in beauty's just applause,
 With whose instinct the soul of man is touch'd ;
 And every warrior that is rapt with love
 Of fame, of valour, and of victory,
 Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits :
 I thus conceiving, and subduing both,
 That which hath stoop'd the chiefest of the gods,
 Even from the fiery-spangled veil of heaven,
 To feel the lovely warmth of shepherds' flames,
 And mask in cottages of strowed reeds,
 Shall give the world to note, for all my birth,
 That virtue solely is the sum of glory,
 And fashions men with true nobility.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564-1593),

from *Tamburlaine the Great*

1. Write a brief summary of this passage.
2. Paraphrase the lines beginning ' If all the heavenly quintessence . . . ' down to the line ' Which into words no virtue can digest'.
3. Explain the following, bringing out the exact meaning of the words in italics :
 (a) With whose *instinct* the soul of man **is** touch'd.

(b) Must needs have beauty beat on his *conceits*.

(c) And *mask* in cottages of strowed reeds.

4. Discuss the suitability of this verse form for dramatic speech.

5. ' Marlowe gets into blank verse the melody of Spenser, and he gets a new driving power by reinforcing the sentence period against the line period ' (T. S. Eliot). Discuss.

6. Sum up the principal qualities of this poetic style.

II

Be absolute for death ; either death or life
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:—
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep : a breath thou art,—
Servile to all the skiey influences,—
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,
Hourly afflict: merely, thou art death's fool;
For him thou labour' st by thy flight to shun,
And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not noble :
For all the accommodations that thou bear'st
Are nurs'd by baseness. Thou art by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; ye grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not;
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get ;
And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not certain ;
For thy complexion shifts to strange affects,
After the moon. If thou art rich, thou'rt poor ;
For like an ass whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616),
from *Measure for Measure*

1. What is the theme of this passage?
2. Explain the following : 'Be absolute for death', 'servile to all the skiey influences', 'all th' accommodations that thou bear'st are nurs'd to baseness', 'thou exist'st on many a thousand grains that issue out of dust'.
3. State what makes these lines effective :
 - (a) l Thou art not certain;
For thy complexion shifts to strange affects,
After the moon,;
 - (V) l for all thy blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied eld.'
4. Examine the verse form, and point out an example of each of the following :
 - (a) End-stopped line, (b) Enjambement. (c) Caesura.
 - (d) Feminine Ending, (e) Alexandrine. (f) Inversion.
 - (g) Elision, (h) Synaeresis. (i) Ellipsis, (j) Pleonasm.
5. Indicate the main qualities of this style.

6. What are the chief differences between this blank verse and that of Marlowe?

12

You do look, my son, in a moved sort,
 As if you were dismay'd : be cheerful, sir.
 Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
 As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
 Are melted into air, into thin air :
 And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
 And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
 As dreams are made on ; and our little life
 Is rounded with a sleep. Sir, I am vex'd ;
 Bear with my weakness ; my old brain is troubled :
 Be not disturb'd with my infirmity :
 If you be pleased, retire into my cell,
 And there repose : a turn or two I'll walk,
 To still my beating mind.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, from *The Tempest*

- 1 . What is the substance of this speech?
2. Point out the poetic felicities of the passage.
3. Show how the use of Climax, Metaphor, and Simile contributes to the emotional quality.
4. Write a brief appreciation of this passage. How does it differ in style from the extract from *Measure for Measure*?

13

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
 So do our minutes hasten to their end ;

Each changing place with that which goes before,
 In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
 Nativity, once in the main of light,
 Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
 Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
 And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
 Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow ;
 Feeds on the rarities of Nature's truth,
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow :
 And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
 Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *Sonnet LX*

1. Give a title to the sonnet.
2. Explain carefully,
 ' Nativity, once in the main of light,
 Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
 Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
 And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.'
3. Write a critical appreciation of the poetic imagery in the following lines :
 ' Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow ;
 Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.'
4. Study the structure of this sonnet. How does it differ from the Italian form? What is the relation of the octave to the sestet? What is the effect of the couplet?
5. ' Music is not inherent in the pattern of the Sonnet' (E. Legouis). Consider carefully the choice of words and their sound here, and comment on this statement.

14

There is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow ;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow ;
There cherries grow which none may buy
Till ' Cherry-ripe ' themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds fill'd with snow ;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till ' Cherry-ripe ' themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still ;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threat'ning with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till ' Cherry-ripe ' themselves do cry.

THOMAS CAMPION (1567 ?-1619), from
Alison's An Hour's Recreation in Music, 1606

1. Examine the similes and metaphors in this poem ; select the most effective, giving reasons for your choice.
2. ' The ideas, in themselves somewhat forced and fantastic, are expressed with great felicity.' Discuss.
3. How are the grace and melody of this lyric achieved?
4. To contemporaries, ' Cherry-ripe ' was a very ordinary street cry. Examine the clever use of the phrase, and show how the poet has changed its associations.
5. From this poem, state the chief properties, in form and content, of the Elizabethan song.

15

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep :
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.'

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose ;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close :
Bless us then with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver ;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever :
Thou that mak'st a day of night—
Goddess excellently bright.

BEN JONSON (1573-1637), from
Cynthia's Revels, 1600

1. What is the subject of the poem? Consider the tone (the 'manner of reading compelled upon one'). To what class of lyric does it belong?
2. Analyse the structure, scan the first stanza, and show how the verse form is adapted to the subject.
3. Explain the means used to give dignity and grace to this lyric. What is the effect of repeating the same line after each stanza?
4. Write a careful appreciation of this poem.

16

The heavens declare the glory of God ;
And the firmament sheweth his handywork.
Day unto day uttereth speech.
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language,
Where their voice is not heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.
In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it :
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.
The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul :
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the
simple.
The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the
heart :
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening
the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever :
The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous alto-
gether.
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much
fine gold :
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
Moreover by them is thy servant warned :
And in keeping of them is great reward.
Who can understand his errors?
Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins ;
 Let them not have dominion over me : then shall I
 be upright,
 And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.
 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my
 heart be acceptable in thy sight.
 O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

THE BIBLE, 1611, *Psalm XIX*

1. Illustrate the simplicity of the language, and of the poetic images.

2. Mark and prepare the first 20 lines for reading aloud, and show that the passage is rhythmic, composed of irregularly distributed beats or accents. Compare it with the passage from *Piers Plowman*.

3. Find an example of each of the following, and state the effect produced :

(a) Parallelism, (b) Simile, (c) Metaphor, (d) Glirfax.

4. Discuss the nature of Mysticism as illustrated by this Psalm.

5. Examine the emotion, and state the impression made upon you.

6. What are the main features of Hebrew poetry as illustrated by this Psalm?

17

I Wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
 Did, till we lov'd? were we not wean'd till then?
 But suck'd on countrey pleasures, childishly?
 Or snorted we in the seaven sleepers den?
 T'was so ; But this, all pleasures fancies bee.
 If ever any beauty I did see,
 Which I desir'd, and got, t'was but a dreame of thee.

And now good morrow to our waking soules,
 Which watch not one another out of feare ;
 For love, all love of other sights controules,
 And makes one little roome, an every where.
 Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone.
 Let Maps to other, worlds on worlds have showne,
 Let us possesse one world, each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appeares,
 And true plaine hearts doe in the faces rest,
 Where can we finde two better hemispheres
 Without sharpe North, without declining West?
 What ever dyes, was not mixt equally ;
 If our two loves be one, or, thou and I
 Love so alike, that none doc slacken, none can die.

JOHN DONNE (1573-1631), from *Songs and Sonnets*

1. What is the poem about?
2. Explain carefully the last five lines of the second stanza, and the last three lines of the third stanza.
3. Comment on the choice of words in the following lines :
 'But suck'd on countrey pleasures, childishly?
 Or snorted we in the seaven sleepers den? *
 'Where can we finde two better hemispheres
 Without sharpe North, without declining West?'
4. Compare the opening (and the general tone) with that of 'Cherry-ripe'. What differences do you observe?
5. Analyse the stanza-form. Consider utterance, movement, and intonation. What examples do you find of (a) rhetorical, (b) musical rhythm?
6. Dryden gave Donne the title of Metaphysical, which Dr. Johnson confirmed. What would you say are the chief characteristics of this style from the study of this particular poem?

18

Walking next day upon the fatal shore,
 Among the slaughtered bodies of their men
 Which the full-stomached sea had cast upon
 The sands, it was my unhappy chance to light
 Upon a face, whose favour when it lived,
 My astonished mind informed me I had seen.
 He lay in's armour, as if that had been
 His coffin ; and the weeping sea, like one
 Whose milder temper doth lament the death
 Of him whom in his rage he slew, runs up
 The shore, embraces him, kisses his cheek,
 Goes back again, and forces up the sands
 To bury him, and every time it parts
 Sheds tears upon him, till at last (as if
 It could no longer endure to see the man
 Whom it had slain, yet loth to leave him) with
 A kind of unresolved unwilling pace,
 Winding her waves one in another, like
 A man that folds his arms or wrings his hands
 For grief, ebbd from the body, and descends
 As if it would sink down into the earth,
 And hide itself for shame of such a deed.

CYRIL TOURNEUR (1575?-1626),

from *The Atheist's Tragedy*

1. Give the substance of the passage in your own words.
2. Examine ' the elaboration of the long suspended sentences '. What is the effect on the blank verse?
3. Indicate the similes. Are they illuminative or ornamental?
4. Examine the poetic images. Do they give unity to the passage or not?

5. T. S. Eliot refers to these lines as 'masterly but artificial'. Justify the comment.

19

Cornelia and other Ladies discovered winding Marcello's corse. Cornelia distracted.

Cor. Will you make me such a fool? here's a white hand :

Can blood so soon be washed out? let me see ;
When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,
And the strange cricket i' the oven sings and hops,
When yellow spots do on your hands appear,
Be certain then you of a corse shall hear.
Out upon't, how 'tis speckled! h'as handled a toad, sure.
Cowslip water is good for the memory :
Pray, buy me three ounces oft.

Flamineo. I would I were from hence.

Cor. Do you hear, sir?
I'll give you a saying which my grandmother
Was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing o'er
Unto her lute.

Flamineo. Do, an you will, do.

Cor. ' Call for the robin-red-breast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm :
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.'

They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel ;
But I have an answer for them :
' Let holy church receive him duly,
Since he paid the church-tithes truly.'
His wealth is summed, and this is all his store,
This poor men get, and great men get no more.
Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.
Bless you all, good people.

JOHN WEBSTER (1580?-1625?),
from *The White Devil*

1. What is your first impression on reading this extract?
2. What mood is suggested in the opening lines? How is it maintained and intensified?
3. Is this melodramatic speech or true poetry? Support your answer.
4. Comment on Webster's handling of blank verse, and distinguish it from that of Tournear.
5. Of the passage beginning, ' Call for the robin-red-breast and the wren ', Lamb says, ' I never saw anything like this dirge except the ditty which reminds Ferdinand of his drowned father in *The Tempest*. As that is of the water, watery ; so this is of the earth, earthy.' Compare the two in some detail.

20

All ye woods, and trees, and bowers,
All ye virtues and ye powers
That inhabit in the lakes,
In the pleasant springs or brakes,
Move your feet
To our sound
Whilst we greet
All this ground

With his honour and his name
That defends our flocks from blame.

He is great, and he is just,
He is ever good, and must
Thus be honoured. Daffodillies,
Roses, pinks, and loved lilies,
Let us fling,
Whilst we sing,
Ever holy,
Ever holy,
Ever honoured, ever young!
Thus great Pan is ever sung.

JOHN FLETCHER (1579-1625),
from *The Faithful Shepherdess*

1. What is the impression made on you by this poem?
2. Analyse the rhythm and pattern of the poem, and state the effect produced.
3. Does the poem seem to you to be formal and artificial, or fresh and spontaneous? State your reasons.

21

I will not court the madness of the times ;
Nor fawn upon the riots that embalm
Our wanton gentry, to preserve the dust
Of their affected vanities in coffins
Of memorable shame. When commonwealths
Totter and reel from that nobility
And ancient virtue which renowns the great,
Who steer the helm of government, while mushrooms
Grow up, and make new laws to license folly ;

Why should not I, a May-game, scorn the weight
 Of my sunk fortunes? snarl at the vices
 Which rot the land, and, without fear or wit
 Be mine own antic? 'Tis a sport to live
 When life is irksome, if we will not hug
 Prosperity in others, and contemn
 Affliction in ourselves. This rule is certain,
 ' He that pursues his safety from the school
 Of state must learn to be madman or fool.'
 Ambition, wealth, ease, I renounce—the devil
 That damns ye here on earth. Or I will be
 Mine own mirth, or mine own tormentor.—So!
 Here comes intelligence ; a buzz o' the court.

JOHN FORD (1586-1639), from
The Lover's Melancholy

1. Give a summary of the passage.
2. Why are the following expressions impressive?
 - (a) ' in coffins of memorable shame.'
 - (b) ' 'Tis a sport to live when life is irksome.'
 - (c) ' Why should not I, a May-game, scorn the
 weight
 Of my sunk fortunes? '
3. Write a short appreciation of the movement of the blank verse.

22

Then walked they to a grove but near at hand,
 Where fiery Titan had but small command,
 Because the leaves conspiring kept his beams,
 For fear of hurting, when he's in extremes,
 The under-flow'ers, which did enrich the ground
 With sweeter scents than in Arabia found.

The earth doth yield, which they through pores exhale,
 Earth's best of odours, th' aromatical ;
 Like to that smell which oft our sense describes
 Within a field which long unplowed lies,
 Somewhat before the setting of the sun;
 And where the rainbow in the horizon
 Doth pitch her tips : or as when in the prime,
 The earth being troubled with a drought long time,
 The hand of heaven his spongy clouds doth strain,
 And throws into her lap a shower of rain ;
 She sendeth up, conceived from the sun,
 A sweet perfume and exhalation.
 Not all the ointments brought from Delos isle ;
 Nor from the confines of seven-headed Nile ;
 Nor that brought whence Phenicians have abodes,
 Nor Cyprus' wild vine-flowers, nor that of Rhodes,
 Nor roses' oil from Naples, Capua,
 Saffron confected in Cilicia ;
 Nor that of quinces nor of marjoram
 That ever from the isle of Coos came.
 Nor these, nor any else, though ne'er so rare,
 Could with this place for sweetest smells compare.

WILLIAM BROWNE (1588-1643),

from *Britannia's Pastorals*

1. What is your first impression on reading this extract?
2. What verse form is this? What are its chief characteristics? (Consider the rhythm, the position of the caesura.)
3. What examples of the following occur :
 (a) Conceit, (b) Personification, (c) Rhetoric, (d) Diaeresis,
 (e) Paragoge, (f) Elision?
4. Would you call this poetry classical or romantic? Support your answer by a careful consideration of the language.

5. Compare and contrast this with the passage from Spenser.

6. What do you learn of the characteristics of pastoral poetry from this extract?

23

Get up, get up for shame, the Blooming Morne
Upon her wings presents the god unshorne.

See how *Aurora* throwes her faire
Fresh-quilted colours through the aire :

Get up, sweet-Slug-a-bed, and see
The Dew-bespangling Herbe and Tree.

Each Flower has wept, and bow'd toward the East,
Above an houre since ; yet you not drest,

Nay! not so much as out of bed?

When all the Birds have Mattens seyde,
And sung their thankfull Hynines : 'tis sin,

Nay, profanation to keep in,

When as a thousand Virgins on this day,
Spring, sooner then the Lark, to fetch in May.

Rise ; and put on your Foliage, and be scene
To come forth, like the Spring-time, fresh and greene ;

And sweet as *Flora*. Take no care

For Jewels for your Gowne, or Haire :

Feare not; the leaves will strew

Gemms in abundance upon you :

Besides, the childhood of the Day has kept,
Against you come, some *Orient Pearls* unwept:

Come and receive them while the light

Hangs on the Dew-locks of the night :

And *Titan* on the Eastern hill

Retires himselfe, or else stands still

Till you come forth. Wash, dresse, be briefe in praying :
Few Beads are best, when once we goe a Maying.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1674),
from ' *Corinna's going a Maying* '

1. Discuss the structure and rhythm of the poem, and the effect produced.
2. Consider the meticulous choice of words, and show how it contributes to the poet's charm and lightness of touch.
3. What examples can you find of 'ingenious fancy *?'
4. What do you learn of the personality of the poet from this poem? What do you gather is his attitude towards his art?
5. This poem has been called 'the classic of all the English songs on May'. What qualities have made it so?

24

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright!
The bridal of the earth and sky—
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
 Like season'd timber, never gives ;
 But though the whole world turn to coal,
 Then chiefly lives.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593-1633),
 from *The Temple*, 1633

1. What is the theme of the poem? What emotion inspired this poem?

2. Show how the third stanza summarises the first two, and leads to the point of the poem in the last stanza.

3. Consider the pattern of the verse, and point out its artistic merits.

4. How is the exquisite cadence of the verse achieved?

5. 'The metaphysicals are the masters of the "neutral style", of a diction equally appropriate, according as it may be used, to prose and verse' (H. J. G. Grierson). Write a short appreciation of the diction of this poem.

6. 'Herbert is (in contrast with Grashaw) comparatively simple, and distinguished by a domestic rather than a spiritual imagery' (Herbert Read). Make a careful study of the imagery used here.

25

O, heart! the equal poise of Love's both parts,
 Big alike with wounds and darts,
 Live in these conquering leaves, live all the same,
 And walk through all tongues one triumphant flame ;
 Live here, great heart, and love, and die, and kill,
 And bleed, and wound, and yield, and conquer still.
 Let this immortal Life, where'er it comes,
 Walk in a crowd of loves and martyrdoms.
 Let mystic deaths wait on't, and wise souls be
 The love-slain witnesses of this life of thee.

O, sweet incendiary! show here thy art
 Upon this carcass of a hard, cold heart;
 Let all thy scatter'd shafts of light, that play
 Among the leaves of thy large books of day,
 Combined against this breast, at once break in
 And take away from me myself and sin ;
 This gracious robbery shall thy bounty be,
 And my best fortunes such fair spoils of me.
 O. thou undaunted daughter of desires!
 By all thy dower of lights and fires,
 By all the eagle in thee, all the dove,
 By all thy lives and deaths of love,
 By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
 And by thy thirsts of love more large than they ;
 By all thy brim-filPd bowls of fierce desire,
 By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire,
 By the full kingdom of that final kiss
 That seiz'd thy parting soul, and seal'd thee his ;
 By all the heav'ns thou hast in him,
 Fair sister of the seraphim!
 By all of him we have in thee,
 Leave nothing of myself in me :
 Let me so read thy life that I
 Unto all life of mine may die.

RICHARD CRASHAW (1612?-1649),
 from *The Flaming Heart, Upon the Book
 and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa*

1. State the theme of the passage, and indicate the poet's intention.
2. Point out the poetic qualities of:
 - (a) ' Upon this carcass of a hard, cold heart.'
 - (b) 'This gracious robbery shall thy bounty be.'
 - (c) ' By thy large draughts of intellectual day.'

(d) 'By all thy brim-filPd bowls of fierce desire.'

(e) ' By the full kingdom of that final kiss.'

3. Analyse the rhythm of the verse, and show how it fits the thought and feeling.

4. Examine carefully the use of metaphor, and state the effect achieved. (Decide whether these analogies give the poet's meaning, feeling, state of mind.)

5. Consider the language. Is it concrete or abstract? What difficulties do you find?

6. Write a short appreciation of this passage, and say how the feeling differs from that of the poem by Donne.

7. 'It may be doubted whether there are any lines so sincere and so passionate, yet so direct and impressive, in the whole of English poetry ' (Herbert Read). Examine the passage finally in the light of this statement.

26

Happy those early days, when I
 Shin'd in my Angel-infancy!
 Before I understood this place
 Appointed for my second race,
 Or taught my soul to fancy aught
 But a white celestial thought :
 When yet I had not walk'd above
 A mile or two from my first Love,
 And looking back—at that short space—
 Could see a glimpse of His bright face :
 When on some gilded cloud, or flow'r,
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
 And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity :
 Before I taught my tongue to wound
 My Conscience with a sinful sound,

Or had the black art to dispense
 A several sin to ev'ry sense,
 But felt through all this fleshly dress
 Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
 And tread again that ancient track!
 That I might once more reach that plain
 Where first I left my glorious train ;
 From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
 That shady City of Palm-trees.
 But ah! my soul with too much stay
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
 Some men a forward motion love.
 But I by backward steps would move ;
 And when this dust falls to the urn,
 In that state I came, return.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1621-1695),
 from *Silex Scintillans*, 1650

1. Give the substance of the poem in your own words.
2. What is meant by : Angel-infancy, second race, first love, glorious train, City of Palm-trees?
3. In what lies the poetic effectiveness of the following?
 - (a) ' Or taught my soul to fancy aught
 But a white celestial thought.'
 - (b) ' And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity.'
 - (c) ' But felt through all this fleshly dress
 Bright shoots of everlastingness.'
 - (d) ' But ah! my soul with too much stay
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way! '
4. Consider the language, and the structure of the sentences. Is the verse as neat and finished as that of Herbert?

5. Compare this poem with Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*. What are the differences in development, feeling, and poetic treatment?

27

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore ; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At ev'ning from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marie, not like those steps
On Heavens azure ; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea, he stood and call'd
His legions, Angel forms, who lay entranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd embow'r ; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld

From the safe shore their floating carcasses
And broken chariot-wheels ; so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded.

JOHN MILTON (1608-1674), from *Paradise Lost*

1. What do you consider to be the most striking quality of this passage?

2. Examine the use of the following and state the effect achieved :

(a) Alliteration, (b) Inversion, (c) Prothesis, (d) Proper Names, (e) Simile, (f) Transferred Epithet.

3. Keats said, ' *Paradise Lost*, though fine in itself, is a corruption of our language ... a northern dialect accommodating itself to Greek and Latin inversions and intonations.' Indicate the Latinisms, and comment on this criticism.

4. Mark and prepare for reading aloud. Write an appreciation of the rhythmic pattern, cadence, and harmony of the verse.

5. Milton defines blank verse as, ' Apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another.' What are the chief differences between his blank verse and that of the passage from *Measure for Measure*?

6. The Grand style (which has been called ' magniloquent ') is impressive, but it is external, and ' works from the outside '. Explain this statement of F. R. Leavis, and discuss its implications.

7. The style of *Paradise Lost* is ' more constantly lifted above the level of prose than any other in English poetry '. (E. Legouis). By what means is this achieved?

28

Avenge O Lord thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
 Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold ;
 Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
 When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones,
 Forget not : in thy book record their groans
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that rolPd
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
 O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
 A hundred-fold, who having learn'd thy way
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

JOHN MILTON

On the late Massacre in Piedmont

1. What are the chief differences in form between the Shakespearean and the Miltonic sonnet?
2. Compare this with the sonnet by Shakespeare. What are the differences in feeling?
3. Show how the Alliteration, Assonance, and Diction contribute to the compelling power of this poem.
4. Consider the particular rimes used here. Why are they so effective?
5. ' He ignores the contrast of the octave with the sextet. The sonnet to work with full force must have this central hinge.' (Hilaire Belloc). Discuss this comment on Milton's treatment of the sonnet form.

29

For his religion, it was fit
 To match his learning and his wit:

'Twas presbyterian true blue ;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true church militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun ;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery ;
And prove their doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks ;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly, thorough reformation,
Which always must be carried on,
And still be doing, never done ;
As if religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended t
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd perverse antipathies ;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss ;
More peevish, cross, and splenetic,
Than dog distract, or monkey sick ;
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way ;
Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,
By damning those they have noe mind to :
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipped God for spite :
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for :
Free-will they one way disavow.
Another, nothing else allow :
All piety consists therein

In them, in other men all sin :
 Rather than fail, they will defy
 That which they love most tenderly ;
 Quarrel with minc'd pies and disparage
 Their best and dearest friend, plum porridge.
 Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
 And blaspheme custard through the nose.

SAMUEL BUTLER (1612-1680),
 from *Hudibras*

1. Give a title to the passage.
2. Which couplet expresses most trenchantly the satire on Presbyterianism?
3. Explain the significance of the following :
 - (a) ' Decide all controversies by
 Infallible artillery.'
 - (b) ' Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,
 By damning those they have noe mind to.'
 - (c) ' Quarrel with minc'd pies and disparage
 Their best and dearest friend, plum porridge.'
4. Much of the success of this poem was due to the verse form. Can you suggest why?
5. Illustrate the variety and ingenuity of the rimes.
6. Examine the use of the following, giving an example of each :
 - (a) Epigram, (b) Humour, (c) Irony, (d) Sarcasm,
 - (e) Wit.
7. Sum up the outstanding qualities of this style.

30

Oh Life, thou Nothing's younger Brother!
 So like, that one might take one for the other!
 What's Some Body, or No Body?
 In all the Cobwebs of the Schoolmens Trade,

We no such nice Distinction woven see,
As 'tis To be, or Not to be.
Dream of a Shadow! a Reflection made
From the false Glories of the gay reflected Bow,
Is a more solid thing than thou.
Vain weak-built Isthmus, which dost proudly rise
Up betwixt two Eternities ;
Yet canst nor Wave nor Wind sustain,
But broken and o'erwhelm'd, the endless Oceans meet
again.

And with what rare Inventions do we strive,
Our selves then to survive?
Wise, subtle Arts, and such as well befit
That Nothing Mans no Wit.
Some with vast costly Tombs would purchase it,
And by the Proofs of Death pretend to Live.
Here lies the Great——False Marble, where?
Nothing but small, and sordid Dust lyes there.
Some build enormous Mountain-Palaces,
The Fools and Architects to please :
A lasting Life in well-hew'n Stone they rear :
So he¹ who on th' Egyptian Shore,
Was slain so many hundred Years before,
Lives still (Oh Life most happy and most dear!
Oh Life that Epicures envy to hear!)
Lives in the dropping Ruins of his Amphitheater.

His Father-in-Law an higher Place does claim
In the Seraphique Entity of Fame.
He since that Toy his Death,
Does fill all Mouths and breathes in all mens Breath.

¹ Pompey the Great.

'Tis true, the two Immortal Syllables remain,
 But, oh ye learned Men, explain,
 What Essence, what Existence this,
 What Substance, what Subsistence, what Hypostatis
 In Six poor Letters is?
 In those alone does the Great Caesar live,
 'Tis all the Conquered World could give.
 We Poets madder yet than all,
 With a refin'd Phantastick Vanity,
 Think we not only Have, but Give Eternity.
 Fain would I see that Prodigal,
 Who his To-morrow would bestow,
 For all old Homer's Life e'er since he dy'd 'till now.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618-1667),

' Life and Fame,' from *Pindarique Odes*

1. Trace the development of thought in the poem.
2. Enumerate the images in the first stanza. Which do you consider to be the most effective? Why?
3. Write a careful paraphrase of the third stanza.
4. Analyse the structure of the verse form. Is it regular? Why should it be called an Ode? What is the connection with Pindar?
5. Find an example of each of the following :
 (a) Alliteration, (b) Antithesis, (c) Apostrophe, (d) Conceit, (e) Epigram, (f) Hyperbole, (g) Metaphor, (h) Litotes.
6. Indicate the qualities which make Cowley a Metaphysical poet. In what respects does he foreshadow the Classical Age?

Had we but world enough, and time,
 This coyness, Lady, were no crime.

We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Should'st rubies find : I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow ;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze ;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest ;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near ;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song : then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity.
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust :
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires

At every pore with instant fires,
 Now let us sport us while we may,
 And now, like amorous birds of prey,
 Rather at once our time devour,
 Than languish in his slow-chapt¹ power.
 Let us roll all our strength and all
 Our sweetness up into one ball,
 And tear our pleasures with rough strife,
 Thorough the iron gates of life :
 Thus, though we cannot make our sun
 Stand still, yet we will make him run.

ANDREW MARVELL (1621-1678),

To his Coy Mistress

1. What is the theme of the poem? How does the poet give it a new turn?

2. Write a full paraphrase of the last section beginning,
⁴ Now therefore, while the youthful hue . . . '

3. Point out the poetic qualities of the following expressions :

(a) ' My vegetable love should grow
 Vaster than empires, and more slow.'

(b) ' But at my back I always hear
 Time's winged chariot hurrying near ;
 And yonder all before us lie
 Deserts of vast eternity.'

(c) ' Let us roll all our strength and all
 Our sweetness up into one ball,
 And tear our pleasures with rough strife,
 Thorough the iron gates of life.'

4. Indicate the 'succession of concentrated images'. Consider these images in the light of Coleridge's statement on Imagination, and say why they are effective.

¹ Slow-jawed, slowly devouring.

5. How is the speed of the verse achieved?
6. What use does the poet make of surprise? (Consider the beginning of each paragraph.)
7. Indicate the changes of mood (alliance of levity and seriousness'), and consider the nature of the wit which pervades the whole poem.
8. In many ways this is the masterpiece of Metaphysical poetry. Indicate those qualities which make it so.
9. Does this poem satisfy Milton's dictum that poetry should be 'simple, sensuous and passionate'?

32

Of these the false Achitophel was first,
A name to all succeeding ages curst :
For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
Restless, unfixed in principles and place,
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace ;
A fiery soul which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high,
He sought the storms ; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide ;
Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please,
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won
To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son,

Got, while his soul did huddled notions try,
 And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
 In friendship false, implacable in hate,
 Resolved to ruin or to rule the state ;
 To compass this the triple bond he broke,
 The pillars of the public safety shook,
 And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke ;
 Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame
 Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
 So easy still it proves in factious times
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
 How safe is treason and how sacred ill,
 Where none can sin against the people's will,
 Where crowds can wink and no offence be known,
 Since in another's guilt they find their own!

JOHN DRYDEN (1631-1700), from
Absalom and Achitophel

1. Enumerate those qualities in the character of * the false Achitophel' which Dryden satirises in this passage. Is the portrait a caricature?

2. Dryden has been called ' the great master of contempt'. What support for this title do you find here?

3. ' Dryden continually enhances : he makes his object great in a way contrary to expectation ' (T. S. Eliot). Is the statement true of this passage?

4. Discuss the nature of the satire, and the means employed.

5. Analyse the verse form, and indicate why it is so well suited to its purpose.

6. Examine the poetic diction. Do you find it * prosaic '? Support your answer.

7. * He is the most masculine of our poets ; his style and his rhythms lay the strongest stress of all our literature on

the naked thew and sinew of the English language ' (G. M. Hopkins). Sum up your remarks in a careful appreciation of this passage.

33

A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find ;
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That Casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,
This, who can gratify? for who can guess?
The Bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half a Crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains from hard-bound brains, eight lines a year ;
He, who still wanting, tho' he lives on theft,
Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left :
And he, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning :
And he whose fustian's so sublimely bad,
It is not Poetry, but prose run mad :
All these, my modest Satire bade translate,
And own'd that nine such Poets made a Tate.
How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe!
And swear, not Addison himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there One whose fires
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires;
Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease :
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise ;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,

And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;
 Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;
 Dreading cv'n fools, by Flatterers besieg'd,
 And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd ;
 Like Cato, give his little Senate laws,
 And sit attentive to his own applause ;
 While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise :—
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
 Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?

ALEXANDER POPE (1688-1744),

from *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*

1. Paraphrase : (a) lines 1-4, (b) lines 9-12.
2. Trace the gradual development of the satirical idea in the second half of the passage.
3. Pope has been called a ' master of miniature '. Compare this ' character' with the one by Dryden, and indicate the difference in method and intention.
4. Discuss Pope's handling of the heroic couplet, paying particular attention to the rhythm, balance, pause, relation of the lines in each couplet, and of the halves of each line. How does it differ from the couplet of Dryden?
5. Show how Pope achieves the ease and freedom of conversation.
6. Illustrate the urbane politeness of the satiric attack, and indicate the ' poised and subtle variety ' exhibited here.
7. Consider the manner of this passage, and point out in what ways it is a typical example of Classicism.

34

By nature's law, what may be, may be now ;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain ; the reverse
Is sure to none ; and yet on this perhaps,
This peradventure, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant, we build
Our mountain hopes, spin out eternal schemes
As we the fatal sisters could out-spin,
And big with life's futurities, expire.
Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud.
Nor had he cause ; a warning was denied :
How many fall as sudden, not as safe ;
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home!
Of human ills the last extreme beware ;
Beware, Lorenzo, a slow sudden death.
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day ; 'tis madness to defer ;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time ;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.
Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears
The palm, ' That all men are about to live,
For ever on the brink of being born.'
All pay themselves the compliment to think

They one day shall not drivell : and their pride
 On this reversion takes up ready praise ;
 At least, their own ; their future selves applaud
 How excellent that life they ne'er will lead.

EDWARD YOUNG (1683-1765),
 from *Night Thoughts*

1. What is the theme of the passage?
2. What kind of poetry is this? What verse form is used?
 What is the poet's intention?
3. Examine the language. Is it concise, elevated, pretentious, artificial, or what? Support your answer.
4. Indicate an example of each of the following, and comment upon its use :
 (a) Allusion, (b) Aphorism, (c) Metaphor, (d) Oxymoron,
 (e) Personification.
5. Examine the feeling, and point out any new sensibility which you may observe.

35

At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
 Scarce staining ether ; but by fast degrees,
 In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
 Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep,
 Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom :
 Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
 Oppressing life ; but lovely, gentle, kind,
 And full of every hope and every joy,
 The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
 Into a perfect calm ; that not a breath
 Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
 Or rustling turn the many twinkling leaves
 Of aspen tall. The uncurling floods, diffused

In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
 Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
 Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
 The fallen verdure. Hushed in short suspense,
 The plummy people streak their wings with oil,
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off;
 And wait the approaching sign to strike, at once,
 Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
 And forests seem impatient, to demand
 The promised sweetness. Man superior walks
 Amid the glad creation, musing praise.
 And looking lively gratitude. At last,
 The clouds consign their treasures to the fields ;
 And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
 Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
 In large effusion, o'er the freshened world.

JAMES THOMSON (1700-1748), from *The Seasons*

1. What does the passage describe?
2. Criticise the writing of the following :
 ' 'Tis silence all,
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
 Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
 The fallen verdure. Hushed in short suspense,
 The plummy people streak their wings with oil,
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off;
 And wait the approaching sign to strike, at once,
 Into the general choir.'
3. Indicate the significance of this expression in regard to the poet's attitude to his subject :
 ' Man superior walks
 Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
 And looking lively gratitude '

4. What evidence is there that the poet had 'his eye on the object'? What traces of 'literary memories' can you find? Compare this passage with the extract from *Britannia's Pastorals*.

5. Is the atmosphere Classical or Romantic? Consider the handling of the verse, turn of phrase, diction, and literary devices.

36

When first the College Rolls receive his Name,
The young Enthusiast quits his Ease for Fame ;
Thro' all his Veins the Fever of Renown
Burns from the strong Contagion of the Gown ;
O'er Bodley's Dome his future Labours spread
And Bacon's Mansion trembles o'er his Head ;
Are these thy Views? proceed, illustrious Youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the Throne of Truth,
Yet should thy Soul indulge the gen'rous Heat,
Till captive Science yields her last Retreat ;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest Ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless Day ;
Should no false Kindness lure to loose Delight,
Nor Praise relax, nor Difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy Cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate Fumes in Vain ;
Should Beauty blunt on Fops her fatal Dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd Heart;
Should no Disease thy torpid Veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's Phantoms haunt thy shade ;
Yet hope not Life from Grief or Danger free,
Nor think the Doom of Man revers'd for thee.
Deign on the passing World to turn thine Eyes,
And pause awhile from Letters to be wise ;

There mark what Ills the Scholar's Life assail,
 Toil, Envy, Want, the Patron, and the Jail.
 See Nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
 To buried Merit raise the tardy Bust.
 If Dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
 Hear Lydiat's Life, and Galileo's End.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709-1784),
 from *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

1. Give the substance of the extract.
2. What kind of poetry is this? State the poet's purpose.
3. What do you learn of the poet himself from this passage?
4. Examine the language. Is it concrete or abstract? Do you find it effective as poetry (give reasons), or would the verses be better turned into prose?
5. Analyse the verse carefully, indicate the particular kind of imagery, and the 'generalising weight' of the whole.
6. What are the outstanding qualities of this style? How does it differ from that of Pope? Are there any signs that the heroic couplet is declining?

.37

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
 Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;
 Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad : nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd ;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray ;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,

With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

THOMAS GRAY (1716-1771),
 from *Elegy written in a Country Church-Tard*

1. What is the theme of the extract?
2. State what you find effective in the following expressions:

(a) 'Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.'

(b) 'Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.'

(c) 'Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.'

(d) 'With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture
 deck'd,

Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.'

Can you detect any similarity to the verse of Johnson?

3. Examine the stanza form. Is it suitable for an elegy?

4. How does Gray achieve what has been called the 4 decent elegiac mode '?

5. Do you find the *Elegy* conventional and literary? Do you think it would bear any serious relation to the life of its time? How would you account for its continued popularity?

6. What are the chief differences in style between this and the poem by Herbert?

38

If ought of Oaten Stop, or Pastoral Song,
 May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine Ear,
 Like thy own brawling Springs,
 Thy Springs, and dying Gales,
 O Nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd Sun

Sits in yon western Tent, whose cloudy Skirts,
With Brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy Bed :
Now Air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd Bat,
With short shrill Shriek flits by on leathern Wing,
Or where the Beetle winds
His small but sullen Horn,
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight Path,
Against the Pilgrim born in heedless Hum :
Now teach me, Maid compos'd,
To breathe some soften'd Strain,
Whose Numbers stealing thro' thy darkning Vale,
May not unseemly with its Stillness suit,
As musing slow, I hail.
Thy genial lov'd Return!
For when thy folding Star arising shews
His paly Circlet, at his warning Lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in Buds the Day,
And many a Nymph who wreaths her Brows with
Sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning Dew, and lovelier still,
The Pensive Pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy Car.
Then let me rove some wild and heathy Scene,
Or find some Ruin 'midst its dreary Dells,
Whose Walls more awful nod
By thy religious Gleams.
Or if chill blustering Winds, or driving Rain,
Prevent my willing Feet, be mine the Hut,
That from the Mountain's Side,
Views Wilds, and swelling Floods,
And Hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd Spires,

And hears their simple Bell, and marks o'er all
Thy Dewy Fingers draw
The gradual dusky Veil.
While Spring shall pour his Show'rs, as oft he
wont,
And bathe thy breathing Tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport,
Beneath thy ling'ring Light :
While sallow Autumn fills thy Lap with Leaves,
Or Winter yelling thro' the troublous Air,
Affrights thy shrinking Train,
And rudely rends thy Robes.
So long regardful of thy quiet Rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest Influence own,
And love thy fav'rite Name!

WILLIAM COLLINS (1721-1759),
Ode to Evening

1. What immediate impression does this poem make upon you?
2. Indicate the objects that are (a) realistically, (b) imaginatively described.
3. Write a critical appreciation of the diction.
4. What is the atmosphere of the poem? How is it achieved?
5. Indicate the contrast between the meditative-melancholy and the freshness of the poem. Is the poem Classical or Romantic in style?
6. Read through *Lycidas* and *L'Allegro* and indicate the reminiscences of Milton in this poem.
7. Analyse the metre and the rhythmic pattern of the verse. How is the delicate eloquence achieved?

39

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train ;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway ;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfin'd :
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting asks, if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from the shore ;
Hoards, e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes a space that many poor supplied ;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds ;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robb'd the neighbouring fields of half their growth,

His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green ;
 Around the world each needful product flies,
 For all the luxuries the world supplies :
 While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure, all
 In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728-1774),
 from *The Deserted Village*

1. What is the argument? Do you find it effectively stated?
2. What kind of poetry is this? What forms the poet's inspiration? Can you account for the poem's continued popularity?
3. How does the verse form differ in structure and rhythm from that of Pope?
4. ' His melting sentiment just held in check by the precision of his language ' (T. S. Eliot). Compare the language with that of James Thomson.
5. What are the outstanding qualities of this style? Has it any of the virtues of prose?

40

The poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade
 And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade,
 The winds play no longer, and sing in the leaves,
 Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have claps'd since I first took a view
 Of my favourite field and the bank where they grew,
 And now in the grass behold they are laid,
 And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
 Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
 And the scene where his melody charm'd me before.
 Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
 And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
 With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head.
 Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if any thing can,
 To muse on the perishing pleasures of man ;
 Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
 Have a being less durable even than he.

WILLIAM COWPER (1731-1800),

The Poplar-field

1. What experience does the poem express?
2. Consider the moralising in the last stanzas, and show how it is a natural development from the rest of the poem.
3. Consider the verse form. Scan the first stanza, and show how Cowper has applied what has been called a 'rocking-horse rhythm' to 'completely solemn purposes'.
4. What new tendencies are evident here? (Consider the mood.)
5. Write a critical appreciation of the poem.

41

But these are scenes where Nature's niggard hand
 Gave a spare portion to the famish'd land ;
 Hers is the fault, if here mankind complain
 Of fruitless toil and labour spent in vain ;
 But yet in other scenes more fair in view,
 Where Plenty smiles—alas! she smiles for few—

And those who taste not, yet behold her store,
Are as the slaves that dig the golden ore,—
The wealth around them makes them doubly poor.
Or will you deem them amply paid in health,
Labour's fair child, that languishes with wealth?
Go then! and see them rising with the sun,
Through a long course of daily toil to run ;
See them beneath the dog-star's raging heat,
When the knees tremble and the temples beat ;
Behold them, leaning on their scythes, look o'er
The labour past, and toils to come explore ;
See them alternate suns and showers engage,
And hoard up aches and anguish for their age ;
Through fens and marshy moors their steps pursue,
When their warm pores imbibe the evening dew ;
Then own that labour may as fatal be
To these thy slaves, as thine excess to thee.

Amid this tribe too oft a manly pride
Strives in strong toil the fainting heart to hide ;
There may you see the youth of slender frame
Contend with weakness, weariness, and shame ;
Yet, urged along, and proudly loth to yield,
He strives to join his fellows of the field.
Till long-contending nature droops at last,
Declining health rejects his poor repast,
His cheerless spouse the coming danger sees,
And mutual murmurs urge the slow disease.

GEORGE CRABBE (1754-1832),
from *The Village*, 1783

1. What new material is handled here? Can you suggest the motive?
2. Trace the development of the thought in this extract.

3. Indicate the Realism. Is it effectively presented?
4. Find examples of the following, and comment on their use:
(a) Alliteration, (b) Antithesis, (c) Personification, (d) Conventional Diction.
5. 'Pope in worsted stockings.' How true is this of Crabbe's style?
6. Consider the form, matter, and outlook. (Scan the first nine lines.) Is Crabbe in the Augustan tradition, or do you find traces of the new Romanticism?

42

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,

Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827),
from *Songs of Experience*, 1794

1. What is the poet's attitude to the subject?
2. Point out the individual idiom and unusual technique of the poem.
3. In what ways is it a 'romantic' poem?
4. By what means are the qualities of vitality and vividness given to this poem?
5. Discuss the following statement : 'When we repeat "Tiger, Tiger, burning bright" we aren't talking about a real tiger, we are talking about ourselves, because with the poem we frighten ourselves—almost mesmerise ourselves—and at the same time we end up feeling as strong as a tiger. And that is what we mean when we say that the poem *moves* us' (Humphrey Jennings, in *The Listener*, 4th May, 1938).

43

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
 An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thiefe ;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
 'S a sma' request :
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
 And never miss 't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
 O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuing
 Both snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out-thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 In proving foresight may be vain :
 The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft a-gley,
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee :
 But oh! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear!
 An' forward tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796),
*To a Mouse, on turning her up in her nest
 with the plough, November 1785*

1. Say what is significant in the choice of subject, and state the poet's intention. Do you feel that he is writing of a genuine experience? Why?
2. How does the poet give interest and importance to a trivial incident?
3. What are the outstanding qualities of this lyrical expression?
4. Indicate the cleavage from the literary modes of the eighteenth century.
5. In what ways would such poetry as this influence the next generation of poets?

44

For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint

What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite ; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more.
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Fain I: I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
Have followed ; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850),
from *Lines composed above Tintern Abbey*, 1798

1. Give the substance in your own words, making clear the main divisions of the thought.

2. Explain carefully the lines beginning 'For I have learned' down to 'To chasten and subdue', and from 'Of all the mighty world' to 'Of all my moral being'.

3. Show how the verse is controlled, and the meaning intensified from 'That time is past' down to 'To chasten and subdue'. And show how the verse rises in an emotional crescendo from 'And I have felt' to 'And rolls through all things'.

4. Write a short appreciation of the structure and movement of the blank verse. How does it differ from that of (a) Shakespeare, (b) Milton?

5. Do you think the 'convincing success of the poetry covers the argument', or do you find a satisfying completeness in Wordsworth's statement? Support your answer.

6. Discuss Herbert Read's remark that 'Wordsworth, perhaps more than any other English poet, shows that the vocabulary of logical thought has the same poetic possibilities as the vocabulary of lyrical sensation'.

45

The world is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;

For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
 It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Sonnet XXXIII

1. What feeling does the sonnet express?
2. To what type of sonnet does this belong? How does it differ from that of Shakespeare in arrangement?
3. Show the relationship between the octave and sestet. What makes the sestet impressive?
4. Write a critical appreciation of the poem, pointing out what qualities of the sonnet suit Wordsworth's genius.

46

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
 Pass as lightly as you will!
 The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
 Amid their own white ashes lying ;
 But when the lady passed, there came
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
 And Ghristabel saw the lady's eye,
 And nothing else saw she thereby,
 Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
 Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
 O softly tread, said Christabel,
 My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom.
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door ;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834),
from *Christabel*

1. What characteristic strikes you on first reading?
2. Analyse the verse form, and indicate the principle of accentuation employed. Show how the pattern is admirably adapted to the subject.
3. How is the general atmosphere of mystery and the supernatural achieved?

4. Write an appreciation of the imagery, and of Coleridge's use of words.

5. What new qualities mark the description in this passage?

47

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep,
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring ;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well ;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know ;

Their kings, their lords, their mightiest, low,
They melted from the field, as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land ;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832),
from *Marmion*

1. State the main facts in this passage.
2. What kind of poetry is this? Consider the verse form, and show in what ways it suits the subject.
3. What means are used to give speed, energy, and vividness to this narrative?
4. Enumerate the romantic qualities of this verse.

48

From you, lanthe, little troubles pass
Like little ripples down a sunny river ;
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,
Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.
lanthe

Stand close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat conveyed,
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old and she a shade.

Dirce

I strove with none ; for none was worth my strife.
Nature I loved and, next to Nature, Art :
I warmed both hands before the fire of life ;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

On his Seventy-fifth Birthday

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775-1864)

1. What kind of poems are these? What makes them effective?
2. Which of the three do you prefer? Give your reasons.
3. Consider the feeling, attitude, and manner, and state whether these poems are examples of classical or romantic art.

49

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824),
from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

1. What does the extract describe?
2. Name the stanza form, and indicate the distinctive qualities of the poet's technique.
3. State the poet's attitude. What do you gather of his personality from this passage?
4. Examine the language, and show how Byron attains nervous energy of expression.
5. Do you find the poetic devices employed effective? Are there any evidences of careless writing?
6. Is this an example of mere rhetoric or of lyrical eloquence? Support your answer.

50

He has outsoared the shadow of our night ;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again ;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain ;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he ;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone ;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

He is made one with Nature : there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird ;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely : he doth bear

His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
 Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
 there,
 All new successions to the forms they wear ;
 Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
 To its own likeness, as each mass may bear ;
 And bursting in its beauty and its might
 From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's
 light.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822),
 from *Adonais*

1. Explain the following expressions, bringing out their full significance :

(a) 'From the contagion of the world's slow stain
 He is secure.'¹

(b) 'He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he.'

(c) 'thou Air,
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
 O'er the abandoned Earth.'

(d) 'He is made one with Nature : there is heard
 His voice in all her music.'

2. Write an amplified paraphrase of the last stanza.

3. What do you learn of Shelley's conception of the spiritual universe from these stanzas?

4. What is the verse form? Comment upon Shelley's technique, and say how his treatment of the metre differs from that of Byron.

5. Consider the emotion and say how it differs from that of Gray's *Elegy*. Select significant words to show Shelley's characteristic mode of expression.

6. Write a critical appreciation of the imagery, and show in what way it is distinctive.

51

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware :
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed ;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and
fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide :
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side ;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and
kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon ;
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands together prest,
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst.
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
 Save wings, for heaven :—Porphyro grew faint:
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821),

from *The Eve of St. Agnes*

1. Consider the atmosphere in these stanzas. How is it achieved? How is it emphasised?

2. Analyse the verse form, and show how it differs in treatment from that of Byron and Shelley.

3. Select epithets and phrases which you consider most effective, and indicate the particular poetic qualities they possess.

4. Indicate the rich local concreteness of the imagery, and contrast it with the imagery of Shelley.

5. * A focussing of the vision so as to shut out the uncongenial is essentially the purpose of Keats's worship of Beauty' (F. R. Leavis). Discuss in relation to this poem.

6. ' Keats saw words as things, and he saw them one at a time ' (Arthur Symonds). Write a brief study of Keats's use of language.

7. Enumerate the Romantic qualities of this style.

52

There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail :
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with
 me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we arc ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809-1892),

from *Ulysses*

1. What are the main points of Ulysses' speech?
2. Illustrate the pictorial quality of the verse, and compare it with that of Keats.
3. Illustrate the use of onomatopoeia. Why is it effective? What other poetic devices are used to heighten the effect?
4. Examine the meticulous craftsmanship of the blank

verse. Do you find here any original note? Support your answer.

5. Write an appreciation of this passage. Is it verse of art or of feeling?

53

For, don't you mark, we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see ;
And so they are better, painted—better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that—
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out. Have you noticed, now,
Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of chalk,
And trust me but you should, though! How much
more,
If I drew higher things with the same truth!
That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place,
Interpret God to all of you! oh, oh,
It makes me mad to see what men shall do
And we in our graves! This world's no blot for us,
Nor blank—it means intensely, and means good :
To find its meaning is my meat and drink.
' Ay, but you don't so instigate to prayer '
Strikes in the Prior! ' when your meaning's plain
It does not say to folks—remember matins—
Or, mind you fast next Friday.' Why, for this
What need of art at all? A skull and bones,
Two bits of stick nailed cross-wise, or, what's best,
A bell to chime the hour with, does as well.
I painted a St. Laurence six months since
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style.

' How looks my painting, now the scaffold's down?
 I ask a brother : ' Hugely,' he returns—
 ' Already not one phiz of your three slaves
 That turn the Deacon off his roasted side,
 But's scratched and prodded to our heart's content,
 The pious people have so eased their own
 When coming to say prayers there in a rage :
 We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.
 Expect another job this time next year,
 For pity and religion grow i' the crowd—
 Your painting serves its purpose! ' Hang the fools!

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889),
 from *Fra Lippo Lippi*

1. What details of language and imagery call up the period with which the poem deals?

2. Explain carefully :

(a) ' Art was given for that—
 God uses us to help each other so,
 Lending our minds out.

(b) ' The pious people have so eased their own
 When coming to say prayers there in a rage :
 We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.'

3. What do you learn of the personality of the painter himself from this monologue?

4. What do you consider to be the poet's intention in writing like this? How far is he successful?

5. What indications do you find here of Browning's general attitude to life and art?

6. Examine the language, and show how it instils vigour and vivacity into the verse.

7. What do you find here audacious and irregular in poetic style?

54

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me, leading wherever I
choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune—I am good-fortune,
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need
nothing,
Strong and content, I travel the open road.

The earth—that is sufficient,
I do not want the constellations any nearer,
I know they are very well where they are,
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
I carry them, men and women—I carry them with me
wherever I go,
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
I am filled with them, and I will fill them in return.
You road I travel and look around! I believe you are
not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.
Here is the profound lesson of reception, neither pre-
ference nor denial,
The black with his woolly head, the felon, the diseased,
the illiterate person, are not denied ;
The birth, the hasting after the physician, the beggar's
tramp, the drunkard's stagger, the laughing
party of mechanics,
The escaped youth, the rich person's carriage, the fop>
the eloping couple,

The early market-man, the hearse, the moving of furniture into the town, the return back from town,
They pass, I also pass, any thing passes—none can be interdicted,
None but are accepted, none but are dear to me.

You air that serves me with breath to speak!
You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and give them shape!
You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable showers!
You animals moving serenely over the earth!
You birds that wing yourselves through the air! you insects!
You sprouting growths from the farmers' fields! you stalks and weeds by the fences!
You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides!
I think you are latent with curious existences—you are so dear to me.

WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892),
from *Leaves of Grass*

1. What is your immediate reaction on reading this extract?

2. What is the extract about? Consider the poet's intention, and state in what way it is original. Does the manner suggest sincerity or facile exuberance?

3. Illustrate the 'democratic quality' of the verse.

4. Is there any definite verse form adapted to the subject? How does it differ from conventional poetic expression?

5. On more careful study, do you find the verse impressive or not? Give reasons.

6. What do you learn about the personality of the poet?

55

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits ;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
 And we are here as on a darkling plain
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888),
Dover Beach

1. What experience does the poem express? '
2. Examine the feeling of the poem, indicating any changes that occur. How does the rhythm help to communicate this feeling?
3. Indicate the careful, scholarly workmanship of the poem. To what class of lyric does it belong?
4. Consider carefully these expressions and state what makes them so effective :
 - (a) ' But now I only hear
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
 Retreating, to the breath
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles of the world.'
 - (b) ' And we are here as on a darkling plain
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.'
5. ' We are conscious of the predominance of the intellect over the heart even in Arnold's simpler and more moving poems' (W. L. Jones). How far do you feel this to be true?
6. Discuss the statement that * in its subdued melancholy resignation this poem resembles Gray's *Elegy* \

56

All other joys of life he strove to warm,
And magnify, and catch them to his lip,
But they had suffered shipwreck with the ship,
And gazed upon him sallow from the storm.
Or if Delusion came, 'twas but to show
The coming minute mock the one that went.
Cold as a mountain in its star-pitched tent,
Stood high Philosophy, less friend than foe :
Whom self-caged Passion, from its prison-bars,
Is always watching with a wondering hate.
Not till the fire is dying in the grate,
Look we for any kinship with the stars.
Oh, wisdom never comes when it is gold,
And the great price we pay for it full worth :
We have it only when we are half earth.
Little avails that coinage to the old!

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828-1909),
from *Modern Love*

- i. How far does this poem resemble a sonnet in (a) form, (b) treatment?
2. What is the theme of the poem? What emotion is expressed? Does the poet's manner suggest sincerity?
3. Write an amplified paraphrase of the passage beginning 'Cold as a mountain . . .' to the end.
4. Find examples of poetic imagery. Is the poet economical in obtaining the desired effect? Support your answer.
5. Write a detailed criticism of this example of philosophical lyricism.

Master of the murmuring courts
Where the shapes of sleep convene!—
Lo! my spirit here exhorts
All the powers of thy demesne
For their aid to woo my queen.
What reports
Yield thy jealous courts unseen?

Vaporous, unaccountable,
Dreamland lies forlorn of light,
Hollow like a breathing shell.
Ah! that from all dreams I might
Choose one dream and guide its flight!
I know well
What her sleep should tell to-night.

There the dreams are multitudes :
Some whose buoyance waits not sleep,
Deep within the August woods ;
Some that hum while rest may steep
Weary labour laid a-heap ;
Interludes,
Some, of grievous moods that weep.

Poets' fancies all are there :
There the elf-girls flood with wings
Valleys full of plaintive air ;
There breathe perfumes ; there in rings
Whirl the foam-bewildered springs ;
Siren there
Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Thence the one dream mutually
 Dreamed in bridal unison,
Less than waking ecstasy ;
 Half-formed visions that make moan
 In the house of birth alone ;
 And what we
At death's wicket see, unknown.

But for mine own sleep, it lies
 In one gracious form's control,
Fair with honourable eyes,
 Lamps of an auspicious soul :
 O their glance is loftiest dole,
 Sweet and wise,
Wherein Love descries his goal.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882),
 from *Love's Nocturn*

1. State the nature of this poetry, and analyse the verse form. Point out the effect of the shortened sixth line.
2. Consider the music of the lines and indicate how it is achieved. Does it seem individual?
3. Is Rossetti trying to express feeling or thought, or subtle suggestions on the borders of each? Is he successful?
4. Comment on the use of Personification. What other poetic devices are used?
5. Indicate the more striking expressions of the imagination. Do they appeal to the senses or the intellect or both?
6. How does this resemble a poetic day-dream? Has it any serious relation to reality?
7. In reading Rossetti we are conscious of an unusual atmosphere, which has been called one of 'aesthetic-religiose devotions *'. Elucidate this statement, and show how the atmosphere is achieved.

58

None other Lamb, none other Name,
 None other Hope in heaven or earth or sea,
 None other Hiding-place from guilt and shame,
 None beside Thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns low ;
 Only my heart's desire cries out in me,
 By the deep thunder of its want and woe,
 Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life, though I be dead ;
 Love's Fire Thou art, however cold I be :
 Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay my head,
 Nor home, but Thee.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894),
 from *Verses*, 1893

1. State the central thought of this poem.
2. What kind of poem is this? Write a short appreciation of the pattern and diction, and show how the weight of the lines and the slow movement of the verse are achieved.
3. Point out the propriety of the closing line of each stanza.
4. ' Christina Rossetti found contentment in religion but did not express its joy ' (L. Cazamian). Consider carefully the feeling of this poem.
5. Compare this with the poem by George Herbert. What differences do you find?

59

' Alas, my maids, you loved not overmuch
 Queen Guenevere, uncertain as sunshine

In March ; forgive me! for my sin being such,
About my whole life, all my deeds did twine,

* Made me quite wicked ; as I found out then,
I think ; in the lonely palace, where each morn
We went, my maids and I, to say prayers when
They sang mass in the chapel on the lawn.

' And every morn I scarce could pray at all,
For Launcelot's red-golden hair would play,
Instead of sunlight, on the painted wall,
Mingled with dreams of what the priest did say ;

⁴ Grim curses out of Peter and of Paul ;
Judging of strange sins in Leviticus ;
Another sort of writing on the wall,
Scored deep across the painted heads of us.

* Christ sitting with the woman at the well,
And Mary Magdalen repenting there,
Her dimmed eyes scorch'd and red at sight of hell
So hardly 'scaped, no gold light on her hair.

' And if the priest said anything that seem'd
To touch upon the sin they said we did,—
(This in their teeth) they look'd as if they deem'd
That I was spying what thoughts might be hid

' Under green-cover'd bosoms, heaving quick
Beneath quick thoughts ; while they grew red with
shame,
And gazed down at their feet—while I felt sick,
And almost shriek'd if one should call my name.

' The thrushes sang in the lone garden there—
 But where you were the birds were scared I trow—
 Clanging of arms about pavilions fair,
 Mixed with the knights⁵ laughs ; there, as I well
 know,

' Rode Launcelot, the king of all the band,
 And scowling Gauwaine, like the night in day,
 And handsome Gareth, with his great white hand
 Curl'd round the helm-crest, ere he join'd the fray.'
 'WILLIAM MORRIS (1834-1896),
 from *King Arthur's Tomb*

1. What do you learn about Guenevere from this extract?
2. How much of the story do you gather by implication?
3. What qualities of a story-teller does Morris reveal here?
4. How may this verse be said to resemble a tapestry?
5. Does this verse recall, in any way, the style of Spenser?
6. Compare this dramatic monologue with the extracts from Tennyson and Browning, and point out the characteristics of each in outlook and style.

60

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
 The mother of months in meadow or plain
 Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain ;
 And the brown bright nightingale amorous
 Is half assuaged for Itylus,
 For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
 The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamour of waters, and with might ;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet ;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player ;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins ;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins ;
And time remember'd is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837-1909),
from *Atalanta in Calydon*

1. What does the extract describe?
2. What do you visualise on reading the following (consider carefully the words in italics) :
 - (a) When the hounds of spring are on winter's *traces*.

- (b) The *mother* of months in meadow or plain.
- (c) And the brown *bright* nightingale amorous.
- (d) Over the *splendour* and speed of thy feet.
- (e) For winter's rains and *ruins* are over.

What sort of difficulties do you find in such imagery?

3. Consider carefully the part played by Alliteration.
Do you think it excessive? What is its effect

(a) on the movement of the verse?

(b) on the mind of the reader?

What other poetic devices are employed?

4. Examine the music and luxuriant fluency of the language. What are the merits and demerits of a poetic style dominated by such an inspiration?

5. 'Swinburne's verse is verbal and literary.' Is the statement true of this passage?

6. Compare this with the passage from Shelley, and indicate similarities and differences.

61

So at last his soul
Was like a storehouse, filled with images,
By musing hours of solitude supplied.
Nor did his ready fingers shape the cut
Of villager's uncouth habiliments
With greater readiness, than did his mind
Frame corresponding images of those
Whose corporal measurement the neat-mark'd paper
In many a mystic notch for aye retain'd.
Hence, more than any man I ever knew,
Did he possess the power intuitive
Of diving into character. A pair
Of breeches to his philosophic eye
Were not what unto other folks they seem,
Mere simple breeches, but in them he saw

The symbol of the soul—mysterious, high
 Hieroglyphics! such as Egypt's Priest
 Adored upon the holy Pyramid,
 Vainly imagined tomb of monarchs old,
 But raised by wise philosophy, that sought
 By darkness to illumine, and to spread
 Knowledge by dim concealment—process high
 Of man's imaginative, deathless soul.
 Nor, haply, in th' abasement of the life
 Which stern necessity had made his own,
 Did he not recognise a genial power
 Of soul-ennobling fortitude. He heard
 Unmoved the witling's shallow contumely,
 And thus, in spite of nature, by degrees
 He saw a beauty and a majesty
 In this despised trade, which warrior's brow
 Hath rarely circled—so that when he sat
 Beneath his sky-light window, he hath cast
 A gaze of triumph on the godlike sun,
 And felt that orb, in all his annual round,
 Beheld no happier nobler character
 Than him, Hugh Thwaites, a little tailor-boy.

JAMES HOGG (1770-1835),
 from *The Flying Tailor*

1. Give the substance of this passage in your own words.
- , 2. How do you know that this is a parody?
3. Which poet is here parodied? Indicate how his metre, sentiment, and style have been imitated.

62

The summond firemen woke at call,
 And hied them to their stations all:

Starting from short and broken snooze,
Each sought his pond'rous hobnail'd shoes,
But first his worsted hosen plied,
Plush breeches next, in crimson dyed,
 His nether bulk embraced ;
Then jacket thick, of red or blue,
Whose massy shoulder gave to view
The badge of each respective crew,
 In tin or copper traced.

The engines thunder'd through the street,
Fire-hook, pipe, bucket, all complete,
And torches glared, and clattering feet
 Along the pavement paced.

And one, the leader of the band,
From Charing Cross along the Strand,
Like stag by beagles hunted hard,
Ran till he stopp'd at Vin'gar Yard.
The burning badge his shoulder bore,
The belt and oil-skin hat he wore,
The cane he had, his men to bang,
Show'd foreman of the British gang—
His name was Higginbottom. Now
'Tis meet that I should tell you how

 The others came in view :
The Hand-in-Hand the race begun,
Then came the Phoenix and the Sun,
Th' Exchange, where old insurers run,
 The Eagle, where the new ;
With these came Rumford, Bumford, Cole,
Robins from Hockley in the Hole,
Lawson and Dawson, cheek by jowl,
 Crump from St. Giles's Pound :
Whitford and Mitford join'd the train,

Huggins and Muggins from Chick Lane,
 And Clutterbuck, who got a sprain
 Before the plug was found.

Hobson and Jobson did not sleep,
 But ah! no trophy could they reap,
 For both were in the Donjon Keep
 Of Bridewell's gloomy mound!

HORACE SMITH (1779-1849),
 from *A Tale of Drury Lane*

1. Which poet is here parodied? What qualities of the style and metre of the original are imitated?

2. Show how the parodist has applied 'his victim's methods to alien subjects', and state the effect achieved.

63

Such, sir, are all the facts, succinctly put,
 The basis or substratum—what you will—
 Of the impending eighty thousand lines.
 'Not much in 'em either,' quoth perhaps simple
 Hodge.

But there's a superstructure. Wait a bit
 Mark first the rationale of the thing :
 Hear logic rivel and levigate the deed.
 That shilling—and for matter o' that, the pence—
 I had o' course upo' me—wi' me say—
 (*Mecurris* the Latin, make a note o' that)
 When I popp'd pen i' stand, scratch'd ear, wip'd
 snout,
 (Let everybody wipe his own himself)
 Sniff'd—tch!—at snuffbox ; tumbled up, he-heed,
 Haw-haw'd (not hee-haw'd, that's another guess thing):
 Then fumbled at, .and stumbled out of, door,

I shoved the timber ope wi' my omoplat;
 And *in vestibule*, i' the lobby to-wit,
 (Iacobi Facciolati's rendering, sir,)
 Donn'd galligaskins, antigropeloes,
 And so forth ; and, complete with hat and gloves,
 One on and one a-dangle i' my hand,
 And ombrifuge (Lord love you!), case o' rain,
 I flopped forth, 'sbuddikins! on my own ten toes,
 (I do assure you there be ten of them,)
 And went clump-clumping up hill and down dale
 To find myself o' the sudden i' front o' the boy.
 Put case I hadn't 'em on me, could I ha' bought
 This sort-o'-kind-o'-what-you-might-call toy,
 This pebble-thing, o' the boy-thing? Q.E.D.
 That's proven without aid from mumping Pope,
 Sleek porporate or bloated Cardinal.

CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY (1831-1884),
 from *The Cock and the Bull*

1. Which poet is here parodied? Enumerate the characteristics in the original that are here emphasised.
2. What makes a good parody? Illustrate your answer from this passage.

64

Strange beauty, eight-limbed and eight-handed,
 Whence earnest to dazzle our eyes?
 With thy bosom bespangled and banded
 With the hues of the seas and the skies ;
 Is thy home European or Asian,
 O mystical monster marine?
 Part mollusious and partly crustacean,
 Betwixt and between.

Wast thou born to the sound of sea-trumpets?
Hast thou eaten and drunk to excess
Of the sponges—thy muffins and crumpets,
Of the seaweed—thy mustard and cress?
Wast thou nurtured in caverns of coral,
Remote from reproof or restraint?
Art thou innocent, art thou immoral,
Sinburnian or Saint?

Lithe limbs, curling free, as a creeper
That creeps in a desolate place,
To enrol and envelop the sleeper
In a silent and stealthy embrace,
Cruel beak craning forward to bite us,
Our juices to drain and to drink,
Or to overwhelm us in waves of Cocytus,
Indelible ink!

O breast that 'twere rapture to writhe on!
O arms 'twere delicious to feel
Clinging close with the crush of the Python,
When she maketh her murderous meal!
In thy eight-fold embraces enfolden,
Let our empty existence escape ;
Give us death that is glorious and golden,
Crushed all out of shape!

Ah! thy red lips, lascivious and luscious,
With death in their amorous kiss!
Cling round us, and clasp us, and crush us,
With bitings of agonized bliss ;

We are sick with the poison of pleasure,
 Dispense us the potion of pain ;
 Ope thy mouth to its uttermost measure
 And bite us again!

ARTHUR CLEMENT HILTON (1851-1877),
Octopus

1. Which poet is parodied here? Do you consider the parody successful? Why?
2. The best parody implies ' sound and valid criticism of the original.' How far is this true of these parodies?
3. Which of these four parodies¹ do you consider the most felicitous? Give reasons for your choice.

65

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
 The old, old Love that we knew of yore!
 We see him stand by the open door,
 With his great eyes sad, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
 He fain would lie as he lay before ;
 Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,
 The old, old Love that we knew of yore!

Ah! who shall help us from overspelling,
 That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
 E'en as we doubt in our hearts once more,
 With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
 Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

.

¹ These four parodies have been placed together, rather than in their correct chronological order, for the purpose of comparison.

In after days when grasses high
O'er-top the stone where I shall lie,
Though ill or well the world adjust
My slender claim to honour'd dust,
I shall not question nor reply.

I shall not see the morning sky ;
I shall not hear the night-wind sigh ;
I shall be mute, as all men must
In after days!

But yet, now living, fain would I
That some one then should testify,
Saying—' He held his pen in trust
To Art, not serving shame or lust.'
Will none?—Then let my memory die
In after days!

• • • • •

I intended an Ode,
And it turn'd to a Sonnet,
It began *d la mode*,
I intended an Ode ;
But Rose cross'd the road
In her latest new bonnet;
I intended an Ode ;
And it turn'd to a Sonnet.

• • • • •

When I saw you last, Rose,
You were only so high ;
How fast the time goes!

Like a bud ere it blows.

You just peeped at the sky,
When I saw you last, Rose!

Now your petals uncloze,

Now your May-time is nigh ;
How fast the time goes!

And a life,—how it grows!

You were scarcely so shy,
When I saw you last, Rose.

In your bosom it shows

There's a guest on the sly ;
How fast the time goes!

Is it Cupid? Who knows!

Yet you used not to sigh,
When I saw you last, Rose ;
How fast the time goes!

• • • • •

HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON (1840-1921)

1. Analyse the pattern of each poem, and name the verse form used.
2. Write a brief comment upon the style and treatment of each poem.
3. State which of the four poems you prefer, and give your reasons.

I leaned upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.

The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings from broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant;
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice burst forth among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy unlimited ;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carollings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928),
The Darkling Thrush

1. What is the pervading mood of the poem? Does the poetic expression convince you of the author's sincerity?
2. Write a careful paraphrase of the second stanza.
3. What is the atmosphere of the poem and how is it achieved?
4. Indicate the poet's attitude towards nature. How would you describe Hardy's philosophy?
5. What are the main qualities of this style?
6. 'Hardy refused to be comforted.' What is there here to support this remark?

67

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 awoke earlier for the unaccustomed bright-
ness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare :
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling white-
ness ;
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 snow-
balling ;

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 broken.

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844-1930),
London Snow

1. How does this description compare with your own experience? Do you find it felicitous?

2. Divide the poem into sections according to the progression of the description. Do you find the poem complete and satisfying? What gives it unity?

3. Analyse the verse-form, and indicate the technical ability revealed.

4. Point out examples of careful observation. Does the description appeal to the eye alone?

5. What expressions do you find particularly vivid and convincing? Are they ' literary ' or ' natural '?

6. Is this poem traditional in tone and manner? Sum up your comments in a short appreciation of the poem.

68

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days ;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years ;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind ; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped ;
And shot, precipitated
Adown Titanic glooms of chasméd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
' All things betray thee, who betrayest Me/

I pleaded outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities ;
(For though I knew His love Who followed,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside) ;
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clanged bars ;
Fretted to dulcet jars

And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
 I said to dawn, Be sudden ; to eve, Be soon ;
 With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
 From this tremendous Lover!
 Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
 I tempted all his servitors, but to find
 My own betrayal in their constancy,
 In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
 Their traitorous trueness and their loyal deceit.
 To all swift things for swiftness did I sue ;
 Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
 But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
 The long savannahs of the blue ;
 Or whether, Thunder-driven,
 They clanged his chariot 'thwart a heaven
 Flashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o* their
 feet:
 Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.

FRANCIS THOMPSON (1859-1907),
 from *The Hound of Heaven*

1. What experience does this passage express?
2. Explain the meaning of:
 - (a) ' I pleaded outlaw-wise,
 By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
 Trellised with intertwining charities.'
 - (b) ' I tempted all his servitors, but to find
 My own betrayal in their constancy,
 In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
 Their traitorous trueness and their loyal deceit.'
3. Find an example of each of the following and state the effect achieved :
 - (a) Metaphor, (b) Onomatopoeia. (c) Oxymoron.
 - (d) Parallelism., (e) Personification. (f) Symbolism.

4. Analyse in detail the telescoping of images in the lines beginning 'To all swift things . . . ' down to 'the spurn o' their feet'.

Write a short appreciation of the imagery in the whole passage.

5. Write a brief study of the highly-wrought language, and the cadenced rhythm of the verse.

6. Consider the poet's religious feeling. Is it convincingly expressed?

7. Do you find in this passage any marks of similarity with the Metaphysical poets Herbert and Vaughan? How does it differ from the passage from Crashaw on page 56?

69

Think no more, lad ; laugh, be jolly :
 Why should men make haste to die?
 Empty heads and tongues a-talking
 Make the rough road easy walking,
 And the feather pate of folly
 Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
 Spins the heavy world around.
 If young hearts were not so clever,
 Oh, they would be young for ever :
 Think no more ; 'tis only thinking
 Lays lads underground.

A. E. HOUSMAN (1859-1936),
 from *A Shropshire Lad*

1. What does this poem say?
2. What is the feeling behind this poem?
3. Explain the full significance of:
 'And the feather pate of folly
 Bears the falling sky.'

4. What is the poet's attitude to life as revealed here? (Consider whether the poem is an expression of fatalism, irony, pessimism, stoicism.)

5. Examine each stanza carefully and then comment on the diction. How is the peculiar concentration achieved?

6. Consider carefully the lyrical note, and show in what way it is new.

7. Sum up the chief qualities of this poetic style. What would the poem have lost or gained by the use of the sonnet form?

70

That minds me of our Viscount loon—Sir Kenneth's
kin—the chap

Wi' Russia leather tennis-shoon an' spar-decked
yachtin'-cap.

I showed him round last week, o'er all—an' at the last
says he :

' Mister MeAndrew, don't you think steam spoils
romance at sea? '

Damned ijjit! I'd been doon that morn to see what
ailed the throws,

Manholin', on my back—the cranks three inches off
my nose.

Romance! Those first-class passengers they like it very
well,

Printed an' bound in little books ; but why don't poets
tell?

I'm sick of all their quirks an' turns—the loves an' doves
they dream—

Lord, send a man like Robbie Burns to sing the Song
o' steam!

To match wi' Scotia's noblest speech yon orchestra
sublime

Whaurto—uplifted like the Just—the tail-rods mark
the time.

The crank-throws give the double-bass, the feed-pump
sobs an' heaves,

An' now the main eccentrics start their quarrel on the
sheaves :

Her time, her own appointed time, the rocking link-
head bides,

Till—hear that note?—the rod's return whings glim-
merin' through the guides.

They're all awa'! True beat, full power, the clangin'⁵
chorus goes

Clear to the tunnel where they sit, my purrin' dyna-
moes.

Interdependence absolute, foreseen, ordained, decreed,
To work, Ye'll note, at any tilt an' every rate o'
speed.

Fra skylight-lift to furnace-bars, backed, bolted, braced
an' stayed.

An' singin' like the Mornin' Stars for joy that they are
made ;

While, out o' touch o' vanity, the sweatin' thrust-block
says :

' Not unto us the praise, or man—not unto us the
praise! '

Now, a' together, hear them lift their lesson—theirs an'
mine :

' Law, Orrder, Duty an' Restraint, Obedience, Disci-
pline! '

Mill, forge an' try-pit taught them that when roarin'
they arose,

An' whiles I wonder if a soul was gied them wi' the
blows.

Oh for a man to weld it then, in one trip-hammer strain,
Till even first-class passengers could tell the meanin' plain!

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865-1936),
from *McAndrew's Hymn*

1. What is the passage about? Why is it called a hymn?
2. What do you learn of the character of McAndrew?
3. Examine the subject and style, and explain what the poet is trying to do. Is he successful?
4. Indicate in what way the tone, theme, and handling of language are new and individual.
5. Compare this with the passage from *WMtman*. Point out any similarities and differences you may observe.
6. Is this verse in any way romantic?

71

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unagcing intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every taster in its mortal dress,

Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence ;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall.
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away ; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is ; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake ;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939),

Sailing to Byzantium

perne = whirl (a word almost peculiar to Yeats)
gyre = a circular or spiral motion

1. What is the theme of the poem? Enumerate the main ideas in the poem.
2. Paraphrase the third stanza.
3. Explain the meaning of:
 - (a) ' Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unageing intellect.'
 - (b) ' Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence.'

(c) ' gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.'

4. How would you describe the atmosphere of this poem? How is it achieved?

5. Discuss F. R. Leavis's remark that this is ' the voice of one who knows intellectual passion.' Can you find here any points of similarity with the Metaphysical poets?

6. ' All his early work aimed at reaching reality through dream . . . Now in maturity ... he seeks for reality, where it really is, in the contemporary world of men. In consequence it is poetry of profound disillusion.' (Martin Gilkes.) Indicate the bitterness of disillusion shown here.

7. Yeats has been termed ' the last in the aristocratic tradition of poets '. Explain, and comment on, this statement.

72

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

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

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's grcen, away from all mankind ;

**A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.**

W. H. DAVIES (1871-1940),
The Kingfisher

1. What does the poem describe?
2. Does the poet's manner suggest sincerity? Do you find the emotion appropriate and satisfying? How is it communicated?
3. What is the pervading mood? How does it differ from that of ' *The Darkling Thrush* '?
4. Write an appreciation of the individual imagery and the delicate naturalism of this lyric.
5. Has this poem anything in common with Elizabethan lyrics?

73

Isled in the midnight air,
Musked with the dark's faint bloom,
Out into glooming and secret haunts
The flame cries, ' Come! '

Lovely in dye and fan,
A-tremble in shimmering grace,
A moth from her winter swoon
Uplifts her face :

Stares from her glamorous eyes ;
Wafts her on plumes like mist;
In ecstasy swirls and sways
To her strange tryst.

WALTER DE LA MARE (1873-),
The Moth

- I. What does the poem describe? How does the poet's attitude differ from that of Burns?

2. Show how the poet makes the scene described harmonize with his own thought and mood.
3. Comment on the following lines :
 - (a) ' Musked with the dark's faint bloom.'
 - (b) ' Lovely in dye and fan.'
 - (c) ' Stares from her glamorous eyes.'
 - (d) ' In ecstasy swirls and sways.'
4. What words in the poem strike you as particularly significant in regard to the poet's intention? What atmosphere do they evoke?
5. What impression does the poem leave on your mind?

74

From the Gallows Hill to the Tineton Copse
There were ten ploughed fields, like ten full-stops,
All wet red clay, where a horse's foot
Would be swathed, feet thick, like an ash-tree root.
The fox raced on, on the headlands firm,
Where his swift feet scared the coupling worm ;
The rooks rose raving to curse him raw,
He snarled a sneer at their swoop and caw.
Then on, then on, down a half-ploughed field
Where a ship-like plough drove glitter-keeled,
With a bay horse near and a white horse leading,
And a man saying ' Zook,' and the red earth bleeding.
He gasped as he saw the ploughman drop
The stilts and swear at the team to stop.
The ploughman ran in his red clay clogs,
Crying, ' Zick un, Towzer ; zick, good dogs !'
A couple of wire-haired lurchers lean
Arose from his wallet, nosing keen ;
With a rushing swoop they were on his track,
Putting chest to stubble to bite his back.

He swerved from his line with the curs at heel,
 The teeth as they missed him, clicked like steel.
 With a worrying snarl, they quartered on him,
 While the ploughman shouted, ' Zick ; upon him.'

.

The lurcher dogs soon shot their bolt,
 And the fox raced on by the Hazel Holt,
 Down the dead grass tilt to the sandstone gash
 Of the Pantry Brook at Tineton Ash.
 The loitering water, flooded full,
 Had yeast on its lip like raddled wool,
 It was wrinkled over with Arab script
 Of eddies that twisted up and slipt.
 The stepping-stones had a rush about them,
 So the fox plunged in and swam without them.

.

He crossed to the cattle's drinking shallow,
 Firmed up with rush and the roots of mallow ;
 He wrung his coat from his draggled bones
 And romped away for the Sarsen Stones.

JOHN MASEFIELD (1 8 7 8 -) ,

from *Reynard the Fox*

1. Analyse the verse form, paying particular attention to rhythm and rime. What irregularities do you find? Can you suggest their purpose?

2. Consider the language, and show how it suits the subject. Do you find economy of means to obtain the desired effect?

3. Illustrate the vigour, and concreteness of this verse, pointing out the more striking expressions.

4. Compare and contrast this with the passage from Chaucer on page 27.

75

The green elm with the one great bough of gold
 Lets leaves into the grass slip, one by one,—
 The short hill grass, the mushrooms small, milk-white,
 Harebell and scabious and tormentil,
 That blackberry and gorse, in dew and sun,
 Bow down to ; and the wind travels too light
 To shake the fallen birch leaves from the fern ;
 The gossamers wander at their own will.
 At heavier steps than birds' the squirrels scold.
 The rich scene has grown fresh again and new
 As Spring and to the touch is not more cool
 Than it is warm to the gaze ; and now I might
 As happy be as earth is beautiful,
 Were I some other or with earth could turn
 In alternation of violet and rose,
 Harebell and snowdrop, at their season due,
 And gorse that has no time not to be gay.
 But if this be not happiness,—who knows?
 Some day I shall think this a happy day,
 And this mood by the name of melancholy
 Shall no more blackened and obscured be.

EDWARD THOMAS (1878-1917),

October

1. What does the poem describe? Point out the ' shift of focus ' to the poet's mood.
2. Show how diction and movement suit the subject, and indicate the originality of the technique.
3. Examine the poet's attitude to nature, and point out the ' exquisite particularity ' of the description.

4. Write an appreciation of this poem; indicate the poet's method, and say what you consider to be his main concern.

5. Contrast this poem with Hardy's *Darkling Thrush*. What difference in sensibility do you find?

76

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

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;
And, wonder's breath indrawn.
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that
same
(Fished up beyond Ææa, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came

(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.
It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER (1884-1915),

The Old Ships

1. What is the poem about? Is it difficult to understand? To imagine? Does it appeal to the intellect, or to the senses?
2. Explain the meaning of the last two lines. What is their significance?
3. Examine the use of repetition, parenthesis, and interrogation. What is the effect produced?
4. Consider carefully the use of colour. What is its value to the poem?
5. Indicate the vividness of the imagery. In what way is it individual?
6. Does the rhythm of the verse fit in with the subject? How does it help to communicate the poet's feelings?

77

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music ; known
Slumber and waking ; loved ; gone proudly friended ;
Felt the quick stir of wonder ; sat alone ;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is
ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,

Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

RUPERT BROOKE (1887-1915),
from *1914 and other poems*

1. What is the theme? Do you find the poem easy to understand or is there profundity of thought?
2. Can you suggest the motive which inspired the poem?
3. Explain the implication of the following :

' And after,

Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness.'

4. What is the connection between the thought in the sestet and the octave?
5. Is the sonnet realistic in treatment, or does the poet idealise the subject?
6. Examine the use of imagery in the sestet. Does it help or obscure the poet's meaning? Do you observe echoes of any other poet?
7. Write a detailed criticism of the poem.

78

Castellated, tall
From battlements fall
Shades on heroic
Lonely grass,
Where the moonlight's echoes die and pass.
Near the rustic boorish,
Fustian Moorish,

Castle wall of the ultimate Shade,
With his cloak castellated as that wall, afraid,
The mountebank doctor,
The old stage quack,
Where decoy duck dust
Began to clack,
Watched Heliogabalusene the Bat
In his furred cloak hang head down from the flat
Wall, cling to what is convenient,
Lenient.

* If you hang upside down with squeaking shrill,
You will see dust, lust, and the will to kill,
And life is a matter of which way falls
Your tufted turreted Shade near these walls.
For muttering guttering shadow will plan
If you're ruined wall, or pygmy man,'
Said Heliogabalusene, 'or a pig,
Or the empty Caesar in tall periwig.'
And the mountebank doctor,
The old stage quack,
Spread out a black membraned wing of his cloak
And his shuffling footsteps seem to choke,
Near the Castle wall of the ultimate Shade
Where decoy duck dust
Quacks, clacks, afraid.

EDITH SITWELL (1887-),
The Bat

1. What impression does this poem make upon you?
2. Has the poem any meaning? Does the manner of expression invite careful study to find a meaning?
3. What is the writer trying to do? Do you find her successful?

4. Indicate the forced language, strained and distorted metaphors, fantastical conceits, eccentricities of thought, and decide whether these difficulties are justified.

5. 'Her verse creates a perpetual metamorphosis that seems an elegant, artificial childhood.' (W. B. Yeats.) How far is it true of this poem?

79

How to kéep—is there any any, is there none such,
 nowhere known some, bow or brooch or braid or
 brace, lace, latch or catch or key to keep
 Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from
 vanishing away?

O is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles
 deep,

D6wn? no waving off of these most mournful messengers,
 still messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?

No there's none, there's none, O no there's none,
 Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair,
 Do what you may do, what, do what you may,
 And wisdom is early to despair :

Be beginning ; since, no, nothing can be done
 To keep at bay

Age and age's evils, hoar hair,
 Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst,
 winding sheets, tombs and worms and tumbling to
 decay ;

So be beginning, be beginning to despair.

O there's none ; no no no there's none :

Be beginning to despair, to despair,

Despair, despair, despair, despair.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844-1889),

The Leaden Echo, published 1918

1. What is the poem about? Comment on the appropriateness of the title.

2. Mark the poem for reading aloud, and when it has been heard, comment on the rhythm and stress. Hopkins called it 'Sprung Rhythm'. What did he mean? Do you find it effective?

3. Consider the handling of the words. Indicate the use of assonance, alliteration, personification, repetition and rime. Try to show why this poem should be considered one of the most remarkable technical achievements of Victorian poetry.

4. Are there any qualities here which might make Hopkins 'the first of the Moderns'?

5. Compare carefully with the following 'improved' version by T. Sturge Moore¹ :

How keep beauty? is there any way?
Is there nowhere any means to have it stay?
Will no bow or brooch or braid.
Brace or lace
Latch or catch
Or key to lock the door lend aid
Before beauty vanishes away?

No, no, there's none,
Nor can you long be fair ;
Soon your best is done,
Wisdom must be early to despair :
Look now for age, hoar hair,
Winding sheets and tumbling to decay ;
Even now to-day
Be beginning to despair,
Despair, despair.

Would the poem gain anything by the changes made?
What would it lose?

¹ *Style and Beauty in Literature, The Criterion*, July 1930.

80

The river's tent is broken : the last fingers of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind
Grosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are
departed.

Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs
are departed.

And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors ;
Departed, have left no addresses.

By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept. . •
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or
long.

But at my back in a cold blast I hear
The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to
ear.

A rat crept softly through the vegetation
Dragging its slimy belly on the bank
While I was fishing in the dull canal
On a winter evening round behind the gashouse
Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
And on the king my father's death before him.
White bodies naked on the low damp ground
And bones cast in a little low dry garret,
Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year.
But at my back from time to time I hear
The sound of horns and motors, which shall bring
Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring.
O the moon shone bright on Mrs. Porter

And on her daughter

They wash their feet in soda water

Et 0 ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!

T. S. ELIOT (1888-),

from *The Waste Land*

1. State carefully the impression made by this passage. What do you consider to be the poet's intention?

2. What sort of difficulties do you find here? Are they an inevitable part of the subject? Do they detract from the general effect of the poem? Consider Eliot's remark, 'It is a test (a positive test, I do not assert that it is always valid negatively), that genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.'

3. Try to place the unmarked quotations and reminiscences. State their purpose, and say whether you find them effective. What are the defects of this method of drawing attention to other works?

4. What examples do you find here of the esoteric and obscure, limiting full understanding to a small minority? Does the fault lie in our state of culture, the nature of the poem, or in the poet himself?

5. How is the new technique more capable of dealing with the increasing complexities of modern life than the old? (Consider the use of Free Association, the extreme allusiveness, and the handling of difficult transitions and variations of theme.)

6. Do you learn anything of the mind of the generation which 'succeeded to the legacy of the War' from this poem?

7. C. Day Lewis has pointed out the similarity between this poetic method and the superficially unconnected 'shots', used to express an emotional state, of film technique. Write a critical appreciation of this passage (and other passages from *The Waste Land*) in the light of this parallel.

81

It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groined—
Too fast in thought for death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,
By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.
With a thousand pains that vision's face was grained ;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan,
' Strange friend,' I said, ' here is no cause to mourn.'
' None,' said the other, ' save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
-Was my life also ; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something had been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from
progress.
Courage was mine, and I had mystery,

Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery ;
 To miss the march of this retreating world
 Into vain citadels that are not walled.
 Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-
 wheels
 I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
 Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
 I would have poured my spirit without stint
 But not through wounds ; not on the cess of war.
 Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
 I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
 I knew you in this dark ; for so you frowned
 Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
 I parried ; but my hands were loath and cold.
 Let us sleep now . . . '

WILFRED OWEN (1893-1918),
Strange Meeting

1. Give the substance of the poem in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of :
 - (a) ' Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.'
 - (b) ' Courage was mine, and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery ;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.'
3. Edmund Blunden, writing in the *Memoir of Wilfred Owen*, said that Owen was ' an unwearied worker in the laboratory of word, rhythm, and music of language'. Consider carefully the music of this poem, and show how the rhythm follows the thought.
4. Examine the use of Assonance Rime. Do you find it effective in suggesting ' remoteness, emptiness, echo, the last word'?

5. ' My subject is war, the pity of war. The Poetry is in the pity.'

' Above all I am not concerned with " Poetry ".'

Consider these two remarks of Owen, and comment on the expression and the feeling of this poem. Compare it with Rupert Brooke's poem, and point out just how Owen has broken with poetic tradition.

82

Desolate that cry as though world were unworthy.
See now, rounding the headland, a forlorn hopeless
bird,
trembling black wings fingering the blowy air,
dainty and ghostly, careless of the scattering salt.

This is the cave-dweller that flies like a butterfly,
buffeted by daws, almost extinct, who has chosen,
so gentle a bird, to live on furious coasts.

Here where sea whistles in funnels, and slaps the back
of burly granite slabs, and hisses over holes,
in bellowing hollows that shelter the female seal
the Cornish chough wavers over the waves.

By lion rocks, rocks like the heads of queens,
sailing with ragged plumes upturned, into the wind
goes delicate indifferent the doomed bird.

REX WARNER (1905-),

Chough

1. Describe your picture of a chough after reading this poem.

2. Write an appreciation of the language and the arrangement of the words.

3. Find an example of each of the following, and state the effect achieved :

- (a) Cadence. (b) Contrast. (c) Onomatopoeia.
(d) Simile.

4. In what ways do you find this poem original?

5. Make a careful comparison with *The Kingfisher* by W. H. Davies. Which is the more lyrical, which the more vital poem? State which you prefer, and give your reasons.

83

You that love England, who have an ear for her music,
The slow movement of clouds in benediction,
Clear arias of light thrilling over her uplands,
Over the chords of summer sustained peacefully ;
Ceaseless the leaves' counterpoint in a west wind lively,
Blossom and river rippling loveliest allegro,
And the storms of wood strings brass at year's finale :
Listen. Can you not hear the entrance of a new theme?

You who go out alone, on tandem or on pillion,
Down arterial roads riding in April,
Or sad beside lakes where hill-slopes are reflected
Making fires of leaves, your high hopes fallen :
Cyclists and hikers in company, day excursionists,
Refugees from cursed towns and devastated areas ;
Know you seek a new world, a saviour to establish
Long-lost kinship and restore the blood's fulfilment.

You who like peace, good sticks, happy in a small way
Watching birds or playing cricket with schoolboys,
Who pay for drinks all round, whom disaster chose not ;
Yet passing derelict mills and barns roof-rent
Where despair has burnt itself out—hearts at a stand-
still,

Who suffer loss, aware of lowered vitality ;
 We can tell you a secret, offer a tonic ; only
 Submit to the visiting angel, the strange new healer.

You above all who have come to the far end, victims
 Of a run-down machine, who can bear it no longer ;
 Whether in easy chairs chafing at impotence
 Or against hunger, bullies and spies preserving
 The nerve for action, the spark of indignation—
 Need fight in the dark no more, you know your enemies.
 You shall be leaders when zero hour is signalled,
 Wielders of power and welders of a new world.

C. DAY LEWIS (1905-),
 from *The Magnetic Mountain*

1. What is the extract about? Summarise it briefly.
2. Examine the writing, and write a critical appreciation of the language and imagery.

3. Analyse the rhythms and the pattern of the first two stanzas.

4. ' We shall not begin to understand post-war poetry until we realize that the poet is appealing above all for the creation of a society in which the real and living contact between man and man may again become possible.' (C. Day Lewis.)

How does this passage make the appeal?

5. Write a short account of the feeling of this poem.
6. What are the outstanding characteristics of this poetic style?

84

¹Sir, no man's enemy, forgiving all
 But will his negative inversion, be prodigal :
 Send to us power and light, a sovereign touch

iSir, God

Curing the intolerable neural itch,
 The exhaustion of weaning, the liar's quinsy,
 And the distortions of ingrown virginity.
 Prohibit sharply the rehearsed response
 And gradually correct the coward's stance ;
 Cover in time with beams those in retreat
 That, spotted, they turn though the reverse were great ;
 Publish each healer that in city lives
 Or country houses at the end of drives ;
 Harrow the house of the dead ; look shining at
 New styles of architecture, a change of heart.

W. H. AUDEN (1907-),
 from *Poems* 1930

1. Paraphrase the passage.
2. State the sort of difficulties you find here. Do they detract from the effectiveness of the poem?
3. What is the poet's attitude to society? (Consider carefully such expressions as 'will his negative inversion', and 'a sovereign touch curing the intolerable neural itch'.)
4. Explain the full significance of the following lines, and show what Auden attacks so vigorously :
 'Prohibit sharply the rehearsed response
 And gradually correct the coward's stance ;
 Cover in time with beams those in retreat
 That, spotted, they turn though the reverse were great.'
5. C. Day Lewis remarked that Auden 'distils poetry out of the most forbidding retorts of science'. Do you consider this to be poetry? T. S. Eliot said, 'Anything that can be said as well in prose can be said better in prose.' Decide whether your paraphrase expresses this passage as well in prose, and show what has been gained or lost.
6. 'The attitude of the satirist is for him halfway between the attitudes of the psycho-therapist and the faith-healer.' (C. Day Lewis.)

Examine the psychological inferences, and point out the satire in this poem.

7. Write a detailed appreciation of this passage, and indicate the new elements.

85

Among these turf-stacks graze no iron horses
Such as stalk, such as champ in towns and the soul of
crowds,
Here is no mass-production of neat thoughts
No canvas shrouds for the mind nor any black hearses :
The peasant shambles on his boots like hooves
Without thinking at all or wanting to run in grooves.

But those who lack the peasant's conspirators,
The tawny mountain, the unregarded buttress,
Will feel the need of a fortress against ideas and against
the
Shuddering insidious shock of the theory-vendors,
The little sardine men crammed in a monster toy
Who tilt their aggregate beast against our crumbling
Troy.

For we are obsolete who like the lesser things
Who play in corners with looking-glasses and beads ;
It is better we should go quickly, go into Asia
Or any other tunnel where the world recedes,
Or turn blind wantons like the gulls who scream
And rip the edge off any ideal or dream.

Louis MACNEIGE (1907-),

Turf-stacks

1. What does this poem say? What is the poet's attitude to the world? How far do you sympathise with it?

2. Write an amplified paraphrase of the second stanza.
3. Does the poet's manner suggest sincerity? Is he deeply moved? Consider carefully the diction and rhythm.
4. Write an appreciation of the imagery, and show how the poet breaks away from conventional usage.
5. Compare and contrast this poem with Wordsworth's, sonnet on page 91.

86

After the first powerful plain manifesto
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.
Without bowing and with unrestrained unconcern
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,
The gasworks and at last the heavy page
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.
Beyond the town there lies the open country
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.
It is now she begins to sing—at first quite low
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness—
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.
And always light, aerial, underneath
Goes the elate metre of her wheels.
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines
She plunges new eras of wild happiness
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.
At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night
Where only a low streamline brightness
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.

Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced
 Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
 Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

STEPHEN SPENDER (1909-),
The Express

1. Explain carefully the following expressions, and state the effect achieved :

- (a) ' the heavy page
 Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.'
- (b) ' she acquires mystery
 The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.'
- (c) And always light, aerial, underneath
 Goes the elate metre of her wheels.'
- (d) ' Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced
 Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
 Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.'

2. Does this passage seem to you satisfying and convincing? What are its outstanding qualities?

3. Show how the new things of a new world have been accepted, absorbed, and turned into poetry.

4. Compare in detail with this passage from Tennyson's *Princess*, and state the differences in tone and expression.

' round the lake
 A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
 And shook the lilies : perch'd about the knolls
 A dozen angry models jetted steam :
 A petty railway ran : a fire-balloon
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
 And dropt a fairy parachute and past :
 And there through twenty posts of telegraph
 They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
 Between the mimic stations ; so that sport
 Went hand in hand with science.'

87

See he slips like insinuations
Into the waves and sidles
Across breakers, diving under
The greater tidals,

Plunging, a small plane
Down dark altitudes,
Trailing bubbles like aerial bombs
Or a balloon's broods.

O moving ecstatic boy
Sliding through the gloomy seas
Who bring me pearls to enjoy
Rarer than to be found in these seas—

Between the fixed bars of your lips
Darts the kiss like silver
Fish, and in my wild grip
You harbour, for ever.

GEORGE BARKER (1913-),
The Seal Boy

1. Explain this poem. What difficulties, if any, do you find? Do they detract from the poem's effect?
2. Examine the use of metaphor and simile. State whether the poet's meaning is helped or obscured.
3. Write a short appreciation of this poem.

3. A FURTHER SELECTION OF POEMS

(1) Assign the following poems or passages to their periods (17th century, Victorian, Modern, etc.), and where possible to authors, stating your reasons from internal evidence.

(2) Using the same methods of approach as in Part 2, write a critical appreciation¹ of each poem or passage.

(3) Compare and contrast the two, or more, poems or passages grouped together, and try to describe accurately the differences of quality and kind. The poems are numbered and the grouping, which is according to some similarity (and occasionally, for contrast, dissimilarity) of subject or feeling, is as follows :

1,2, 3, 4; 5,6; 7,8; 9, 10; 11, 12; 13, 14; 15, 16; 17, 18, 19 ; 20, 21 ; 22, 23 ; 24, 25 ; 26, 27, 28 ; 29, 30; 31,32; 33, 34, 35,36; 37,38; 39,40; 41,42.²

It has been suggested that a detailed appreciation of a poem would be useful as a model, and would give some ideas on how to start upon this section of unsigned poems.

The critical appreciation which follows is simple in expression, and does not go outside the range of the re-

¹ See Note on page xi.

² The authors of poems in this section are given in a list which may be obtained by teachers on application to the publishers.

marks made upon the poem by an Upper Sixth Form. It offers suggestions of a method of approach and analysis, and does not claim to be a final judgment on the poem.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask : But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies ; God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts : who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best : His state
Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

The subject is the poet's blindness, and the poem tells how patience and faith can overcome this affliction. The poet expresses his quiet resignation to the will of God.

The verse form used is that of the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet, the sestet riming c d e c d e . There is no division marked between the octave and the sestet, the sense running on :

But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies.

In the first line the word ' consider' strikes a keynote, that of reflection. There is a process of calm thought leading to the conclusion stated in the last line.

Though the poem is subjective it makes contact with a wider world in the word 'light', something universal, (making his loss the greater), whereas 'sight' (the expected word) would be personal and limited. This breadth is seen in 'talent', with its play upon words—the talent for poetry which the writer possessed and feels is now useless, and the talent of the parable (bringing the whole of the biblical story to mind with one word). The expression of his religious feeling now pervades the poem. The affliction of blindness only makes the poet more eager to serve his Maker. Biblical memories are stirred by the expressions * 'present my true account', and in the next line 'day-labour'. The question 'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?' is somewhat querulous; the murmur is checked, and the answer is given by Patience, fittingly personified. From this point to the end the mood is one of serenity and quiet assurance; the yoke is mild, God is good. More than that He is kingly, and the poet is proud to acknowledge His sovereignty. Dignity of expression (to suit the change of mood) is achieved by the balance of 'Either man's work, or His own gifts' and of 'who best Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best'. There is a fine contrast between 'thousands at His bidding speed' and the last line 'They also serve who only stand and wait'; a contrast which serves to emphasise the sincere humility of the poet.

The movement of the verse is dignified yet varied. The caesura constantly shifts, falling after 'days', 'talent', 'useless', 'Maker', 'account'; a variety which never becomes looseness but always suits the flow of the sense.

The total effect is one of quiet dignity. The sonnet

form contains the thought completely ; there is the question and the answer, and the final acceptance through faith expressed in the quietness of the last line.

The subject, that of his own blindness, makes the poem easy to place as the work of Milton. Other indications which should be considered are the lofty tone, the harmony and emphasis of the verse, the religious feeling, the intense sincerity. Significant expressions are 'dark world and wide' (cf. 'human face divine'), the Latin construction 'light denied', the inversion

' who best

Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best :'

and finally, there is the characteristic movement of the first seven and a half lines.

As mentioned above, most of the poems in this section are grouped according to some similarity of subject, feeling, or idea. This grouping will serve also to bring out more strikingly the differences. The poems will be found to interact, making critical comment easier, and a better understanding of each should follow. For example, here are two brief extracts expressing disillusionment:

- (i) You did not come,
 And marching Time drew on, and wore me numb.—
 Yet less for loss of your dear presence there
 Than that I thus found lacking in your make
 That high compassion which can overbear
 Reluctance for pure lovingkindness' sake
 Grieved I, when, as the hope-hour stroked its sum,
 You did not come.

- (2) The holy centaurs of the hill are vanished ;
I have nothing but the embittered sun ;
Banished heroic mother moon and vanished,
And now that I have come to fifty years
I must endure the timid sun.

In (i) the incident described rises immediately out of personal experience, the poignant memory of a broken appointment. There is the sense of the heavy, crushing weight of despair. This starkness of feeling is reflected in the starkness of the diction. The great metaphor in line 2 is arresting, ponderous ; wearing down body and spirit. ' Hope-hour stroked its sum ' has the same impressive weight. The use of long vowel sounds and heavy stresses achieves this effect, and the simple statement ' You did not come ' gains greater significance. The expression is controlled by the deliberate movement; the sadness never becomes desolation. Deep feeling is perfectly communicated.

(2) Expresses, in verse of some difficulty, the bitterness of disillusionment. The poet wakes from the enchantment of legend—' the holy centaurs of the hill are vanished '—and of the dream-world of mythology, here represented by the moon, known not only as the huntress, heroic with bow and quiver, but as the great Mother Goddess, caring for mankind, the earth, and all creatures. She is banished, and the poet finds he has nothing but ' the embittered sun'. (With this transferred epithet he fixes his mood.) Now, in that harsh light, he recognizes the actual world, but too late for his fifty years, and being unable to make a readjustment because of habit, he must timidly endure. The verse has the idiom and movement of speech, and is in

marked contrast to the resolute weight of (i). The tone is quiet ; ' vanished ' is the key-word, repeated in line 3 with its falling cadence ; while the cadence of the last line bears out the feeling of despair. The poet has the courage to look upon reality, but there is no comfort ' I must endure '. (i) Expresses the disillusionment of a lover ; (2) expresses the disillusionment of a dreamer.¹

I

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
 With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale.
 The nightingale with feathers new she sings ;
 The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
 Summer is come, for every spray now springs,
 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale ;
 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings ;
 The fishes flete with new repaired scale ;
 The adder all her slough away she slings ;
 The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale ;
 The busy bee her honey now she mings² ;
 Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
 And thus I see among these pleasant things
 Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

2

Nothing is so beautiful as spring—
 When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and
 lush ;
 Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush

¹ (i) From *A Broken Appointment* by Thomas Hardy ; (2) from *Lints Written in Dejection* by W. B. Yeats.

² mingles, mixes.

Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing ;
 The glassy pear-tree leaves and blooms, they brush
 The descending blue ; that blue is all in a rush
With richness ; the racing lambs too have fair their
 fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,

 Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,

 Most, O Maid's child, thy choice and worthy the
 winning.

3

'Twas at the season when the Earth upsprings
From slumber ; as a sphered angel's child,
Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wings,
 Stands up before its mother bright and mild,
Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems—
So stood before the sun, which shone and smiled
 To see it ride thus joyous from its dreams,
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove
Waxed green, and flowers burst forth like starry beams ;

 The grass in the warm sun did start and move,
And sea-buds burst under the waves serene.

How many a one, though none be near to love,

 Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen
In any mirror—or the spring's young minions,
The winged leaves amid the copses green :

 How many a spirit then puts on the pinions
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,

And his own steps, and over wide dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast,
More fleet than storms. The wide world shrinks below,
When winter and despondency are past.

4

The glory of the beauty of the morning,—
The cuckoo crying over the untouched dew ;
The blackbird that has found it, and the dove
That tempts me on to something sweeter than love ;
White clouds ranged even and fair as new-mown hay ;
The heat, the stir, the sublime vacancy
Of sky and meadow and forest and my own heart :—
The glory invites me, yet it leaves me scorning
All I can ever do, all I can be,
Beside the lovely of motion, shape, and hue,
The happiness I fancy fit to dwell
In beauty's presence. Shall I now this day
Begin to seek as far as heaven, as hell,
Wisdom or strength to match this beauty, start
And tread the pale dust pitted with small dark drops,
In hope to find whatever it is I seek,
Harkening to short-lived happy-seeming things
That we know naught of, in the hazel copse?
Or must I be content with discontent
As larks and swallows are perhaps with wings?
And shall I ask at the day's end once more
What beauty is, and what I can have meant
By happiness? And shall I let all go,
Glad, weary, or both? Or shall I perhaps know
That I was happy oft and oft before,
Awhile forgetting, how I am fast pent,

How dreary-swift, with naught to travel to,
Is Time? I cannot bite the day to the core.

5

The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning : but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful (Enone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

' O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flower droops : the golden bee

Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all weary of my life.'

6

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-
panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-
panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chim-
neys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes ;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet:
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate ;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a *toast* and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, ' Do I dare? ' and, ' Do I dare? '
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say : ' How his hair is growing thin!)
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the
chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple
pin—
(They will say : ' But how his arms and legs are thin! ')
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

7

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire
Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire ;
Anon he stain'd the thick and spongy sod
With wine, in honour of the shepherd-god.
Now while the earth was drinking it, and while
Bay leaves were crackling in the fragrant pile,
And gummy frankincense was sparkling bright
'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light
Spread greyly eastward, thus a chorus sang :

' O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness ;
Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress
Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken ;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken

The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
 In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
 The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth ;
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now,
 By thy love's milky brow!
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
 Hear us, great Pan!

.

' O thou, to whom

Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
 Their ripen'd fruitage ; yellow girted bees
 Their golden honeycombs ; our village leas
 Their fairest blossom'd beans and popped corn ;
 The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
 To sing for thee ; low creeping strawberries
 Their summer coolness ; pent up butterflies
 Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh budding year
 All its completions—be quickly near,
 By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
 O forester divine!

8

' Into the inmost Temple thus I came,
 Which fuming all with frankincense I found
 And odours rising from the altars flame.
 Upon an hundred marble pillars round
 The roof up high was reared from the ground,
 All deckt with crowns, and chains, and garlands gay,
 And thousand precious gifts worth many a pound,
 The which sad lovers for their vows did pay ;
 And all the ground was strow'd with flowers as fresh as
 May.

' An hundred Altars round about were set,
All flaming with their sacrifices fire,
That with the steam thereof the Temple sweat,
Which roll'd in clouds to heaven did aspire,
And in them bore true lovers' vows entire :
And eke an hundred brazen cauldrons bright,
To bathe in joy and amorous desire,
Every of which was to a damsel hight ;
For all the priests were damsels in soft linen dight.

' Right in the midst the Goddess' self did stand
Upon an altar of some costly mass,
Whose substance was uneath¹ to understand :
For neither precious stone, nor dureful brass,
Nor shining gold, nor mould'ring clay it was ;
But much more rare and precious to esteem,
Pure in aspect, and like to crystal glass,
Yet glass was not, if one did rightly deem ;
But, being fair and brittle, likest glass did seem/

9

There was a Power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden ; a ruling Grace
Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,

¹ difficult.

Tended the garden from morn to even :
And the meteors of that sublunar Heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when Night walks forth.
Laughed round her footsteps up from the Earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,
But her tremulous breath and her flushing face
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep from her eyes,
That her dreams were less slumber than Paradise :

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
Had deserted Heaven while the stars were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Though the veil of daylight concealed him from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it pressed ;
You might hear by the heaving of her breast,
That the coming and going of the wind
Brought pleasure there and left passion behind.

And wherever her aery footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers through all her frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the stream
On those that were faint with the sunny beam ;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder-showers.

10

I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove ;
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill :
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with cankered venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallowed ground i;
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tasselled horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless.

II

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 flies ;
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.

12

Look, stranger, at this island now
The leaping light for your delight discovers,
Stand stable here
And silent be,
That through the channels of the ear
May wander like a river
The swaying sound of the sea.

Here at the small field's ending pause
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall ledges
Oppose the pluck
And knock of the tide,
And the shingle scrambles after the suck-
ing surf, and the gull lodges
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships
Diverge on urgent yoluntary errands

And the full view
Indeed may enter
And move in memory as now these clouds do,
That pass the harbour mirror
And all the summer through the water saunter.

13 '

Then shall my native city Samarcanda,
And crystal waves of fresh Jaertis' stream,
The pride and beauty of her princely seat,
Be famous through the furthest continents ;
For there my palace royal shall be plac'd,
Whose shining turrets shall dismay the heavens,
And cast the fame of Ilion's tower to hell :
Thorough the streets, with troops of conquer'd kings,
I'll ride in golden armour like the sun ;
And in my helm a triple plume shall spring,
Spangled with diamonds, dancing in the air,
To note me emperor of the three-fold world ;
Like to an almond-tree y-mounted high
Upon the lofty and celestial mount
Of ever-green Selinus, quaintly deck'd
With blooms more white than Erycina's brows,
Whose tender blossoms tremble every one
At every little breath that thorough heaven is blown.
Then in my coach, like Saturn's royal sun
Mounted his shining chariot gilt with fire,
And drawn with princely eagles through the path
Pav'd with bright crystal and enchas'd with stars,
When all the gods stand gazing at his pomp,
So will I ride through Samarcanda-streets,
Until my soul, dissever'd from this flesh,
Shall mount the milk-white way, and meet him there.

14

Yet still, e'en here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loathe his vegetable meal ;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes ;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent'rous plough-share to the steep ;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage¹ into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze ;
While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board :
And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
With many tales repays the nightly bed.

15

Hard-faring race!
They pick their fuel out of every hedge,
Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquenched
The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide

¹ the bear.

Their fluttering rags, and shows a tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree they claim.
Great skill have they in palmistry, and more
To conjure clean away the gold they touch,
Conveying worthless dross into its place ;
Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.
Strange that a creature rational, and cast
In human mould, should brutalize by choice
His nature, and, though capable of arts
By which the world might profit and himself,
Self banished from society, prefer
Such squalid sloth to honourable toil!
Yet even these, though feigning sickness oft,
They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb,
And vex their flesh with artificial sores,
Can change their whine into a mirthful note
When safe occasion offers ; and with dance,
And music of the bladder and the bag,
Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.
Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy
The houseless rovers of the sylvan world ;
And, breathing wholesome air, and wandering much,
Need other physic none to heal the effects
Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

16

Yet are they here the same unbroken knot
Of human Beings, in the self-same spot!
Men, women, children, yea the frame
Of the whole spectacle the same!
Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,
Now deep and red, the colouring of night ;

That on their Gipsy-faces falls,
Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.
—Twelve hours, twelve beauteous hours are gone,
while I
Have been a traveller under open sky,
Much witnessing of change and cheer,
Yet as I left I find them here!
The weary sun betook himself to rest ;—
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,
Outshining like a visible God
The glorious path in which he trod.
And now, ascending, after one dark hour
And one night's diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty Moon! this way
She looks as if at them—but they
Regard not her :—oh, better wrong and strife
(By nature transient) then this torpid life ;
Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move!
Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth!
In scorn I speak not;—they are what their birth
And breeding suffer them to be ;
Wild outcasts of society!

17

For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
Or chide my palsy, or my gout,
My five grey hairs, or ruined fortune flout ;
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,
Take you-a course, get you a place,
Observe his honour, or his grace ;
Or the king's real, or his stamped face

Contemplate ; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.

Alas, alas, who's injured by my love?
What merchants' ships have my sighs drowned?
Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tombs and hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse ;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms ;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us canonized for love,

And thus invoke us : You whom reverend love
Made one another's hermitage ;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage ;
Who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes—
So made such mirrors and such spies
That they did all to you epitomize,—
Countries, towns, courts ; beg from above
A pattern of your love!

18

For a day and a night Love sang to us, played with us,
Folded us round from the dark and the light;
And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with
us,
Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with
us,
Stayed in mid passage his pinions from flight
For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he
hidden us.
Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,
From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that
had chidden us
Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us
Spirit and flesh growing one with delight
For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will not stay for
us:
Morning is here in the joy of its might :
With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for
us;
Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us ;
Love can but last in us here at his height
For a day and a night.

19

My Love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis, for object, strange and high :
It was begotten by despair
Upon impossibility.

Magnanimous despair alone
 Could show me so divine a thing,
 Where feeble hope could ne'er have flown
 But vainly flapped its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
 Where my extended soul is fixt,
 But Fate does iron wedges drive,
 And always crowds itself betwixt.

For Fate with jealous eyes does see
 Two perfect loyes ; nor lets them close :
 Their union would her ruin be,
 And her tyrannic power depose.

And therefore her decrees of steel
 Us as the distant poles have placed,
 (Though love's whole world on us doth wheel)
 Not by themselves to be embraced.

Unless the giddy heaven fall,
 And earth some new convulsion tear ;
 And, us to join, the world should all
 Be cramped into a planisphere.

As lines so love's oblique may well
 Themselves in every angle greet:
 But ours, so truly parallel,
 Though infinite, can never meet.

Therefore the love which us doth bind,
 But Fate so enviously debars,
 Is the conjunction of the mind,
 And opposition of the stars.

20

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compiled,
Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry 'Amen'
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say 'Tis so, 'tis true,'
And to the most of praise add something more ;
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
Then others for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

21

She is foremost of those that I would hear praised.
I have gone about the house, gone up and down
As a man does who has published a new book
Or a young girl dressed out in her new gown,
And though I have turned the talk by hook or crook
Until her praise should be the uppermost theme,
A woman spoke of some new tale she had read,
A man confusedly in a half dream
As though some other name ran in his head.
She is foremost of those that I would hear praised.
I will talk no more of books or the long war
But walk by the dry thorn until I have found
Some beggar sheltering from the wind, and there
Manage the talk until her name come round.

If there be rags enough he will know her name
And be well pleased remembering it, for in the old days,
Though she had young men's praise and old men's
 blame,
Among the poor both old and young gave her praise.

22

With thee conversing I forget all time,
All seasons and their change, all please alike :
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds ; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew ; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers ; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild ; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train :
But neither breath of Morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.

23

After the songless rose of evening,
 Night quiet, dark, still,
In nodding cavalcade advancing
 Starred the deep hill :

You, in the valley standing,
In your quiet wonder took
All that glamour, peace, and mystery
In one grave look.
Beauty hid your naked body,
Time dreamed in your bright hair,
In your eyes the constellations
Burned far and fair.

24

In that world we weary to attain,
Love's furled banner floats at large unfurled ;
There is no more doubt and no more pain
In that world.

There are gems and gold and inlets pearled ;
There the verdure fadeth not again ;
There no clinging tendrils droop uncurled.

Here incessant tides stir up the main,
Stormy miry depths aloft are hurled :
There is no more sea, or storm, or stain,
In that world.

25

Ah, Sun-flower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun ;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime,
Where the traveller's journey is done ;
Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

26

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too the night
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
I see her veil draw soft across the day,
I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent with
grey;
I feel her finger light
Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train ;
The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,
The heart less bounding at emotion new,
And hope, once crush'd, less quick to spring again.
And long the way appears, which seem'd so short
To the unpractis'd eye of sanguine youth ;
' And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,
Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare!
Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-batter'd world uplifts its wall.
And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,
And near and real the charm of thy repose,
And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

27

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phoebus lifts his golden fire ;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require :
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.

Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasures bring to happier men :
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear :
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear.
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

28

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green :
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars ;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen :
Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

My genial spirits fail ;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light {that lingers in the west :

I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

29

Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
All strength—all terror, single or iri bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form ;
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaös, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man,
My haunt, and the main region of my song.
—Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms
Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps ;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was?
For the discerning intellect of Man,

When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.

30

Descend from heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name, I call : for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwelPst, but, heav'nly born,
Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the heav'n of heav'ns I have presumed.
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air
Thy tempering ; with like safety guided down
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unreined, as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall
Erroneous, there to wander and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound,
Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though falPn on evil days,
On evil days though falPn and evil tongues ;
In darkness, and with dangers compast round,

And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east. Still govern thou my song,
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
 For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.

31

Hear then the truth : ' 'Tis Heav'n each Passion
 sends,
 And different men directs to different ends.
 Extremes in Nature equal good produce,
 Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use.'
 Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?
 That Pow'r who bids the Ocean ebb and flow,
 Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,
 Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,
 Builds life on Death, on Change Duration founds,
 And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.
 Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
 Wait but for Wings, and in their season fly.
 Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
 Sees but a backward steward for the Poor ;
 This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare ;
 The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,
 In lavish streams to quench a Country's thirst,
 And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Gotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
Yet was not Gotta void of wit or worth :
What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot?
His court with nettles, moats with cresses stored,
With soups unbought and salads bless'd his board?
If Gotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
Than Brahmins, Saints, and Sages did before ;
To cram the Rich was prodigal expense,
And who would take the poor from Providence?
Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,
Silence without, and Fasts within the wall ;
No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
No noontide-bell invites the country round ;
Tenants with sighs the smokeless tow'rs survey,
And turn th' unwilling steeds another way ;
Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,
Curse the sav'd candle, and unop'ning door ;
While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate,
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

32

And now what are we? unbelievers both,
Calm and complete, determinately fixed
To-day, to-morrow, and for ever, pray?
You'll guarantee me that? Not so, I think!
In no-wise! all we've gained is, that belief,
As unbelief before, shakes us by fits,
Confounds us like its predecessor. Where's
The gain? how can we guard our unbelief,
Make it bear fruit to us?—the problem here.
Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-touch,

A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as Nature's self,
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
Round the ancient idol, on his base again,—
The grand Perhaps! we look on helplessly,—
There the old misgivings, crooked questions are—
This good God,—what He could do, if He would,
Would, if He could—then must have done long since ;
If so, when, where, and how? some way must be,—
Once feel about, and soon or late you hit
Some sense, in which it might be, after all.
Why not, ' The Way, the Truth, the Life? '

33

How should I praise thee, Lord! how should my rhymes
Gladly engrave thy love in steel,
If what my soul doth feel sometimes,
My soul might ever feel!

Although there were some forty heav'ns, or more,
Sometimes I peer above them all ;
Sometimes I hardly reach a score,
Sometimes to hell I fall.

O rack me not to such a vast extent;
Those distances belong to thee :
The world's too little for thy tent,
A grave too big for me.

Wilt thou meet arms with man, that thou dost stretch
A crumb of dust from heav'n to hell?
Will great God measure with a wretch?
Shall he thy stature spell?

O let me, when thy roof my soul hath hid,
O let me roost and nestle there :
Then of a sinner thou art rid,
And I of hope and fear.

Yet take thy way ; for sure thy way is best:
Stretch or contract me thy poor debtor :
This is but tuning of my breast,
To make the music better.

Whether I fly with angels, fall with dust,
Thy hands made both, and I am there :
Thy power and love, my love and trust
Make one place ev'rywhere.

34

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease ; petitions yet remain
Which Heaven may hear, nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.
Safe in his power whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious prayer ;

Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
 Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
 Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
 And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
 Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resigned ;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
 For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
 For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat.
 These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
 These goods He grants who grants the power to gain ;
 With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
 And makes the happiness she does not find.

35

Well, World you have kept faith with me,
 Kept faith with me ;
 Upon the whole you have proved to be
 Much as you said you were.
 Since as a child I used to lie
 Upon the leaze and watch the sky,
 Never, I own, expected I
 That life would all be fair.

'Twas then you said, and since have said,
 Times since have said,
 In that mysterious voice you shed
 From clouds and hills around :
 ' Many have loved me desperately,
 Many with smooth serenity,
 While some have shown contempt of me
 Till they dropped underground.

I do not promise overmuch,
 Child ; overmuch ;
Just neutral-tinted haps and such/
 You said to minds like mine.
Wise warning for your credit's sake!
Which I for one failed not to take,
And hence could stem such strain and ache
 As each year might assign.

36

False life! a foil and no more, when
 Wilt thou be gone?
Thou foul deception of all men
That would not have the true come on

Thou art a Moon-like toil ; a blind
 Self-posing state ;
A dark contest of waves and wind ;
A mere tempestuous debate.

Life is a fix'd, discerning light,
 • A knowing Joy ;
No chance, or fit : but ever bright,
And calm and full, yet doth not cloy

'Tis such a blissful thing, that still
 Doth vivify,
And shine and smile, and hath the skill
To please without Eternity.

Thou art a toilsome Mole, or less
 A moving mist,
But life is, what none can express,
A quickness, which my God hath kist.

37

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me ; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture : I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life :
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last,
With a fresh pinion ; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round¹ our being
cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm, —
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

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