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ENGLISH
PATRIOTIC POETRY

ENGLISH PATRIOTIC POETRY

Selected and annotated by

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PREFACE

SINCE the purpose of this little book, as stated in the Introduction, is to trace the growth of the Patriotic Note in English Verse, it is evident that, but for the generosity of many living authors, its object could not have been realised. And, therefore, my sincere thanks are offered to the following authors and publishers, who have generously given me permission to include copyright poems:

Mr Alfred Austin for "In Praise of England," from *Songs of England* (Messrs Macmillan and Co.).

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for "The Song of the Bow," from *Songs of Action* (Messrs Smith Elder and Co.).

Mr Rudyard Kipling for "The English Flag," from *Barrack Room Ballads and other Verses* (Messrs Methuen and Co.).

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For the following poems I am indebted to the courtesy of the owners of the copyright. For Mr Rudyard Kipling's "The Children's Song," from *Puck of Pook's Hill*, to the Rt Hon. the Earl of Meath; for Archbishop



PREFACE

Trench's Sonnet on "England" to Messrs Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.; for Lord Tennyson's "Hands All Round" to Messrs Macmillan and Co.; and for Mr Swinburne's "The Armada" Section VII. No. 2, to the author's executor, and also to Messrs Chatto and Windus the publishers.

Only the limits imposed by the law of copyright have prevented the inclusion of the famous ballads "The Revenge" and "The Defence of Lucknow" by the late Lord Tennyson, but as it is an easy matter to obtain these poems, it is hoped that this deficiency will be overlooked.

I should like also to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to many of my friends for valuable suggestions, and in particular to Miss M. Sowden for help of every kind.

The growing importance of such celebrations as are now held in our schools on Empire Day seemed to emphasise the need for an anthology of this sort; and if, through its influence, even a few of our children are led to honour their country in thought and deed, it will not have been compiled in vain.

L. G. S.

2 September 1910.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PATRIOTIC NOTE IN ENGLISH VERSE.

It is surely a matter for surprise that, with a history so full of romance, and with chronicles that bear on every page the record of high heroic deeds done for England's sake, there should be in our Literature so few patriotic poems of the highest classical merit. Yet in the very nature of things, it could not well be otherwise; for with a history of such uninterrupted progress as that of England, there has been no room for the expression of a patriotism like that of the exiled Hebrew in the most impassioned of all patriotic hymns, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept." By a just law of compensation it is always the downtrodden and exiles who have sung those "sweetest songs that tell of saddest thoughts": hence it is that there can be nothing in our Patriotic Literature to compare with the poetry of the Celts, with its burden of longing and regret, and its passionate outcry against tyranny and injustice.

Again, the apparent failure may be accounted for by the fact that it is the nameless heroes who have made England what she is, the steady practical men, whose lives are no more possible as themes of heroic poetry than would be the history of a steam-roller. Such men are men of action rather than of words, and the record of their lives must be looked for, not in our poetry, but in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, where, as Mr Newbolt beautifully says.

"Not of the great only you deigned to tell—
The stars by which we steer—
But lights out of the night that flashed—and fell
To night again, are here.

Whether their fame centuries long should ring
 They cared not overmuch,
 But cared greatly to serve God and the king,
 And keep the Nelson touch.

And fought to build Britain above the tide
 Of wars and windy fate;
 And passed content, leaving to us the pride
 Of lives obscurely great."

Yet — though it cannot be said that England's patriotic poems are in any high degree an adequate record of her mighty Past— it is fitting that we should look first to her poets for patriotic utterances. The poet is, by nature, more sensitive than the ordinary man to the impressions of the hour, so that impulses and ideas which stir the nation as a whole, must, of necessity, stir its poets even more powerfully. All men at heart are patriots: it is the poet who has the power to transmute thought into language.

And so this search after the Patriotic Note in our Verse is no fruitless quest. Though at the outset it may sound faint and uncertain, it swells through the centuries till at last its volume is no longer unworthy of its great theme, and its echoes ring true in the hearts of Englishmen throughout the Empire.

I. EARLY PATRIOTIC EFFORTS.

In dealing with the question of the Patriotic Note in English Verse, it is natural first to ask "What is this Patriotism—this universal instinct, this spring of inspiration in our literature?" A patriot is "a man who truly loves and serves his fatherland" (Gk. *πατριώτης* = 'of the fatherland'); whilst Patriotism is "love or zeal for one's fatherland or country."

Evidently then, the word presupposes a 'Patria' or country, and so we cannot expect to find it voiced to any audible extent in English literature until the thirteenth century, when the idea that "England is for the English" first took root.

As soon as the nation began to feel its unity and strength,

and Magna Charta (1215), that first united act of a united people, testified to the reality and permanence of this feeling, then at once the note of patriotism begins to dominate the utterances of all classes of writers and thinkers.

It is first heard in the rude popular poetry which abounds from this time onwards, poetry crude and often vulgarly boastful, but for all that instinct with the genuine spirit of National Pride. The few political songs which belong to King John's reign are remarkable for the shrewd way in which they plead for the honour of England, and attack her enemies. *The Scrog of the Bishops*, for example, is a virulent attack in Latin on the Bishops of Bath, Norwich and Winchester, who supported the king in his quarrel with the Pope, about the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the next reign, the weak government of Henry III, his excessive fondness for foreigners, and the exorbitant demands of the Pope, aroused to the highest degree the newly born national pride, as evidenced by the songs which celebrate the Barons' War, and extol the virtues of the people's hero, 'Sir Simon the Righteous.'

Simon's triumph was short-lived however. In August, 1265, he was killed at the great battle of Evesham. His fate was the subject of general lamentation, and in the Cotton MSS. is the following hymn, designed for use in a religious service in his honour:

'Salve, Symon Montis-Fortis
 Totius flos militiæ,
 Duras poenas passus mortis,
 Protector gentis Angliæ.

 Sis pro nobis intercessor
 Apud Deum qui defensor
 In terris extiteras.'

(Hail, Simon de Montfort, the flower of all the war, who endured the harsh penalty of death, protector of the English race.. Thou who didst exist as our defender on earth be our mediator in Heaven.)

But he had not lived in vain, for not only had he aroused in his countrymen an undying feeling of hatred at the wholesale

usurpation by foreigners of the rights of Englishmen, but he had also laid the foundation of popular representation in Parliament. Well might the poet sing :

“On Evesham’s plain is Montfort slain,
Well skilled the war to guide:
Where streams his gore shall all deplore
Fair England’s flower and pride.’

(*Lament for Simon de Montfort*, trans. by George Ellis, abt. 1800.)

In no early poet is the realization of English nationality and patriotism more strongly indicated than in the monk, Robert of Gloucester (c. 1298). His *Chronicle* is wholly worthless as literature, but the sentiment of patriotism is so strong that Hearne (1678—1735) claims for its author the honour of being the first of English writers: “He and not Chaucer,” says he, “as Dr Fuller and some others would have it, is the genius of the English nation, and he is on that account to be as much respected as ever Ennius himself was among the Romans, and I have good reason to think that he will be so by friends to our antiquities and our old history.” Camden also contends for the merits of his verses on the plea of their being thoroughly English, and the lines he quotes afford as good a sample of the *Chronicle* as could be chosen :

“England is a well good land, in the stead best.
Set in the one end of the world and reigneth west.
The sea goeth him all about, he stant as an yle,
Of foes it need the lesse doubt: but it be through gile
Of folke of the self land;

Plentie men in England of all good see,

For England is full enough of fruit and of treene,
Of woods and of parks, that joy it is to seene.”

The principal cities are thus briefly described :

“In the countrey of Canterbury, most plenty of fish is,
And most chase of wild beasts about Salisbury, i-wis,

And London ships most, and wine at Winchester,
 At Hartford sheep and oxe, and fruite at Worcester,
 Soape about Coventry, and yron at Gloucester,
 Metall, lead and tinne, in the countrey of Exeter.
 Evorwick of fairest wood, Lincoln of fairest men,
 Cambridge and Huntingdon most plenty of deep venne,
 Elie of fairest place, of fairest sight Rochester."

Along with these flowery descriptions of England and her people, patriotic pride found vent in a crowd of martial ballads dealing with the wars of the first three Edwards. The most noticeable feature of these early war-songs is an obnoxious self-assertiveness, that ignores the just claims of all who do not happen to be fellow-subjects, and revels in vulgar vituperation of the enemy. This was perhaps natural, at a time when England was beset on all sides by wild and cruel enemies; and was ruled by kings whose desire for military glory and conquest was paramount. Welsh, Scots and French alike suffered at the hands of these so-called patriotic poets, whose bitter vehemence degraded the very name of Patriotism.

Among these efforts is the *Songs of the Scottish Wars*, composed apparently soon after the Battle of Falkirk, 1298. Again and again in the poem does the author express his contempt for the

"Tunicatus populus, multus et immanis,
 Qui solet detrahere viris Anglicanis";

(*The kilted folk, many and huge, who are wont to scorn the English men.*)

whilst, with extreme boastfulness, he concludes :

"Angli velut angeli semper sunt victores,
 Scotieis et Wallieis sunt prestantiores,
 Quasi sus insurgeret leonis virtuti,
 Sic expugnant Angliam Scotie polluti."

(*The English like angels are always conquerors, they are more excellent than the Scots or the Welsh, as though a swine should resist the valour of a lion so the filthy Scots attack England.*)

The same spirit colours the *Chronicle* of Peter Langtoft, for after the Scots were beaten at Dunbar he made the following rhyme:

“These scaterand Scottes
 Hold we for sottes
 Of wrenches unware,
 Erly in mornyng
 In an eivill timyng
 Came thei to Dunbarre;”

whilst the Welsh came in for an equal share of his scorn and derision:

“Gales soit maldit de Deus e de St Symoun!
 Car tuz jours ad este pleins de tresoun.
 Escoce soit maldit de la Mère Dé!
 E paifount à diable Gales enfoundré!”

(*May Wales be accursed of God and St Simon, for it has always been full of treason. May Scotland be accursed of the mother of God, and Wales sunk down deep to the Devil.*)

After the defeat of Bannockburn in 1314, an English poet in the bitterness of humiliation sings:

“Me cordis angustia cogit mira fari,
 Scotiae quod Anglia coepit subjugari.
 Regionum Anglia pluriū matrona,
 Cui tributaria jam dabantur dona,
 Heu dolor! nunc cogitur nimis esse prona
 Filiae, qua laeditur materna corona.”

(*The Battle of Bannockburn, from the Cotton MSS. fol. 68*);

(*Perplexity of heart compels me to tell wonderful things, that England begins to be subjected to Scotland. England the matron of many regions, to whom tributary gifts were given, is now alas! constrained to be prostrate to the daughter, by whom the maternal crown is injured.*)

but with the victory of Halidon Hill in 1333 English pride was restored, and then the English patriot cries triumphantly:

“Where are ye Scottes of St John's town?
 The boast of your banner is beaten all down.”

(*Minot, v. 7*);

and once more in Song i. 49—56 :

“More menacings yet have they makéd
 Malgré may they have to meed,
 And many nights too, have they wakéd
 To harm all England with their deed.
 But, praised be God, the pride is slakéd
 Of theȝ that are so stout on steed,
 And some of them are laid all nakéd
 Not far from Berwick upon Tweed ”

Equally vigorous and boastful were the poets' attacks on the French, for with the approach of the Hundred Years' War Englishmen completely lost sight of their Norman ancestry. In the opinion of his subjects Edward III was the rightful heir to the throne of France, and they hastened therefore to share in the expedition which was preparing. Bannockburn had been avenged, and now the stain of Senlac was to be wiped out on the fields of Crecy and Poitiers.

This independent national spirit found expression in the ballads of Lawrence Minot, a gleeman who wrote, between the years 1333—1352, some ten poems on the achievements of Edward III and the Black Prince, celebrating such events as the victory of Halidon Hill, 1333; the sea-fight off Sluys, 1340; the Battle of Crecy and the siege of Calais, 1346; and the capture of Guisnes Castle, 1352.

In glowing patriotism and love for his king, Minot is surpassed by none of his predecessors; and moreover his work is remarkable for a precision and force as yet unexampled in English verse. Listen to his exultation over the downfall of the French at Crecy :

“Away is all thy weal, i-wis,
 Frenche man, with all thy fare.

 English man shall yet this year
 Knock thy pallet 'ere thou pass
 And make thee polléd 'ke a frère,
 And yet is England as it was.”

or again to his account of Edward's first expedition to France :

“Edward, our comely king,
 In Braband has his dwelling
 With many comely knight;

And in that land truely to tell
 Ordains he stull for to dwell
 To time he think to fight.
 Then the rich flower de lys
 Wan there full little price;
 Fast he fled for ferde.
 The right heir of that countre
 Is comen with all his knightes free
 To shake him by the beard.
 Our king and his men held the field
 Stalworthly with spear and shield
 And thought to win his right
 With lordes and with knightes keen,
 And other doughty men bydene
 That war ful frek to fight."

But whilst martial songmen like Minot spent themselves in extolling the prowess of England and her King in battle, others there were, no less important, whose love for their country found more truthful expression in deploring the miseries which inevitably accompanied this long warfare. The times were evil for the poor; the clergy were selfish and corrupt; landlords were greedy and tyrannous; and the people, enfeebled by plague and famine, were oppressed by the heavy taxes and cruel statutes, by which Parliament was vainly striving to reorganize Capital and Labour. No wonder that from time to time throughout the fourteenth century the cry of the people sounded above the clash of arms, in a series of crude and bitter rhymes, whose unknown authors unconsciously paved the way for the poetry of Gower and Langland.

Not a class of society escaped the scathing condemnation of these humble rhymsters: clergy, lords and ladies were weighed in the balance and found wanting.

In the *Song of the Husbandmen*, (Harleian MSS. 2253), the writer complains piteously of the burdens laid by the rich on the poor "who rede in swow and in swynk swynde mot so" (who needs must in sweat and in labour waste away so); while the *Complaint of the Ploughman*, a poem belonging to the latter part of Richard II's reign, and the well-known satire entitled *Piers*

Ploughman's Crede draw graphic pictures of the selfishness of the clergy and the misery of the poor.

So far these patriotic utterances—written as many of them were in Latin or Norman-French—could have had only a limited sphere of influence. Now, however, when the nation had fully realized its own identity, and national pride had begun to assert itself, there came the urgent demand for a truly national language, signs of which had already begun to appear in songs written in two and even three languages, as e.g. *The Song against the King's Taxes*, written towards the end of the thirteenth century in Latin and French.

Though, as late as 1393, Gower wrote :

“And for that fewe men endite
In our Englisch, I thenke make
A boke for Englelondes sake ;”

yet, by the beginning of that century, we find authors writing in the English tongue “that all might read.”

About 1320 appeared the *Cursor Mundi*, a poem translated, as the author expressly said, “into the English tongue, for the Commons of Merrie England to read and understand, since it is useless to write in French, which very few now know, the major part of the nation being of English blood.” Again, the English translator of *Richard Cœur de Lyon*, near the time of Edward I, tells that “unlearned men know no French; among a hundred there is not one. And yet many of them would hear with glad cheer, of the noble jousts of the doughty knights of England.”

Towards 1340, Robert Mannyng writes “in English the simple mother-tongue, which is easiest in the mouths of simple men, for the laymen who knew neither French nor Latin.”

In 1362 it was ordained that all pleaders in the King's Courts and in other Courts of Law should plead in English; and the next year Parliament was opened for the first time with an English speech; whilst in the Grammar Schools, from now onwards, boys were taught to construe and learn in English. In 1386 Trevisa complains that “now children of gramer scole kunneth no more Frensch than her lifte heele.”

Thus by these gradual steps the language which was destined—through the influence of Chaucer—to become the mouth-piece of the nation, was assured; and the English tongue was borne to supremacy by the irresistible force of patriotism.

And here we reach the point at which English Literature may be said to begin. The *Chronicles* of Robert of Gloucester and of Peter Langtoft; the war-songs of Lawrence Minot; and the rude popular ballads of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, must have done much to increase the patriotic sense of the nation, during the years that it was struggling to realize the tremendous lessons of its national independence; but they created a taste which they could not satisfy. As yet their dominant note is a sort of insular patriotism, which vaunts the superiority of England over all other countries. They are merely the germ of the true patriotic poetry, which was to become so powerful a factor in national life in the hands of Drayton and Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton, Wordsworth and Tennyson, and those other less glorious poets who have made England their theme.

II. FROM CHAUCER TO SPENSER.

And here there would seem to be, at first sight, a great gap in the development of the patriotic note in our poetry; for it is not until the new-born pride of Elizabethan Englishmen for their country was quickened by the defeat of Spain, that we have any great patriotic poems. Yet a closer examination of the works of the intervening period reveals the fact that love of country still dominated the minds of the authors. True, in the works of Chaucer and his disciples, there are no direct and rousing appeals to patriotism, no patriotic lyrics, no ballads descriptive of heroic exploits such as abound later: yet these poets were at heart thorough-going patriots, and the strongest impression conveyed by a perusal of their works is their true English character.

In the works of one of Chaucer's most distinguished contemporaries, John Gower (1330—1408), may be traced the development

With Langland however the case was different. He has won our gratitude for the patriotic zeal which led him to write of the burning questions of the day, and to claim for the Middle and Lower Classes of England their share in the government of their country. He was of the people, and, writing for the people, he chose the old alliterative verse of the Anglo-Saxons, as being the kind of verse more familiar to their ears.

During the next century, when the Poetic Muse deserted England for Scotland, the only poet with any claim to genius is John Lydgate (1370?—1451?), who was too much occupied with rewriting *Tales of Troy* etc., to pay much heed to his own country. Yet he possessed a patriot's warm feeling for his King and Capital, for one of his minor works entitled, *Pur le Roy*, closes with the following invocation to the City of London:—

“Be glad, O Londone, be glad and make grete joy!
Cite of cities, of noblesse precelling,
In thi begynning callyd New Troy.

.

Of seven thinges I prayse this cite,
Of treu menyng and ffethefulle observaunce,
Of rightewissnes, trouthe and equite,
Of stabylenes ay kept in lygeaunce,
And ffior of vertu thou hast such suffiraunce,
In this lande here and other landes alle,
The kynges Chamber of Custom men it calle.”

The Englishman's pride in his country's capital was evidently as great then as it is to-day, for his desire for her prosperity is expressed in numerous poems, and notably in one preserved amongst the Lansdowne MSS.:

“Stronge be thi walls aboute thee stondes;
Wise be the people that within thee dwelles;
Freshe is thi river with his lusti strandes;
Blythe be thi Chirches, well sownyng are thi belles;
Rich be thi merchautes in substaunce that excelles;
Faire be thi wives, right lovesom, white and small;
Clere be thi virgyns, lusty under killys.
London thou art the flowre of cities all!”

An unknown writer celebrates somewhat earlier the accession of Henry V, in a poem of some merit, in which he describes how the renown of the English had spread over the world, and prays God not to suffer the kingdom to be spoiled by its people's fault, but to keep the king and protect his throne :

“ God, lete this kyngdom neure be lorn,
 Among oure self, in no distance!
 Other kyngdomes laughe us not to skorn,
 And say, for synne God send vengeance.
 God, giue us space of repentance,
 Good lyf, and deuocioun;
 And God, kepe in thy gouernance
 Oure comely kyng, and saue the crowne!”
 (*Oxford MSS.*, Vol. 124. Early English Text Society.)

It is clear, from a perusal of contemporary historians that the events of the War with France (1415—1453) caused, not only exultation and pride, but also shame and indignation in England; and the sieges and battles that followed appear to have been celebrated in a considerable number of contemporary ballads and poems most of which, however, have unfortunately perished.

The story of Agincourt, which was in later years to give us one of the finest martial ballads, and the most genuinely patriotic of dramas, is told in a wearisome poem preserved among the Selden MSS. at Oxford, entitled *Ye Batyle Egyngecourte*. We quote the first few lines because they are so thoroughly characteristic of the period :

“ God that all this worlde dyd make,
 And dyde for us upon a tree,
 Save England for Mary thy Mother's sake,
 As yee art stedfast God in Trynnye:
 And save Kyng Hery soule, I besech the,
 That was ful gracyous and good with all,
 A courtyous knyght and kyng ryall.”

As a practical proof of the strength of patriotic feeling evoked by the battle, Parliament granted the king a tax on wool and leather for life.

About 1436 a remarkable poem entitled *The Libelle* (i.e. little book) of *Englyshe Polycye* was published. In it the author exhorted "alle Englande to kepe the sea environ, and namelye the narrowe sea, shewynge what profete commeth thereof and also worshype and salvacioun to Englande and to alle Englyshe menne":

"Kepte (keep) than the sea above in speciale
Which of England is the rounde walle:
As thoughe England were lykened to a cité,
And the walls environ were the see;
Keep than the see that is the walle of England
And than is Englund kepte by Goddes sonde."

A much shorter poem with the Latin inscription "Anglia, propter tuas naves et lanas, omnia regna, te salutare deberent," and enforcing the same principles, exists in a MS. in the British Museum (Lansdowne MSS. No. 759, fol. 2). It appears to have been written in the reign of Edward IV, and is really an abstract of *The Libelle* adapted to the times. Both poems are particularly interesting, not because they are spirit-stirring ballads such as those Campbell was to write on the same subject, but because they indicate the fact that, even before Tudor days, Englishmen had begun to realize their great destiny, and were already laying the foundation of a naval policy which secured their triumph in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

During the last half of the century numerous political songs were written, dealing with such subjects as "Popular Discontent at the Disasters in France," "The Death of the Duke of Suffolk," "The Corruptions of the Times," "Public Extravagance," and "The Corruption of Public Manners," etc. England according to her poets was being ruined by bribery and corruption, by flatterers, false deeds and extravagance in dress. Nor were the charges groundless, if as one cynic wrote: "The Land contains much people of light conscience, many knights with little power many laws with little justice, many Acts of Parliament but few properly kept, little charity but much flattery." (*Epigram on the Times*. Corpus Ch. Col. MSS., Oxford, No. 237, fol. 236.)

Among all these prophets of evil, it is refreshing to find one who is more cheerful in tone. After the first battle of St Albans, 1455, an outward pacification was effected, and a public service was held at St Paul's, attended by the great lords of the rival parties. According to the author of a ballad written for the occasion, "Wrath was fled from the land and room left for wealth and prosperity, whilst ~~for~~ foreign enemies were now quaking with fear at the news that peace was once more prevalent in England." The ballad ends with a eulogy of London couched in much the same words as those quoted above:

"Of thre thynges, I praise the worshipful cité;
 The firste, the true faithe that thei have to the kyng;
 The seconde, of love to the comynalyte:
 The third, goude rule for evermore kepyng.
 The which God maynteyn evermore duryng,
 And save the maier and all the worthi city;
 And that is amys God bryng to amendyng,
 That Anglond may rejoyse to concorde and unity."

To the same fifteenth century also belong some of the best known of our national ballads, including the famous *Chevy Chase* and *The Nutte Browne Maide*, whilst the earliest sea-song yet discovered exists in a MS. of the time of Henry VI in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

And here we must pause, on the threshold of the Elizabethan Age, to notice *The Mirror for Magistrates*, a work which exerted a far-reaching influence on our national literature, though it is not in the true sense patriotic. In the work itself there is not a line that reflects that great and imaginative pride in England which revealed itself only a few years later, in works like Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Shakespeare's historical dramas, yet undoubtedly it owes its great popularity to the "new patriotism" which heralded the dawn of Elizabethan England.

Ever since Boccaccio (1313—1375) had written his tragical biographies, the favourite theme of poets had been the accounts of the fates of great men. In 1494 Lydgate wrote his *Falles of Princes*, an adaptation of Boccaccio's work, and in 1527 came the demand for a new edition of this book. Wayland, a printer,

approached William Baldwin on the subject, and this latter writer tells how he was counselled "By divers writers...to continue the story from where as Bochas (Boccaccio) left it until the present time, chiefly of such as fortune hath dalyed with here in *this Ylande*, which might be as a myrroure for al men, as well nobles as others;" and how he gathered around him a band of literary men, all of whom agreed to write one or more "Complaynts" on *English Subjects*. †

After some delay the first edition of *The Mirror* appeared in 1559. It contained fifteen legends dealing with the fates of English princes after the reign of Richard II contributed by six minor poets. The next edition 1563 contained the famous "Induction" and "Complaynt of the Duke of Buckingham" by Thomas Sackville, the only well-known author connected with the work. Complaint after complaint was added as each new edition appeared, until *The Mirror* became "a sort of chain-gang of the illustrious unhappy," proceeding backward into the dim legendary past long before the advent of the Romans, and forward to the spacious times of great Elizabeth. Dull and prolix as the work is, there are yet flashes of inspiration that carry with them the assurance that by this time the poets realized as never before the greatness of their country's future. Take for example the words addressed by the oracle to Brutus (the mythical founder of Great Britain):

"O Brute, farre under Phoebus fall, beyonde of France that raigne
 An Island in the ocean is, with sea 'tis compass'd mayne,
 An Island in the ocean is, where Giances erst did dwell;
 But now a desert place that's fit, will serve thy people well.
 To this direct thy race, for there shall be thy seat for aye,
 And to thy sonnes there shall be built another stately Troye.
 Here of thy progeny and stocke shall mightie kings descend,
 And unto them as subject, all the world shall bow and bend "

(*Legend of King Albanact*);

or consider the reply made by Cassivellanus, King of Britain, to Caius Julius Caesar, Consul of Rome, in the *Legend of Lord Nennius*, No 24, in the sixth edition of *The Mirror* edited by John Higgins, 1587:

“As thou O Caesar writste, the Gods have geuen to thee
 The West; so I repley they gave this island mee.
 Thou sayest you Romaynes and thyselfe of Gods descend,
 And darst thou then to spoile our Troian blood pretend?
 Againe, tho’ Gods have given thee all the world as thine,
 That’s parted from the world, thou getst no land of mine.
 And since likewise of Gods wee came a nation free
 We owe no tribute, Iyde or pledge to Rome or thee.”

In another place Caesar is made to say of his newly acquired subjects :

“And this I can report, they valiant people are,
 They fear no foes, they reck no fame, of people nere or farre;”

whilst a nobly patriotic note is struck in the following lines in the *Legend of the Emperor Severus*, slain at York about 206 A.D.:

“Who would not venter life in such a case?
 * Who would not fight at Country’s whole request?
 Who would not, meeting Caesar in the place,
 Fight for life, pince and country, with the best?”

With very questionable taste Niccols added to the last edition of *The Mirror* (1610) a poem entitled “England’s Eliza or The Victorious and Triumphant Reigne of that Virgin Empress of sacred Memorie, Elhizabeth Queene of England,” the crude flattery of which is very striking :

“The heav’ns did smile on her with sweet delight,
 And thundering Jove did laugh her foes to scorne.
 The God of Warre did cease from bloodie fight,
 And fruitful plentie did her land adorn
 With richest gifts, pour’d from her plenteous horne;
 The happie seedes which th’ hands of peace did sow
 In everie place with goodlie fruit did grow.”

Poor though *The Mirror* is, its popularity may be fully accounted for by the fact that it dealt with the fates of Englishmen only, or of men closely connected with English history, a sure recommendation in an age when everything English seemed to its people to be admirable, and everything that happened in England to be worthy of narration.

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III. THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

For the last 150 years English people had been only half alive to the glories of the inheritance Chaucer had left them. Now, however, they awoke suddenly to the consciousness of the boundless resources which the history of their country, their legends and their language so lavishly provided.

The printing—through the medium of the Caxton printing-press—of long-forgotten MSS., the *Chronicles* of men like Fabyan, Hall and Leyland, and later of Grafton, Stow and Holinshed, supplied poets and dramatists with new and inspiring themes: whilst from abroad English sailors were bringing home marvellous stories of wonders they had seen, and specimens of hidden treasures that might be had for the fetching.

Before the end of the century the coast of Guinea was discovered by Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Walter Raleigh founded in America a colony which was destined to bear the name of England's virgin Queen. Davis and Frobisher explored the Arctic Ocean; Drake, the first of Englishmen to compass the globe, burnt the Spanish ships at Cadiz, so preparing the way for the defeat of the great Armada; while the foundation of our Indian Empire was laid when, in 1600, Elizabeth granted the Charter of Privilege to the East India Company.

Is it surprising that the period was an equally brilliant one for English Literature, connected as are its mighty happenings with the names of men of genius like Spenser, Shakespeare and Bacon, patriots like Sydney, Drayton and Camden, or heroes and adventurers like Grenville, Raleigh, Drake and Frobisher? Patriotism and loyalty flourished as never before; the whole energy of the nation expended itself in the glorification of Queen and Country.

Even the prose writers of the period found inspiration in the Motherland. "For the glory of the British name" Camden spent his leisure in traversing England and collecting information about her antiquities. His great work *Britannia* (1586) became so popular, even though written in Latin, that he

ventured to compile a second work still dealing with his native land, "so resplendent in all glories, that if the most Omnipotent had fashioned the world round like a ring, as he did like a globe, it might have been most worthily the one gemme therein" (From *The Remaines*.)

In 1610 the *Britannia* was translated into English, but meanwhile many similar works had made their appearance. Thomas Churchyard set about describing in verse and prose "The Worthiness of Wales" (1587), dedicating his work to the "Queenes most excellent Majestie Elizabeth" with the double object of convincing her of the "loyaltie, courtesie and natural kindness of the inhabitants of the little Principality," and also of recording the richness of its soil, and "the beauties and dignity of its Citties, Towns, and Castles."

Stow described the Capital in the same spirit, and Harrison busied himself with drawing quaint and flattering pictures of the manners and customs of the English people. According to him the Britons excel "such as dwell in the hotter countries" both in strength and in courage, they are wise and sincere, and "deal with folk more frankly and plainly" than either the French or Italians. They regard lightly the shedding of blood, and "tremble not when they see the liquor of life go from them." Their men "care not to live long but to live well," and though "no man is said to wax old till he draw unto three score" they retain their strength and comeliness "even to the last gasp": whilst their women are more beautiful than those from the countries beyond the seas. (Harrison's *Description of Britaine*. Edited by F. J. Furnivall. From New Shakspere Society's Publications, pp. 152—156.)

Stubbes, too, before satirizing the faults of his countrymen, takes care to record that they are "A strong kind of people, audacious, bold, puissant and heroycal; of great magnanimitee, valiauncie and prowess, of an incomparable feature, of an excellent complexion, and in all humanitie inferior to none under the Sunne": whilst the land is "A pleasant and famous Iland, immured aboute with the Sea as it were with a wall, wherein the aire is verie temperate, and the ground fertile and

abounding with all things, either necessary to man or needful for beast." (Stubbes' *Anatomic of Abuses*. New Shakspeare Society, p. 23.)

Nor was foreign testimony to this flattering opinion of England lacking, for among the *Calendar of State Papers* at Venice (Volume IX.) we find Francesco Guaderigo, the Italian envoy in 1596, writing: "The country is the most lovely you can imagine in all the world; so opulent, fat, and abounding in all things that it may with truth be said, that poverty hath no place there: personally I have not seen a beggar yet."

All writers worked alike with zeal and energy, because they were inspired by a passionate devotion to their country, and because they were writing "for the learned lovers of Great Britain's glory."

But to write in prose at times like these is to lose half the glory. The challenge had gone forth: "Poet, of thine own country, sing!" and the poets hastened to celebrate in glowing verse "the gests of Britons stout, the acts of Englishmen."

As early as 1561 Barnaby Googe in *The Zodiacke of Life* wrote:

"If Chaucer nowe should lue, whose eloquence devine
 Hath paste ye poets al, that came of auncient Brutus' line.
 If Homere here might dwell, whose praise the Grekes resound
 If Virgil might his years renewe, if Ovid might be found;
 All these might well be sure theyr matches here to fynde,
 So much dothe *England* flourish now, with men of Muses kynde."
 (Arber's Reprints, Vol. 30.)

It is surely not surprising that at such a time of national uplifting a poem like *The Faerie Queen* should rise from the heart of Spenser, or that, from his far-away home in Ireland, he should draw a sharp contrast between the "land with brutish barbarism overspread" and "Eliza's blessed field, that still with people, peace and plentie flows" (see page 1). *The Faerie Queen* is, in its essence, one long glorification of England and Elizabeth, but its chief value to Patriotic Poetry lies in the fact that it is a mirror of the great Elizabethan Age and not merely a meaningless eulogy of Queen and Court.

The Nation's past is sung in magnificent stanzas in Book II, Canto x. and Book III, Cantos III. and IX., as e.g. when Merlin seeks to comfort the love-smitten Britomart with the promise that from her union with Arthegall shall spring a famous progeny of ancient Trojan blood,

“Which shall revive the sleeping memoree
Of those same antique Peres, the heven's brood
Which Greece and Asian rivers staynéd with their blood.

Renowned kings and sacred Emperours,
Thy fruitful offspring, shall from thee descend:
Brave Captaines, and most mighty warriors
That shall their conquests through all lands extend.”

(Bk. III., c. III. 22-23.)

while the patriotic spirit of the time constantly breaks forth in tender filial utterance as when Prince Arthur, perusing the ancient book “high Briton Moniments” is constrained to cry:

“Deare countrey! O how dearely deare
Ought thy remembrance and perpetual band
Be to thy foster Childe.”

(Bk. II., c. x. 69.)

Like that of his predecessors, the patriotism of Spenser is narrow and insular. The enemies of England are all repulsive recreants like Archimago (the Pope) or false sorceresses like Duessa (Mary, Queen of Scots), whilst her friends and allies are models of every virtue. It is a flattering mirror that Spenser holds up to England; but while he was content to reflect an idealized country, it was reserved for his greatest contemporary to depict England as she really was.

Nor was Spenser alone in this idealization of England. Among his many disciples, William Browne and Phineas Fletcher in the next century gave to their Pastoral poems a purely English environment. “Thus, dear Britannia, will I sing of thee,” wrote Browne at the beginning of his Pastorals (1616), some lines of which, in praise of Devonshire, will be found on page 14.

In strong contrast to the fairy pictures of Spenser and his school stand the narrative poems of the "Laudatores Patriae," who tried to turn history into verse, in their enthusiasm for England, viz. William Warner (1588—1609), Samuel Daniel (1562—1619) and Michael Drayton (1563—1631).

Warner is the weakest of the three, and his *Albion's England*, though superior to much of the work of the Pre-Spenserian period, is dull and diffuse, whilst there is nothing remarkable in what he says of his country.

Daniel's patriotism, on the contrary, not only coloured his prose works, but was undoubtedly responsible for the choice of the Wars of the Roses as the subject for the longest of his narrative poems. In his *Defence of Rhyme* (1602), he speaks in glowing terms of the British Constitution: "Let us go no further but look upon the wonderful architecture of the State of England, and see whether they were deformed times that could give it such a form, where there is no one the least pillar of majesty, but was set with most profound judgment, and borne up with the just conveniency of prince and people. No Court of Justice, but laid by the rule and square of nature, and the best of the best Commonwealths that ever were in the world."

His poetry hardly comes up to the level of his prose, but there is true patriotic feeling in the indignant words of Henry V:

"Ungrateful times! that impiously neglect
That worth, that never times again shall show.

Why do you seek for feignéd Palladines
(Out of the smoke of idle vanity)
Who might give glory to the true designs
Of Bouchier, Talbot, Neville, Willoughby?
Why should not you strive to fill up your lines
With wonders of your own with verity?
T' inflame their offspring with the love of good
And glorious true example of their blood!"

Daniel pleaded also for a more widespread knowledge of English in the famous Dedication of the *Tragedy of Cleopatra* to the Countess of Pembroke:

“O that the ocean did not bound our stile
 Within these strict and narrow limits so,
 But that the melody of our sweet isle
 Might now be heard to Tiber, Arne, and Po;
 That they might know how far Thames doth out-go
 The music of declined Italy,
 And listening to our songs another while
 Might learn of thee their songs to purify;”

whilst the prophetic lines describing the spread of the English tongue in his *Musophilus and Philocosmus* are worthy of the most ardent twentieth century Imperialist:

“The treasures of our tongue, to what strange shores
 This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
 T’ enrich unknowing nations with our stores?
 What worlds in the yet unforméd Occident
 May come refined with accents that are ours?
 Or who can tell for what great work in hand
 The greatness of our style is now ordained?
 What powers it shall bring in, what spirits command,
 What thoughts let out, what humours keep restrained,
 What mischief it may powerfully withstand,
 And what fair ends may thereby be attained.”

Michael Drayton’s most elaborate work bearing on our subject is the *Polyolbion*, a sort of poetical topography of England and Wales. Of notable passages the opening lines in praise of the climate of England may be cited:

“Of Albion’s glorious Ile the wonders whilst I write,
 The sundry varying soyles, the pleasures infinite,
 (Where heat kills not the cold, nor cold expels the heat,
 The calmes too mildly small, nor winds too rudely great,
 Nor night doth hinder day, nor day the nights doth wrong,
 The summer not too short, the winter not too long)
 What helpe shall I invoke to ayde my Muse the while?
 Thou genius of the place (this most renownéd Ile)

.

Direct my course so right, as with my hand to showe
 Which way the Forests range, which way the Rivers flowe
 Wise genius, by thy helpe that so I may descrie
 How thy faire Mountains stand, and how thy Vallies lie”

(Song I.);

and the famous description of London, which illustrates Drayton at his best :

“Then Westminster the next great Thames doth entertain;
 That vaunts her palace large, and her most sumptuous fane
 The land's tribunal seat, and challengeth for hers
 The crownings for our Kings, their famous sepulchres.
 Then goes he on along by that most beauteous Strand,
 Expressing both the wealth and bravery of the land.”

(Song xvii.)

It is not as the writer of this gigantic work however, that Drayton takes his place amongst Patriotic Poets, but as the author of the short poems known as *The Ballad of Agincourt* and *The Virginian Voyage*. The former will be found on page 3, with notes on page 95, whilst the latter, though not so well known, is almost as effective; for in its slow staccato beat we hear the trumpet-call to England's high-hearted voyagers to do and dare all for the glory of their native land :

“Ye brave heroic minds,
 Worthy your country's name,
 That honour still pursue,
 Whilst loitering hands
 Lurk here at home with shame,
 Go—and subdue!
 Britons, you stay too long;
 Quickly aboard bestow you.
 And with merry gale,
 Swell your stretch'd sayle!”

In the dark hour of England's failures at La Rochelle, Drayton produced another long poem entitled *The Battaile of Agincourt* dedicated “To the noblest gentlemen of these renowned kingdoms of Great Britain, who in these declining times have yet in your brave bosoms the sparks of the spritely

fire of your courageous ancestors." As a literary effort this poem is not to be compared with the Ballad, and in spite of the many ways in which Drayton sang the praises of England, he is now almost completely forgotten, and it is only the student or the maker of anthologies who ventures to peer within his dust-laden covers.

But if the glories of England in the past, her legends, her history and her "Agincourts" had such charm for her poets, how infinitely more inspiring were the events of Elizabeth's own reign.

Thomas Deloney, the "ballading silk-weaver," as Nash calls him, is known to have written about fifty ballads on topical subjects, including three on the Armada, vigorous, but without literary merit, e.g.:

"Our pleasant countrie
 So fruitful and so faire
 They do intend by deadly warre
 To make both poore and bare,
 Our towns and cities
 To rack and sack likewise.

 And you dear brethren,
 Which beareth armes this day,
 For safeguard of your native soyle,
 Marke well what I shall say—
 Regard your duties,
 Think on your countries good;
 And feare not in defense thereof,
 To spend your dearest blood."

In spite of their roughness and lack of polish, verses like these, when set to music and hummed in streets and taverns, undoubtedly had no small share in fostering and maintaining that enthusiasm for England which was the greatest characteristic of the Age.

Ballads on men like Drake and Frobisher evidently abounded at the time, and Peele's *Ode, written as a Farewell to Sir John Norris, Sir Francis Drake and their brave Associates* on the eve

of the disastrous expedition to Portugal in 1589, is an unusually fine example of patriotic fervour :

“You fight for Christ, and England’s peerless queen
Elizabeth, the wonder of the world,
Over whose throne the enemies of God
Have thunder’d erst their vain successful braves.
O, ten-times treble happy men, that fight
Under the Cross of Christ, and England’s Queen,
And follow such as Drake and Norris are!
All honour do this cause accompany;
All glory on these endless honours waits;
These honours and this glory shall He send,
Whose honour and whose glory you defend.”

The importance of these efforts pales into insignificance, however, when contrasted with the new and wonderful creation in our literature, the Rise of the Drama and the coming of Shakespeare.

IV. THE DRAMA.

There are times in the history of every country—times “like the years which followed the glorious victories of Salamis and Actium, like those which felt the first thrill of the Crusades,” when, if the poets had not, the very stones must have cried out: and such were the days of Elizabeth. With the birth of the Elizabethan Dramas the theatre very rapidly became the “schoolhouse of popular instruction.” Through its teaching the people of England grew familiar with their country’s history, and were stirred up to emulate the deeds of their national heroes. When Heywood boasted that “the pageantry of heroism and patriotism displayed before a people on the stage bred virtue and inflamed the soul to emulation,” he fully realized the enormous influence this new element in our Literature was bound to exercise on the development of national character. If the Ballad of *Chevy Chase* could so stir the heart of Sidney, how the cry of Old Gaunt must have thrilled the hearts of an English audience only nine years after the destruction of the

Armada! As Ward says: "The Elizabethan Age would have remained isolated from its predecessors and from its successors had not its dramatic literature, with a vividness beyond the reach of any other literary form held up to itself the mirror of the past, and transmitted its own picture of itself to posterity. But for this our national history and national life would have missed their most faithful, most complete and most effective interpretation." (Ward, *History of the Drama*.)

It is significant that a crowd of plays dealing with national topics soon began to monopolise the stage. Such, for example, as:

(I) *Chronicle Plays* portraying "The Misfortunes of King Arthur," "The Famous Victories of Henry V," "The Troublesome Reign of King John," "The Contention between the Houses of York and Lancaster" and many others, which prepared the way for Marlowe's *Edward II* and Shakespeare's great historical dramas.

(II) Plays dealing with the *biographies of famous English statesmen or political heroes* like Sir Thomas More, Thomas Cromwell, Perkin Warbeck, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Lady Jane Grey. Such plays were for a time very popular, for in the Prologue of Perkin Warbeck as late as 1634, Ford writes:

" We can say
He shows a History couchéd in a Play!
A History of noble mention, known,
Famous and true, most noble, cause our own!
Not forged from Italy, from France, from Spain,
But chronicled at home."

(III) Plays founded on the *marvellous enterprises of English adventurers* like Sir Thomas Stukeley, or *heroes* like Drake, Hawkins and the rest. Such are Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, *Dick of Devonshire*; *The Famous Travels of the Three Brothers Anthony, Thomas and Robert Shirley* by Rowley, Day and Wilkins; and Peele's *Tragical Battile of Alcazar* (see page 2).

(IV) Plays commemorating the *legendary heroes of England*, and in particular Robin Hood, celebrated in Greene's *Pinner of Wakefield*.

(V) Plays reflecting *the contemporary life of the age*, e.g. Greene and Lodge's *A Looking Glass for London and England*; Dekker's *Honest Whore* and Ben Jonson's Comedies.

(VI) *Masques and Pageants* written for various *special occasions of some court or municipal function*. Peele's *Device of the Pageant borne before Woolston Dixie*, the Lord Mayor in 1585, and his *Descensus Astraeae*, written in honour of the mayoralty of Sir William Webbe in 1591, in which latter are these lines celebrating "Lovely London and its Thames":

"Labour, fair lord, as other mayors of yore
To beautify this city with deserts.

Keep it inviolate for thy sovereign's hope,
Virtue's pure mirror, London's great Mistress;
Unsheathe the sword committed to thy sway
With merciful regard of every cause.
So go in peace, happy by sea and land
Guided by grace and Heaven's immortal hand!"

Ben Jonson's patriotic convictions are expressed in a later Masque written in 1610 in honour of the ill-fated Henry, Prince of Wales. In it Merlin presents before the young Prince the pageant of England's kings, bidding him emulate their mighty deeds in war or peace. He ends with the remarkable prophecy concerning the destiny of Princess Elizabeth, the Queen of Bohemia, and ancestress of our present sovereign:

"Nor shall less joy your royal hopes pursue
In this most princely maid whose form might call
The worlds to war, and make it hazard all
His valour for her beauty; she shall be
Mother of nations, and her princes see
Rivals almost to these. Whilst you sit high,
And led by them, behold your Britain fly
Beyond the line, when what the seas before
Did bound, shall to the sky then stretch his shore."

(*Prince Henry's Barriers*, Act v.)

It would be impossible to quote all the references to contemporaneous events which lie embedded in the great

majority of these plays, but one or two striking passages call for notice.

Naturally it is in connection with Spain that these utterances are the most potent; because the crisis of 1588 proved conclusively that love of country could rise superior to the claims of creed or party.

Lyly's play *King Midas* contains the most interesting allusions to the Armada. Here Philip of Spain is portrayed in the title-role of the play, and the defeat of his mighty fleet is reproduced in his fruitless attempts to conquer the island of Lesbos, "That will not be touched by gold, and by force it cannot be; the Gods have pitched it out of the world as not to be controlled by any in the world." (Act v. Sc. 3.)

Peele's patriotism too is audible in many of his plays, and in particular in the Queen-Mother's apostrophe to England in the chronicle play of *Edward I.* (Act I. Sc. 1.)

"Illustrious England, ancient seat of kings,
Whose Chivalry hath royaliz'd thy fame,
That sounding bravely through terrestrial vales
Proclaiming conquests, spoils and victories
Rings glorious echoes through the farthest world."

while there is an evident reference to the fate of the Armada in the lines quoted from *The Tragical Battle of Alcazar* on page 2.

And this brings us to a consideration of the greatest of our dramatists, the immortal Shakespeare, whose work is the very embodiment of the spirit of nationalism, which characterized so much of Elizabethan literature. With his comprehensive and observant genius, it would have been impossible for him to ignore patriotism and the patriotic sentiment. All his historical plays are instinct with love of country, and though as a dramatist he could only treat the subject disconnectedly and often slightly, still the net result is greater by far than that of any other writer. The inspired speech of old Gaunt on his death-bed: the noble invocation of Faulconbridge in *King John*; the glowing martial speeches in *King Henry V*, are familiar to every

lover of Great Britain's glory. Though quoted perhaps more frequently than any lines in our language they ring as true to-day as they did three hundred years ago.

Could there be a more just conception of the possibilities of England than is expressed in these lines ?

“O England! Model to thy inward greatness,
Like little body with a mighty heart,
What mightst thou do that honour would thee do
Were all thy children kind and natural!”

(*Henry V*, Chorus.)

Besides these direct appeals to the spirit of patriotism, Shakespeare portrays in flaming colours the deeds of national heroes like the warlike king Henry V, and the frank and impulsive Faulconbridge the Bastard in *King John*, whilst in the tragedy of *Coriolanus* he unsparingly condemns the man who, though gifted with the strongest of patriotic instincts, yet allowed personal consideration to triumph over the direct call to duty.

There is still a third way in which Shakespeare inculcates the spirit of patriotism, and that is by indirect instruction in the causes of national welfare and decay, in the almost continuous review of his country's history from the reign of King John to the reign of King Henry VIII. The patriotic significance of these plays far transcends their historical value, for, as Thomas Heywood exclaims in his *Apology for Actors* (1612), “What coward to see his countrymen valiant would not be ashamed of his cowardice, What Englishman, should he behold Henry V or the portraiture of that famous Edward III would not be suddenly inflamed by so royal a spectacle?”

There is nothing aggressive or insular in Shakespeare's patriotism, for honesty compelled him to see the events of history in their true light, and he is equally ready to record his country's failures and defeats as to chronicle her triumphs. Again and again, one is struck by the half-tender, half-humorous way in which he deals with the petty foibles and follies of his fellow-countrymen, follies which are no less common to-day

than ever they were—their extravagance and bad taste in dress (*Merchant of Venice*, Act II. Sc. 2), their love of novelty (*Tempest*, Act II. Sc. 2), their slowness in acquiring other languages (*Merchant of Venice*, Act II. Sc. 2), and above all their drunken habits (*Othello*, Act II. Sc. 3).

Hence, by his direct and rousing appeals to the spirit of patriotism, by his inimitable portrayal of heroes and heroic deeds, by his unconscious exposition of the causes and conditions of national greatness, and not least by the boldness and sympathy with which he directed attention to his country's faults, our greatest poet has contributed to our patriotic verse a legacy whose value no man can justly estimate.

On Shakespeare's death (1616) the drama passed into the hands of Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and their less famous contemporaries, Ford and Massinger. At once it showed a tendency to become the organ of the Court rather than the mouth-piece of the People, and the great impetus given to patriotism by the coming of the Armada died down, leaving scarcely a trace of the noble spirit that had animated poets and dramatists alike.

As an immediate proof of this decadence in patriotic fervour, very few dramatists of the first half of the seventeenth century made any attempt to rival Shakespeare's historical plays. Even such notable exceptions as Ford's *Perkin Warbeck* (1634) and the Chronicle Histories of Thomas Heywood failed to keep alive any sense of national pride, and the playwrights sought inspiration in the fields of classical history and romantic fiction.

Thus gradually the stage ceased to reflect the life of the English people, the drama began visibly to degenerate in tone, and consequently failed in its high ideal.

Meanwhile the Puritan ascendancy was threatening its very existence, and Prynne's famous *Histriomastix* (1633) testifies to the hostility with which it was beginning to be popularly regarded. At Christmas, 1641, only a single play was acted at Court, and in September, 1642, an Ordinance of the Lords forbade the performance of public stage plays.

At the Restoration party feeling ran high, and from henceforth the patriotic element in the drama is replaced by a slavish

adulation of the restored monarchy combined with a low standard of morality. It is true that Dryden (1631—1700), the poet laureate, used his satirical pen to defend such burning questions as Limited Monarchy and the Divine Right of Kings, yet he can in no sense be called a patriotic poet, since his plays are biased by considerations of party.

In his play of *King Arthur*, where one might reasonably expect some lofty sentiments breathing love of country, the same lack of true patriotism is evident. Here are however two charming little lyrics in honour of England:

- (I) "Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
 Seat of pleasures and of loves;
 Venus here will choose her dwelling
 And forsake her Cyprian groves;"

and

- (II) "Round thy coasts fair nymph of Britain:
 For thy guard our waters flow;
 Proteus all his herds admitting,
 On thy greens to graze below.
 Foreign lands thy fishes tasting,
 Learn of thee luxurious fasting

 For folded flocks, and fruitful plains,
 The shepherd's and the farmer's gains,
 Fair Britain all the world outvies;
 And Pan as in Arcadia reigns:
 Where pleasure mixed with profit lies."

It is painfully evident that party spirit was henceforth to be the ruling factor in English political life, and hence the scene of patriotic appeal was shifted from the theatres of Blackfriars and The Globe, to the Houses of Parliament at Westminster; whence almost two centuries later, Tennyson vainly strove to recall it.

V. POETS OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND
EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

Meanwhile the same blighting influences had attacked poetry proper, and the bright spontaneity of the Elizabethan writers was replaced by the dark warnings and sad laments of the Puritan poets, as for example:

“ Upon thy fleets, thy havens and thy ports,
Upon thine armies and thy strong-walled forts,
Upon thy pleasures and commodities,
Upon thy handicrafts and merchandise,
Upon thy fruits, and cattle in thy fields,
On what the air, the earth, or water yields,
On king and people, on both weak and strong,
On priest and prophet, on both old and young,
Yea, on each person, place and everything
His just deserved judgments God will bring!”

(George Wither's *Britain's Remembrancer*.)

During the progress of the Civil War the poets were for the most part silent, and though Royalists like Suckling, Lovelace, Cowley and Davenant, contributed many lovely Lyrics to English Literature. there is not one poem which is strictly patriotic, and it was left for Macaulay—in the nineteenth century—to write the best martial poems on the period.

This remarkable silence at such a time is accounted for, doubtless, by the fact that most of those who might have been writing poetry were proving their patriotism with the sword; whilst others were equally busy with the pen, defending—in prose—their theories of Church and State. The Civil War effectually drowned the glorious watchword “Pro Patria” in the discordant party cries of Presbyterian and Episcopalian, Whig and Tory!

In Milton perhaps, more than in any other poet, the practical outcome of these circumstances may be seen. He was one of England's greatest patriots, yet there is surprisingly little in his poetry that directly reflects that marvellous love of country

which upheld him through the long years, when he not only deliberately crushed his poetic yearnings, but also sacrificed his eyesight at the call of duty.

Apart from the Sonnets on pages 17 and 18, scarcely half a dozen poems record his sympathy with the great questions of the day; whilst his religious convictions led him to choose the story of the Fall of Man rather than the legendary history of Britain and King Arthur, as the subject for his great Epic. With Milton's desertion of the task the Epic of England still remains unsung:

“By some strange fate, which ruled each poet's tongue
Her dearest worthies yet remain unsung.
Critics there are who with a scornful smile,
Reject the annals of our martial Isle.
And, dead to patriot passion, coldly deem
They yield for lofty Song no touching theme.”

(Hayley, *On the British Epic*, 18th century.)

Following Milton's lead, appeared Panegyrics on Cromwell by Waller (see page 15), Dryden, Wither and others. At the time these sounded sincere enough, but they lose much of their value, and all their effect when, at the Restoration, the same poets are found celebrating the return of Charles II, in almost similar language. Nevertheless, Andrew Marvell (1621—1678), Milton's colleague, deserves special notice for his fine Horatian ode upon *Cromwell's Return from Ireland*, for it is one of the few truly noble patriotic efforts of the age, and is quite as memorable for the touching tribute to Charles I:

“He nothing common did or mean
Upon this memorable scene;”

as for its praise of Cromwell:

“He to the Commons' feet presents,
A Kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame, to make it theirs.”

In all these poems, the glorification of England was of quite secondary importance to that of her rulers, whilst lack of true

inspiration is emphasized by the miserable inadequacy of the poets' treatment of passing events.

The author of the *Annus Mirabilis* missed a great opportunity; for the year 1666, with its tale of war, plague and fire was surely one to call forth the powers of a poet like Dryden. Yet it cannot be said that he did justice either to himself or to his subject even when he proudly sang:

“Of all who since have used the open sea,
 Than the bold English none more fame have won;
 Beyond the year, and out of Heaven's high way,
 They make discoveries where they see no sun.”

or when, with the far-seeing gaze of the prophet, he cried:

“Methinks, already from this chymic flame
 I see a city of more precious mould,
 Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
 With silver pav'd, and all divine with gold.”

With the exception of one or two occasional pieces by minor poets, there is little to record until the times of Marlborough's Wars. But his mighty deeds go comparatively unnoticed, for even Addison failed to put any life into his portrait of the great general, and the only passages in *The Campaign* (1704) worth notice are the well-known lines describing Marlborough's conduct at Blenheim, and the following lines to prove the fairness of political advancement:

“Thrice happy Britain! from the kingdoms rent
 To sit the guardian of the Continent!
 That sees her bravest sons advanced so high
 And flourishing so near her prince's eye!
 Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport
 Or from the crimes and follies of a court;
 On the firm basis of desert they rise,
 From long-tried faith and friendship's holy ties,
 Their sovereigns well distinguished smiles they share
 Her ornaments in peace, her strength in war:
 The nation thanks them with a public voice,
 With showers of blessing Heaven approves their choice.”

Blenheim is more universally remembered in connection with the poet Southey than with the author of *Sir Roger de Coverley*. *The Letter from Italy* however reveals the true patriot spirit in the fine invocation to Liberty as the tutelary Goddess of England; beginning:

“Thee, goddess, thee, Britannia’s isle adores:
 How has she oft exhausted all her stores,
 How oft in fields of death thy presence sought,
 Nor thinks the mighty prize too dearly bought.”
 etc., etc.

A few only of Pope’s faultless heroic couplets are directly concerned with his native land; yet, here and there, one may discover national pride lurking under his captious criticisms. Such, for example, is the charming couplet:

“Fair Liberty, Britannia’s Goddess, rears
 Her cheerful head, and leads the golden years;”

and the lines written on Windsor Forest about the time of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713):

“The time shall come, when, free as seas or wind
 Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind;
 Whole nations enter with each swelling tide
 And seas but join the regions they divide;
 Earth’s distant ends our glory shall behold,
 And the new world launch forth to seek the old

 O stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to shore,
 Till conquests cease, and slav’ry be no more.”

Thomson was the herald of the Romantic Revival, and his poetry reflects with vigour and freshness the love of nature inspired by the scenery of England. A passage from *The Seasons* may be quoted in illustration:

“Happy Britannia! where the Queen of Art
 Inspiring vigour, Liberty abroad
 Walks unconfined even to the farthest cots,
 And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.
 Rich is thy soil and merciful thy clime;
 Thy streams unfailing in the summer’s drought;

Unmatched thy guardian oaks; thy valleys float
 With golden waves; and on thy mountains, flocks
 Bleat numberless—while, roving round their sides,
 Bellow the blackening herds in lusty droves”

(Poem on *Summer*);

whilst his poem of *Liberty*, written primarily to exalt Great Britain over every other country, is a veritable pæan of delight at the glories of his fatherland, whose freedom is sustained by these three virtues:

“Independent life,
 Integrity of office, and o’er all
 Supreme, a passion for the common weal.”

But the poem is bombastic and dull, and Thomson’s patriotic convictions are more suitably enshrined in the popular hymn, *Rule Britannia* (see page 18).

Collins and Gray contributed their quota to the sum total of national poetry, and while the former, in common with the rest of his fellow poets, made England the home of *Liberty*, the latter, with equal felicity traced the progress of poesy from Greece and Italy to his native land. His *Elegy*, too, breathes an intensely real appreciation of the dignity and pathos surrounding English rural life, thus anticipating the poetry of Goldsmith and Crabbe.

Among satirists, the riotous Charles Churchill (1731—1764) penned a very just tribute to native talent in his once famous *Rosciad* (1761):

“But more than just to other countries grown
 Must we turn base apostates to our own?
 Where do these words of Greece and Rome excel
 That England may not please the ear as well?

 Why should we then abroad for judges roam
 When abler judges we may find at home?
 Happy in tragic as in comic powers
 Have we not Shakespeare? Is not Jonson ours?
 For them, your natural judges, Britons vote,
 They judge like Britons, who like Britons wrote.”

(*Rosciad*, Bk. 1.)

Finally David Garrick (1717—1779) forestalled Dibdin in his well-known song entitled *Hearts of Oak* with its rollicking chorus:

“Hearts of oak are our ships,
Gallant tars are our men,
We always are ready,
Steady boys, steady!
We’ll fight—and we’ll conquer
Again and again!”

Of the later transition poets, Goldsmith, in the passage from *The Traveller*, on page 20, betrayed a pride of race which was not to be dismayed by his close acquaintance with the seamy side of English life.

Cowper, too, throughout *The Task*, gave evidence of a sincere and tender but quite impartial regard for his native land, which found expression in his characteristic protest:

“England, with all thy faults, I love thee still,
My country! and while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee.”

Probably too, he helped indirectly to remove the stigma of slavery from English commerce by his noble lines in Book II. of *The Task*, and his vigorous “Hymn to Freedom” in his *Table Talk* (1782).

But in *Boadicea* (page 21) and *The Loss of the Royal George* his patriotism is more obvious and accessible.

Before the close of the century all eyes were turned to France, and the energies of our younger poets became so absorbed in the stirring scenes across the Channel, that they had no time to eulogize England.

VI. THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, AND AFTER.

With the advent of the nineteenth century the reaction against the excesses of the French Revolution was complete; and once more the eyes of the poets were turned towards their homeland, “Queen of the Ocean,” “Mother Isle,” “Motherland revered, thou mighty Isle” as Southey, Coleridge and the rest repeatedly call her.

Already Napoleon was threatening Europe with a world-wide Empire, and instinctively a passionate desire for liberty flamed up in all the countries threatened by his aggressive policy.

Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth, Moore and Campbell returned with the new century to safer and saner paths of patriotism, and with the fear of invasion in 1798, Coleridge hastened to express filial devotion to his country in the beautiful lines quoted on page 33 from his poem entitled *Fears in Solitude*.

Wordsworth's *Sonnets dedicated to Liberty* express the same unswerving devotion to England, the land that was "dearer to him than life was dear." Though his instinctive hatred of tyranny led him to mourn over the conquest of Spain and Switzerland, Venice and The Tyrol, and to celebrate the national heroes of other lands, yet he constantly returns to sing of England; denouncing her failures with true Miltonic scorn in the Sonnet beginning "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour" (see page 23); chiding her with tender affection, thus:

"England, the time is come when thou shouldst wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food."

and chanting her undying praises in:

"It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom,.....
Should perish;" etc. (page 24).

Then came the war with France, and Wordsworth, rising to the occasion, summoned his countrymen to arms in true soldier spirit:

"No parleying now! In Britain is one breath,
We all are with you now, from shore to shore
Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death!" (page 25);

and again:

"O for a single hour of that Dun 'ee,
Who in that day the word of onset gave!
Like conquest would the men of England see,
And her foes find a like inglorious grave."

(In the Pass of Kulliecrankie.)

ENGLISH PATRIOTIC POETRY

But the pompous *Thanksgiving Ode*, written January 18th, 1816, to chronicle the triumph of England, was his least worthy contribution to our national verse, in spite of the patriotic ring of such lines as the following :

“Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed
Shall represent her labouring with an eye of circumspect
humanity;
Shall show her clothed with strength and skill,
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary flight
In motion rapid as the lightning’s gleam;
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night
To rouse the wicked from their wicked dream—
Woe, Woe to all that face her in the field;
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.”

Southey, Poet-Laureate from 1813 to 1843, followed the course of the war with odes and celebrations, and both he and Wordsworth hastened to express their admiration for the valour and devotion of England’s naval hero : the former in his inspired *Life of Nelson*, almost a poem in itself; the latter in his *Character of the Happy Warrior* (page 25).

It is disappointing to find that with these two exceptions, few poets have succeeded in immortalising Trafalgar and the death of Nelson, and it is especially strange that Campbell, whose *Battle of the Baltic* was so worthy of the occasion, should have neglected the great opportunity afforded by so dramatic an event as the death of a hero in the hour of victory. His other national poems, however : *Ye Mariners of England*, *Stanzas on the Threatened Invasion* and *Men of England*, amply justify Campbell’s position among patriotic poets.

The sea-songs of Charles Dibdin (1745—1814) the “ocean-bard,” who boasted that he had brought more men into the navy than the Press-gang, are also worthy of note in this connection. They include *Tom Bowling*, *The True English Sailor*, *Britannia’s Name*, and *The Land—Boys—We Live in*.

Closely allied in spirit to these fearless rollicking ditties is the anonymous song *Hurrah for England!*

“Mothers and wives of England!
 Be to your birthright true,
 The welfare of the peopled earth
 Is given by God to you;”

and one or two of Tennyson's early efforts, as e.g. *A National Song* beginning:

“There is no land like England
 Where'er the light of day be,
 There are no hearts like English hearts
 Such hearts of oak as they be.”

and his *Riflemen Form* (1859), which did so much to give life to the Volunteer movement just then beginning.

Obviously songs like these cannot be included with the rest of Tennyson's patriotic work.

But to return to greater poems! In the famous lines from *Marmion* (1808) quoted on page 28, Sir Walter Scott—from his home across the Border—contributed his panegyric to Nelson and the rival statesmen Pitt and Fox, while throughout his works are evidences of his warm affection for England. Yet inspiring as are Scott's Lays as martial poetry, they are not conspicuous as records of the patriotic valour which leaves all to fight for “home and king and country.” In this respect they differ from those of his English disciple—Macaulay, in whose *Lays of Ancient Rome* are found the supreme examples of Civic patriotism. His “Horatius” is an inspiration to every boy and girl. So too, in a less degree, are his English Lay *The Armada* fragment (page 48) and his fine *Battle of Naseby*.

From the poetry of Byron, with all its passion and beauty, only a few stanzas can be selected, viz.: the famous lines commemorating the Waterloo campaign, from *Childe Harold*, which will be found on page 40.

Both Byron and Shelley were too impatient of control to wait for the realization in England of their dreams of freedom, and,

“O, let me see our land retain her soul,
 Her pride, her freedom, and not freedom's shade!”

is perhaps the most prayerful expression of affection Shelley offers to his country. The words he puts into the mouth of Hampden in his fragment *Charles I* :

“England farewell! thou who hast been my cradle,
Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!
I held what I inherited in thee
As pawn for that inheritance of freedom
Which thou hast sold for this Despoiler’s smile:
How can I call thee England? or my country?”

with the Sonnet acclaiming the degradation of Church and State in 1819, beginning: “An old, mad, blind, despised and dying king,” express his conviction of the hopeless state of the England of his day.

The great political, social and economic changes which occupied the years between the close of the Wars with Napoleon and the Second Reform Bill, left, of necessity, a decided mark on English Literature.

In 1832 John Henry Newman uttered these warning words:

“Tyre of the west, and glorying in the name,
More than in Faith’s pure flame!
.
.
.
Dread thine own power! Since haughty Babel’s prime
High towers have been man’s crime.”

In the same year, on the passing of the Reform Bill, Ebenezer Elliot (1781—1849), the “Corn Law Rhymer,” dedicated some vigorous lines to the printers of Sheffield:

“God said—‘Let there be Light!’
Grim darkness felt his might
And fled away;
Then startled seas and mountains cold
Shone forth all bright in blue and gold,
And cried—‘Tis day!’ ‘tis day!’”

whilst his Prologue to the *Corn Law Rhymes* :

“For thee my country, thee, do I perform,
Sternly the duty of a man born free.

For thee, for us, for ours do I upraise
 The standard of my song! for thine and mine
 I toll the knell of England's better days;
 And lift my hated voice, that mine and thine
 May undergrade the human form divine!"

and the passionate cry of the *People's Anthem*:

"When wilt thou save the people?
 O, God of Mercy! When?
 The people, Lord, the people!
 Not thrones and crowns, but men!"

possess a vigour and depth of feeling which stir men's hearts even to-day.

Still more impressive than Elliot's passionate verse is the pathetic cry:

"O God! that bread should be so dear,
 And flesh and blood so cheap"

from Thomas Hood's *Song of the Shirt*. Assuredly true patriotic fervour is embodied in the verse of both these poets.

Any of the Chartist Songs might be chosen to illustrate the strong feeling which inspired their writers. Here is a telling verse from one of the most forceful, describing the "passion of Labour" in England about 1840:

"Crucified, crucified, every morn,
 Beaten with stripes and crowned with thorns;
 Spurned and spat on and drenched with gall,
 Brothers, how long will ye bear the thrall?
 Mary of Magdalene, Peter and John,
 Answer the question, and pass it on."

Other poems by Ernest Jones (1819—1869) drew lurid pictures of England in the early forties, when "in Mammon's mighty battle man was immolating man," and the starving poor were flocking into the great towns to be trampled on by the "fierce steam-horses, England's mighty Juggernaut."

Sharp indeed is the contrast he drew between the days when

"'Twas merry in England in times of old,
 When the summer fields rolled their long billows of gold
 And the bright year had climbed to its noon";

and the England of the years during which modern democracy was slowly asserting itself, when

“The very sun shines pale on a dark earth,
Where quivering engines groan their horrid mirth,
And black smoke-offering, crimes and curses, swell
From furnace-altars of incarnate hell.”

(*The Cornfield and the Factories.*)

Of far greater importance, because of their literary merit, are the occasional songs with which the patriot-preacher Charles Kingsley adorned his prose works, notably Alton Locke's Song:

“Weep, weep, weep, and weep,
For pauper, dolt and slave;
Hark! from wasted moor and fen,
Feverous alley, workhouse den,
Swells the wail of Englishmen;
‘Work! or the grave!’”

the Song from *Yeast*, which ruthlessly exposes the selfishness of the country squires:

“A labourer in Christian England,
Where they cant of a Saviour's name,
And yet waste men's lives like the vermin
For a few more brace of game.”

and the fine lines entitled *The Day of the Lord*.

Equally patriotic are the poems of Gerald Massey (1828—1907), some of which are historical pictures, as *Havelock's March*, *After Alma*, *Before Sevastopol*, and *Inkermann*, but they are also national poems, and contain many impassioned lines. E.g. lines from *Inkermann* concluding:

“To the proud Mother England came the radiant Victory,
With laurels red, and a bitter cup, like some last agony.
She took the cup, she drank it up, she raised her laurelled brow;
Her sorrows seemed like solemn joy, she looked so noble now.
The dim divine of distance died—the purpled past grew wan,
As came that crowning Glory o'er the heights of Inkermann”;

and a version of the National Anthem beginning:

“God bless our Native Land,
Glorious and grave and grand,
Freedom's bright home!”

Among many other writers who celebrated the Crimean War in verse was Richard Trench (1807—1886). His notable *Sonnet on England* will be found on page 52, whilst numerous passages in his poems on *Alma*, *Balaklava*, etc. reflect a truly Christian spirit of patriotism, e.g.:

“Men of England, constant ever, to your own plain instincts true,
Praise the Giver of all good things, for the gifts He gave to you.
To her cancell'd scroll of greatness, none shall now set England's
name,
What she sowed in tears and anguish, she shall never reap in
shame.”

(*Lines written on the breaking off of the Conferences at Vienna, 1855.*)

No poet followed the political and social movements of the day with keener interest than did Alfred Tennyson.

The Reform Bill, the Chartist Movement, Free Trade and Protection, Ireland, the Crimea, and finally the growing responsibilities of Empire, all these were inspiring themes for his poetic genius. Ballads, lyrics and dramas alike are the outcome of a deeply-rooted and wholesome love of country, which has influenced thousands of his fellow-men.

His early patriotic lyrics, printed on pages 53—58, do not reach the level of his best work, but they are full of noble sentiment and salutary warnings, and *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, written in 1854, is superior in every way to the companion piece *The Charge of the Heavy Brigade* which appeared in 1882. Both these poems, however, suffer by comparison with *The Revenge* and *The Defence of Lucknow*, two ballads, which for manly spirit, brilliancy of expression, and majestic rhythm it would be difficult to surpass.

As a dramatist he achieved only a very slight success in his plays of *Queen Mary*, *Harold* and *Becket*, for unlike Shakespeare, who was his model, his characters attract merely as individuals and not as the representatives of England. The finest patriotic passage is the vision of the dying Confessor in *Harold*, Act III. Sc. 1.

A far greater contribution to national poetry is *The Ode*

on the *Duke of Wellington* published in 1852, the finest eulogy in English Literature. Though here and there it has an uncertain sound, yet there are many lines which have become almost proverbial, as, e.g.:

“Rich in saving common-sense
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.”

again

“That tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew”!

and the immortal

“Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory.”

In addition to all this, it may be fairly claimed for Tennyson that he was the first of our poets to sing of the British Empire. In the lines *To the Queen*, appended to the *Idylls*, he pleaded for a fuller comprehension of the duties of the Motherland to her colonists:

“The loyal to their crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England, and her throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if she knows
And dreads it we are fallen”;

whilst the magnificent modern conception of Imperialism is voiced for the first time in the toast entitled *Hands all Round* (see page 58), as also in the lines written to celebrate “The Opening of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition by the Queen”:

“Welcome, welcome with one voice!
In your welfare we rejoice,
Sons and brothers . . .

“ Sharers of our glorious past,
Brothers, must we part at last?
Shall we not through good and ill
Cleave to one another still?

Britain's myriad voices call,
 'Sons, be welded each and all,
 Into one imperial whole,
 One with Britain, heart and soul!
 One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne!
 Britons, hold your own."

Of women poets of the nineteenth century, Felicia Hemans (1793—1835) is represented by the touching *England's Dead* which is entirely free from the diffuseness and sentimentality usually associated with her work, whilst Eliza Cook (1818—1889) is the author of the song, *The Englishman*, with its fine tribute to the stainless honour of the British Flag, and its inspiring chorus:

"For a glorious charter, deny it who can
 Is breathed in the words—'I'm an Englishman!'"

and *The Land of My Birth*, another song dealing with a subject which "age cannot stale or repetition dull."

Of the poems of Mrs Browning, the passage from *Aurora Leigh* in which she beautifully describes an English countryside will be found on page 73

As for Robert Browning—with the exception of the two lovely lyrics on pages 71—72—there is nothing in his poetry of purely national interest.

A finer lyric note than all of these, however, is struck by Matthew Arnold in *Heine's Grave*, where the tender expression of regret at England's faults comes straight from the Patriot's heart:

"I chide with thee not, that thy sharp
 Upbraidings often assail'd
 England, my country—for we,
 Heavy and sad, for her sons,
 Long since, deep in our hearts,
 Echo the blame of her foes.
 We, too, sigh that she flags;
 We, too, say that she now—
 Scarce comprehending the voice
 Of her greatest, golden-mouth'd sons
 Of a former age any more—

Stupidly travels her round
 Of mechanic business, and lets
 Slow die out of her life
 Glory, and genius, and joy.
 So thou arraign'st her, her foe;
 So we arraign her, her sons."

Of modern Plays, Swinburne's *Tragedy of Mary Stuart* introduces us once more to Elizabethan England, and affords an opportunity of recording again the nation's marvellous devotion to the Virgin Queen :

"You
 Are very England; in your light of life
 This living land of ours walks only safe,
 All this breathing people with your breath
 Breathes unenslaved, and draws at each pulse in
 Freedom; your eye is light of theirs, your word
 As God's to comfort England, whose whole soul
 Is made with yours one."

Whilst in a fine passage in Act iv., Thomas Phillips, Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, estimates a statesman's debt to England :

"Nor is the stake set here to play for less
 Than what is more than all men's names alive—
 The great life's gage of England, in whose name
 Lie all our own impledged, as all our lives
 For her redemption forfeit, if the cause
 Call once upon her.....
 She must live
 And keep in all men's sight her honour fast,
 Although all men died dishonoured."

Swinburne's poems too, and notably *The Armada* (see page 75), are full of brilliant and characteristic expressions of devotion to his country, for he is pre-eminent among modern poets as the poet of patriotism.

And here we leave the Past and turn to the Present, to the poems of Morris, Henley and Meredith, Austin, Kipling, Watson, and Newbol..

Events like the two Jubilees, the Boer War and the death of England's greatest Queen, have challenged the sympathy and

attention of them all, but—at such close range—it is difficult to estimate their work at its true value, or to prophesy its effect on future generations.

Lines like Kipling's:

“Fair is our lot—O goodly is our heritage!
 Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in your mirth!
 For the Lord our God most High
 He hath made the deep as dry,
 He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the earth!”
 or like Henley's:

“What have I done for you?
 England—my England!
 What is there I would not do?
 England—my own!
 With your glorious eyes austere,
 As the Lord were walking near
 Whispering terrible things and dear;
 As the song on your bugles blown
 England.....

Round the world on your bugles blown;”

vigorous and pregnant with love of country though they are, yet do not reach the level of

“This England never did, nor never shall,
 Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
 But when it first did help to wound itself.
 Now these her princes are come home again,
 Come the three corners of the world in arms
 And we shall shock them! Nought shall make us rue
 If England to itself do rest but true;”

(*King John*, v. 7);

of one of Wordsworth's Sonnets, or even of those noble stanzas which appeared on the eve of the second Jubilee:

“God of our Fathers, known of old—
 Lord of our far-flung battle line—
 Beneath whose awful hand we hold
 Dominion over palm and pir—
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
 Lest we forget, lest we forget.”

(*The Recessional*.)

With the march of Time and the growth of Empire, the modern Patriotic poet has a wider field for his genius than that of mere "Patria"; and hence his work must for the present be in the making, and it is only in the course of years that it can arrive at perfection.

"But shortly once again the Isle will ring
 With wakening winds of March, and rhapsodies of Spring.
 Some patriot hand will sweep the living lyre,
 And prove with native notes, that Merlin was his sire."

(Austin.)

Thus has the note of patriotism come sounding down the ages, "for never hath England lacked a voice to sing her fairness, and her fame." Faint and uncertain at first, this note grew louder and more steady, until at length, struck by the master-hand of Shakespeare, it found its echo in the heart of all time. Then—though drowned for awhile in the clanging discord of party strife—it once again rose clear and high at the touch of Wordsworth and Tennyson; and it still has power to thrill as it swells into a mighty diapason of Empire.

Truly it is a noble heritage that we have entered upon:

"Not once or twice in our fair island-story
 The path of duty was the way to glory."

Why should our future be less glorious than our past? Has not many a one been roused to deeds of chivalry and daring by the Poets' records of heroes and heroic actions? May there not be many who, impelled by the glories of the past, will cry with Browning:

"Here, and here, did England help me,
 How can I help England? say!"

ENGLISH PATRIOTIC VERSE

'Go, call thy sons; instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire
Those sacred rights, to which themselves were born.'

EDMUND SPENSER (1552—1599)

From COLIN CLOUDS COME HOME AGAIN

From thence another world of land we kend,
Floting amid the sea in jèopardie,
And round about with mightie white rocks hemd,
Against the seas encroching crueltie.
Those same, the shepheard told me, were the fields
In which dame Cynthia her land-heards fed;
Faire goodly fields, then which Armulla yields
None fairer, nor more fruitfull to be red:

There fruitfull corne, faire trees, fresh herbage is,
And all things else that living creatures need. 10
Besides most goodly rivers there appeare,
No whit inferiour to thy Fanchins praise,
Or unto Allo, or to Mulla cleare:

Both heaven and heavenly graces do much more
(Quoth he) abound in that same land than this
For there all happie peace and plenteous store
Conspire in one to make contented blisse,
No wayling there, no wretchednesse is heard,
No bloodye issues, nor no leprosiés,
No griesly famine, nor no raging sweward, 20

No nightly bordrags, nor no hue and cries;
 The shepheards there abroad may safely lie,
 On hills and downes, withouten dread or daunger;
 No ravenous wolves the good man's hope destroy
 Nor outlawes fell affray the forest raunger.
 There learned arts do florish in great honor,
 And Poets' wits are had in peerlessë price:
 Religion hath lay powre to rest upon her,
 Advancing vertue and suppressing vice.
 For end, all good, all grace there freely growes, 30
 Had people grace it gratefully to use:
 For God his gifts there plenteously bestowes,
 But graceless men them greatly do abuse.

GEORGE PEELE (1558?—1597?)

*From THE TRAGICAL BATTLE OF ALCAZAR IN
 BARBARY. Act II. Scene 4*

K. Sebastian. Were every ship ten thousand on
 the seas,
 Mann'd with the strength of all the eastern kings,
 Conveying all the monarchs of the world,
 T' invade the island where her highness reigns,
 'Twere all in vain, for heavens and destinies
 Attend and wait upon her majesty.
 Sacred, imperial, and holy is her seat,
 Shining with wisdom, love and mightiness;
 Nature that everything imperfect made,
 Fortune that never yet was constant found, 10

Time that defaceth every golden show,
 Dare not decay, remove or her impair;
 Both nature, time, and fortune, all agree,
 To bless and serve her royal majesty.
 The wallowing ocean hems her round about;
 Whose raging floods do swallow up her foes,
 And on the rocks their ships in pieces split.

The south the narrow Britain-sea begirts,
 Where Neptune sits in triumph to direct
 Their course to hell that aim at her disgrace; 20
 The German seas along the east do run,
 Where Venus banquets all her water-nymphs,
 That with her beauty glancing on the waves
 Distains the cheek of fair Proserpina.

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563—1631)

TO THE CAMBRIO BRITONS, AND THEIR HARP, BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Fair stood the wind for France,
 When we our sails advance,
 Nor now to prove our chance,
 Longer will tarry;
 But putting to the main,
 At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
 With all his martial train,
 Landed king Harry.

And taking many a fort,
 Furnished in martial sort, 10

MICHAEL DRAYTON

Marcheth towards Agincourt
In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French gen'ral lay
With all his power,

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
To the King sending,
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

20

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazéd;
Yet have we well begun;
Battles so bravely won,
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raiséd."

30

"And for myself," quoth he,
"This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.
Victor I wil remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me."

40

"Poitiers and Cressy tell,
 When most their pride did swell,
 Under our swords they fell,
 No less our skill is,
 Than when our grandsire great,
 Claiming the regal seat,
 By many a warlike feat
 Lopp'd the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread,
 The eager vaward led; 50
 With the main Henry sped,
 Among his henchmen.
 Excester had the rear,
 A braver man not there,
 O Lord, how hot they were
 On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
 Armour on armour shone,
 Drum now to drum did groan,
 To hear, was wonder; 60
 That with the cries they make
 The very earth did shake,
 Trumpet to trumpet spake,
 * Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
 O noble Erpingham,
 Which didst the signal ajm
 To our hid forces;
 When from a meadow by,
 Like a storm suddenly, 70

The English archery
 Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
 Arrows a cloth-yard long,
 That like to serpents stung,
 Piercing the weather,
 None from his fellow starts,
 But playing manly parts,
 And like true English hearts,
 Stuck close together.

80

When down their bows they threw,
 And forth their bilbows drew,
 And on the French they flew,
 Not one was tardy;
 Arms were from shoulders sent,
 Scalps to the teeth were rent,
 Down the French peasants went,
 Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king
 His broad sword brandishing,
 Down the French host did ding,
 As to o'erwhelm it;
 And many a deep wound lent,
 His arms with blood besprent,
 And many a cruel dent
 Bruiséd his helmet.

90

Glo'ster, thyt duke so good,
 Next of the royal blood,
 For famous England stood,
 With his brave brother,

100

Clarence, in steel so bright,
 Though but a maiden knight,
 Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
 Oxford the foe invade,
 And cruel slaughter made,
 Still as they ran up;
 Suffolk his axe did ply,
 Beaumont and Willoughby
 Bare them right doughtily,
 Ferrers and Fanhope.

110

Upon St Crispin's day
 Fought was this noble fray,
 Which Fame did not delay,
 To England to carry;
 Oh, when shall Englishmen
 With such acts fill a pen,
 Or England breed again
 Such a king Harry?

120

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564—1616)

From RICHARD II. Act II. Scene 1

Gaunt. Methinks I am a prophet new inspired
 And thus, expiring, do foretell of him;
 His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last, ,
 For violent fires soon burn out themselves;
 Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;

He tires betimes, that spurs too fast betimes ;
 With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder
 Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
 Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
 This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle, 10
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
 This other Eden, demi-paradise :
 This fortress built by Nature for herself,
 Against infection, and the hand of war ;
 This happy breed of men, this little world ;
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,
 Which serves it in the office of a wall,
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,
 Against the envy of less happier lands ;
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England, 20
 This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
 Fear'd by their breed, and famous by their birth,
 Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
 (For Christian service and true chivalry,)
 As is the sepulchre, in stubborn Jewry,
 Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son ;
 This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
 Dear for her reputation through the world,
 Is now leas'd out, I die pronouncing it,
 Like to a tenement or pelting farm ; 30
 England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
 Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
 Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
 With inky blots, and rotten parchment bonds ;
 That England, that was wont to conquer others,
 Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
 Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,
 How happy then were my ensuing death !

From HENRY V. Act III. Scene 1

France. Before Harfleur.

Alarum. Enter *King Henry, Exeter, Bedford, Gloucester,* and *Soldiers,* with scaling-ladders.

King Henry. Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;

Or close the wall up with our English dead!
In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness, and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage:
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Let it pry through the portage of the head, 10
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it,
As fearfully, as doth a galléd rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height!—On, on, you noblest English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof!—
Fathers, that, like so many Alexanders,
Have in these parts from morn till even fought, 20
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument:
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest

That those whom you call'd fathers did beget you!
 Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
 And teach them how to war!—And you, good yeomen,
 Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
 The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
 That you are worth your breeding: which I doubt not:
 For there is none of you so mean and base,
 That hath not noble lustre in your eyes. 30
 I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
 Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:
 Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge,
 Cry "God for Harry, England, and Saint George!"
 (*Exeunt, Alarum, and chambers go off.*)

From HENRY V. Act IV. Scene 3

Present, *Gloucester, Bedford, Exeter, Erpingham*, with
 all his host: *Salisbury* and *Westmoreland*.

Enter King Henry.

West. O, that we now had here
 But one ten thousand of those men in England,
 That do no work to-day!

K. Hen. What's he that wishes so?
 My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin;
 If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
 To do our country loss; and if to live,
 The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
 God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
 By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,

Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost; 10
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires;
But, if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, 'faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:
God's peace! I' would not lose so great an honour,
As one man more, methinks, would share from me,
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he, which hath no stomach to this fight, 20
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
And crowns for convoy put into his purse;
We would not die in that man's company,
That fears his fellowship to die with us.
This day is call'd—the feast of Crispian:
He, that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He, that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours, 30
And say, "To-morrow is Saint Crispian:"
Then will he strip his sleeve, and shew his scars,
And say, "These wounds I had on Crispin's day."
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,—
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,—
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd. 40
This story shall the good man teach his son:
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,

From this day to the ending of the world,
 But we in it shall be remember'd:
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
 For he, to-day that sheds his blood with me,
 Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
 This day shall gentle his condition:
 And gentlemen in England, now a-bed
 Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here; 50
 And hold their manhoods cheap, whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

From HENRY VIII. Act V. Scene 5

Cranmer. This royal infant, (Heaven still move
 about her!)

Though in her cradle, yet now promises
 Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,
 Which time shall bring to ripeness: she shall be
 (But few now living can behold that goodness)
 A pattern to all princes living with her,
 And all that shall succeed: Saba was never
 More covetous of wisdom, and fair virtue,
 Than this pure soul shall be: all princely graces,
 That mould up such a mighty piece as this is, 10
 With all the virtues that attend the good,
 Shall still be doub'd on her: truth shall nurse her;
 Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her:
 She shall be lov'd and fear'd: her own shall bless her:
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,

And hang their heads with sorrow: good grows
with her;

In her days every man shall eat in safety,
Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours;
God shall be truly known; and those about her 20
From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.
Nor shall this peace sleep with her; but as when
The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
Her ashes new create another heir,
As great in admiration as herself;
So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
(When heaven shall call her from this cloud of
darkness,)

Who, from the sacred ashes of her honour,
Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was, 30
And so stand fix'd. Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
That were the servants to this chosen infant,
Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him;
Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
His honour and the greatness of his name
Shall be, and make new nations; he shall flourish,
And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
To all the plains about him:—our children's children
Shall see this, and bless Heaven.

WILLIAM BROWNE (1590?—1645?)

BRITANNIA'S PASTORALS. Book II. Song II

DEVONSHIRE

Hail, thou my native soil! Thou blessed plot,
Whose equal all the world affordeth not!
Show me who can so many crystal rills;
Such sweet-clothed valleys or aspiring hills;
Such wood-ground, pastures, quarries, wealthy mines;
Such rocks in whom the diamond fairly shines:
And if the earth can show the like again,
Yet will she fail in her sea-ruling men.
Time never can produce men to o'ertake
The fames of Grenville, Davies, Gilbert, Drake, 10
Of worthy Hawkins, or of thousands more
That by their power made the Devonian shore
Mock the proud Trojans; for whose richest spoil
The boasting Spaniard left the Indian soil
Bankrupt of store, knowing it would quit cost
By winning this, though all the rest were lost.

EDMUND WALLER (1605—1687)

From "A PANEGYRIC TO MY
LORD PROTECTOR"

While with a strong and yet a gentle hand,
You bridle faction, and our hearts command,
Protect us from ourselves, and from the foe,
Make us unite, and make us conquer too;

Let partial spirits still aloud complain,
Think themselves injured that they cannot reign,
And own no liberty but when they may
Without control upon their fellows prey.

Above the waves as Neptune showed his face,
To chide the winds and save the Trojan race, 10
So has your Highness, raised above the rest,
Storms of ambition, tossing us, repressed.

Your drooping country, torn with civil hate,
Restor'd by you, is made a glorious state;
The seat of empire, where the Irish come,
And the unwilling Scots, to fetch their doom.

The sea's our own: and now all nations greet,
With bending sails, each vessel of our fleet:
Your power extends as far as winds can blow,
Or swelling sails upon the globe may go. 20

Heaven, (that hath plac'd this island to give law,
 To balance Europe, and her states to awe)
 In this conjunction doth on Britain smile,
 The greatest leader, and the greatest isle!

Whether this portion of the world were rent,
 By the rude ocean, from the continent;
 Or thus created; it was sure design'd
 To be the sacred refuge of mankind.

Hither th' oppress'd shall henceforth resort,
 Justice to crave, and succour, at your court; 30
 And then your Highness, not for ours alone,
 But for the world's protector shall be known.

Fame, swifter than your wing'd navy, flies
 Through every land, that near the ocean lies,
 Sounding your name, and telling dreadful news
 To all that piracy and rapine use.

Lords of the world's great waste, the ocean, we
 Whole forests send to reign upon the sea;
 And every coast may trouble or relieve;
 But none can visit us without your leave. 4

Our little world, the image of the great,
 Like that, amidst the boundless ocean set,
 Of her own growth hath all that Nature craves,
 And all that's rare, as tribute from the waves.

As Egypt does not on the clouds rely,
 But to the Nile owes more than to the sky;
 So, what our earth, and what our heaven, denies,
 Our ever-constant friend, the sea, supplies.

The taste of hot Arabia's spice we know,
 Free from the scorching sun that makes it grow; 50
 Without the worm, in Persian silks we shine;
 And, without planting, drink of every vine.

To dig for wealth, we weary not our limbs;
 Gold, though the heaviest metal, hither swims.
 Ours is the harvest where the Indians mow,
 We plough the deep, and reap where others sow.

Things of the noblest kind our own soil breeds;
 Stout are our men, and warlike are our steeds;
 Rome, though her eagles through the world had flown,
 Could never make this island all her own. 60

JOHN MILTON (1608—1674)

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY
 (1642)

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
 Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
 If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
 He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
 That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
 Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
 The great Emathian conqueror bid spare 10
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground: and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
 And on the neck of crownéd Fortune proud
 Hast reared God's trophies, and His work pursued,
 While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
 To conquer still; Peace hath her victories 10
 No less renown'd than War; new foes arise,
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hircling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

JAMES THOMSON (1700—1748)

RULE BRITANNIA

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
 Arose from out the azure main,
 This was the charter of the land,
 And guardian angels sung the strain:
 "Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
 Britons never will be slaves."

The nations, not so blest as thee,
 Muct in their turn, to tyrants fall,
 While thou shalt flourish great and free,
 The dread and envy of them all. 10

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
 More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
 As the loud blast that tears the skies
 Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
 All their attempts to bend thee down
 Will but arouse thy generous flame,
 But work their woe, and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
 Thy cities shall with commerce shine: 20
 All thine shall be the subject main;
 And every shore it circles, thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
 Shall to thy happy coast repair:
 Blest Isle! with matchless beauty crown'd
 And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
 "Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
 Britons never will be slaves."

WILLIAM COLLINS (1721—1756)

ODE WRITTEN IN 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
 By all their country's wishes blest!
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
 Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
 She there shall dress a sweeter sod
 Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
 By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
 There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
 To bless the turf that wraps their clay; 10
 And Freedom shall awhile repair
 To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728—1774)

From THE TRAVELLER

Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
 And flies where Britain courts the western spring;
 Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
 And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspes glide.
 There all around the gentlest breezes stray;
 There gentle music melts on every spray;
 Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
 Extremes are only in the master's mind!
 Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,
 With daring aims irregularly great; 10
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
 I see the lords of human kind pass by;
 Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
 By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand,
 Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
 True to imagin'd right, above control,
 While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
 And learns to venerate himself as man.

WILLIAM COWPER (1731—1800)

BOADICEA

When the British warrior queen,
 Bleeding from the Roman rods,
 Sought, with an indignant mien,
 Counsel of her country's gods;

Sage beneath a spreading oak
 Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
 Every burning word he spoke
 Full of rage, and full of grief.

"Princess! if our aged eyes
 Weep upon thy matchless wrongs, 10
 'Tis because resentment ties
 All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish—write that word
 In the blood that she has spilt;
 Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
 Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome, for empire far renown'd,
 Tramples on a thousand states;
 Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
 Hark! the Gaul is at her gates! 20

"Other Romans shall arise,
 Heedless of a soldier's name;
 Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
 Harmony the path to fame.

“Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

“Regions Caesar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.”

30

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow;
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe;

40

“Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you.”

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770—1850)

From SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY*Composed by the Sea-side near Calais, August 1802*

Fair star of evening, splendour of the west,
 Star of my country!—on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
 On England's bosom: yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
 Conspicuous to the nations. Thou, I think,
 Should'st be my country's emblem: and should'st w
 Bright star! with laughter on her banners, drest
 In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
 Beneath thee, it is England; there it lies. 10
 Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory! I, with many a fear
 For my dear country, many heartfelt sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

LONDON 1802

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour;
 England hath need of thee: she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, and heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower,
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea; 10
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF

It is not to be thought of that the flood
 Of British freedom, which to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters unwithstood"—
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible knights of old: 10
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake—the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
 Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803

Vanguard of liberty, ye men of Kent,
 Ye children of a soil that doth advance
 Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment!
 To France be words of invitation sent!
 They, from their fields, can see the countenance

Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath; 10
 Confirmed the charters that were yours before;—
 No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;
 We all are with you now from shore to shore:
 Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death!

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
 Whom every man in arms should wish to be?
 It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought:
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright:
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10
 But makes his moral being his prime care:
 Who, doom'd to go in company with pain,
 And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain:
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest dower:
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling, render'd more compassionate: 20
 Is placable—because occasions rise

So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more: more able to endure
As more exposed to suffering and distress:
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
'Tis he whose law is reason: who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends!
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He fixes good on good alone, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim; 40
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state:
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be call'd upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has join'd
Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50
Is happy as a lover, and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired:
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;

Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes; 60
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart: and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve:
More brave for this, that he hath much to love
'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one, 70
Where what he most doth value must be won;
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must go to dust without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name, 80
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause:
That is the happy warrior; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771—1832)

From MARMION. INTRODUCTION TO CANTO I.
l. 53—205

To mute and to material things
 New life revolving summer brings;
 The genial call dead Nature hears,
 And in her glory reappears.
 But oh! my Country's wintry state
 What second spring shall renovate?
 What powerful call shall bid arise
 The buried warlike and the wise;
 The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
 The hand that grasp'd the victor steel? 10
 The vernal sun new life bestows
 Even on the meanest flower that blows;
 But vainly, vainly may he shine,
 Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;
 And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
 That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
 O never let those names depart!
 Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
 Who victor died on Gadite wave; 20
 To him, as to the burning levin,
 Short, bright, resistless course was given.
 Where'er his country's foes were found,
 Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
 Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
 Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd,—and was no more!
 Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,

Who bade the conqueror go forth,
 And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
 On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar; 30
 Who, born to guide such high emprise,
 For Britain's weal was early wise;
 Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
 For Britain's sins, an early grave!
 His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
 A bauble held the pride of power,
 Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
 And served his Albion for herself;
 Who, when the frantic crowd amain
 Strafn'd at subjection's bursting rein, 40
 O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
 The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
 Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
 And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the freeman's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,
 A watchman on the lonely tower,
 Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
 When fraud or danger were at hand;
 By thee, as by the beacon-light,
 Our pilots had kept course aright; 50
 As some proud column, though alone,
 Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne:
 Now is the stately column broke,
 The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,
 The trumpet's silver sound is still,
 The warder silent on the hill!

Oh think, how to his latest day,
 When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,

With Palinure's unaltered mood,
 Firm at his dangerous post he stood; 60
 Each call for needful rest repell'd,
 With dying hand the rudder held,
 Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
 The steerage of the realm gave way!
 Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
 One unpolluted church remains,
 Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
 The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
 But still, upon the hallow'd day,
 Convoke the swains to praise and pray; 70
 While faith and civil peace are dear,
 Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
 He, who preserved them, Pitt, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
 Because his rival slumbers nigh;
 Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
 Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
 For talents mourn, untimely lost,
 When best employ'd, and wanted most;
 Mourn genius high, and lore profound, 80
 And wit that loved to play, not wound;
 And all the reasoning powers divine,
 To penetrate, resolve, combine;
 And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
 They sleep with him who sleeps below:
 And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
 From error, him who owns this grave,
 Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
 And sacred be the last long rest.

Here, where the end of earthly things 90

Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
"All peace on earth, good-will to men;"
If ever from an English heart,
O, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside, 100
Record, that Fox a Briton died!
When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was barter'd by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
The sullied olive-branch return'd,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nail'd her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave 110
A portion in this honour'd grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,
How high they soar'd above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand, 120
Look'd up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known

The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
 Spells of such force no wizard grave
 E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
 Though his could drain the ocean dry,
 And force the planets from the sky.
 The spells are spent, and, spent with these,
 The wine of life is on the lees.

Genius, and taste, and talent gone, 130
 For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
 Where—taming thought to human pride!—
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.

Drop upon Fox's grave a tear,
 'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
 O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound,
 And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
 The solemn echo seems to cry,—
 "Here let their discord with them die.
 Speak not for those a separate doom, 140
 Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;
 But search the land of living men,
 Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
 Of dying Nature bid you rise;
 Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
 The leaden silence of your hearse;
 Then, O, how impotent and vain
 This grateful tributary strain!
 Though not unmark'd from northern clime, 150
 Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:
 His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
 The Bard you deign'd to praise, your deathless names
 has sung.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772—1834)

From FEARS IN SOLITUDE. Nether Stowey.

April 20th, 1798

But, O dear Britain! O my Mother Isle!
Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
A husband, and a father! who revere
All bonds of natural love, and find them all
Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
O native Britain! O my Mother Isle!
How should'st thou prove aught else but dear and holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas, 10
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrowed from my country! O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which 20
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!

THE BRITISH STRIPLING'S WAR-SONG

Imitated from Stolberg

Yes, noble old Warrior! this heart has beat high,
Since you told of the deeds which our countrymen
wrought;

O lend me the sabre that hung by thy thigh,
And I too will fight as my forefathers fought.

Despise not my youth, for my spirit is steel'd
And I know there is strength in the grasp of my
hand;

Yea, as firm as thyself would I march to the field,
And as proudly would die for my dear native land.

In the sports of my childhood I mimick'd the fight,
The sound of a trumpet suspended my breath; 10
And my fancy still wander'd by day and by night,
Amid battle and tumult, 'mid conquest and death.

My own shout of onset, in the heat of my trance,
How oft it awakes me from visions of glory;
When I meant to have leapt on the Hero of France,
And have dash'd him to earth, pale and breathless
and gory.

As late thro' the city, with banners all streaming,
To the music of trumpets the Warriors flew by,
With helmet and scimitars naked and gleaming,
On their proud-trampling, thunder-hoof'd steeds did
they fly; 20

I sped to yon heath that is lonely and bare,
 For each nerve was unquiet, each pulse in alarm;
 And I hurl'd the mock-lance thro' the objectless air,
 And in open-eyed dream proved the strength of
 my arm.

Yes, noble old Warrior! this heart has beat high,
 Since you told of the deeds that our countrymen
 wrought;
 O lend me the sabre that hung by thy thigh,
 And I too will fight as my forefathers fought!

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777—1844)

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

Ye Mariners of England
 That guard our native seas!
 Whose flag has braved a thousand years,
 The battle and the breeze!
 Your glorious standard launch again
 To match another foe;
 And sweep through the deep,
 While the stormy winds do blow!
 While the battle rages loud and long,
 And the stormy winds do blow.

10

The spirits of your fathers
 Shall start from every wave!—
 For the deck it was their field of fame,
 And Ocean was their grave:

Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow,
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

20

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

30

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC (1801)

Of Nelson and the North,
 Sing the glorious day's renown,
 When to battle fierce came forth
 All the might of Denmark's crown,
 And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
 By each gun the lighted brand,
 In a bold determined hand,
 And the Prince of all the land
 Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat 10
 Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
 While the sign of battle flew
 On the lofty British line;
 It was ten of April morn by the chime;
 As they drifted on their path,
 There was silence deep as death;
 And the boldest held his breath
 For a time.

But the might of England flush'd 20
 To anticipate the scene;
 And her van the fleeter rush'd
 O'er the deadly space between.
 "Hearts of oak!" our captain cried; when each gun
 From its adamantine lips
 Spread a death-shade round the ships,
 Like the hurricane eclipse
 Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
 And the havoc did not slack,
 Till a feebler cheer the Dane
 To our cheering sent us back:— 30
 Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
 Then ceased—and all is wail,
 As they strike the shatter'd sail,
 Or, in conflagration pale,
 Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
 As he hail'd them o'er the wave;
 "Ye are brothers! ye are men!
 And we conquer but to save:— 40
 So peace instead of death let us bring;
 But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
 With the crews, at England's feet,
 And make submission meet
 To our King."

Then Denmark bless'd our chief,
 That he gave her wounds repose;
 And the sounds of joy and grief
 From her people wildly rose,
 As death withdrew his shades from the day; 50
 While the sun look'd smiling bright
 O'er a wide and woeful sight,
 Where the fires of funeral light
 Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise!
 For the tidings of thy might,
 By the festal cities' blaze,
 Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;

And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
 Let us think of them that sleep 60
 Full many a fathom deep
 By thy wild and stormy steep,
 Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
 Once so faithful and so true,
 On the deck of fame that died,—
 With the gallant good Riou:
 Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
 While the billow mournful rolls,
 And the mermaid's song condoles, 70
 Singing glory to the souls
 Of the brave!

MEN OF ENGLAND

Men of England! who inherit
 Rights that cost your sires their blood!
 Men whose undegenerate spirit
 Has been proved in field and flood:—

By the foes you've fought uncounted,
 By the glorious deeds ye've done,
 Trophies captured—breaches mounted,
 Navies conquer'd—kingdoms won!

Yet, remember, England gathers
 Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame, 10
 If the freedom of your fathers
 Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
 Where no public virtues bloom?
 What avails in lands of slavery,
 Trophied temples, arch, and tomb?

Pageants!—Let the world revere us
 For our people's rights and laws,
 And the breasts of civic heroes
 Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

20

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
 Sidney's matchless shade is yours,—
 Martyrs in heroic story,
 Worth a hundred Agincourts!

We're the sons of sires that baffled
 Crown'd and mitred tyranny;—
 They defied the field and scaffold
 For their birthrights—so will we!

GEORGE, LORD BYRON (1788—1824)

From CHILDE HAROLD. Canto III. Stanzas 21—28

There was a sound of revelry by night,
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising
 knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind, 10
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain: he did hear 20
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago 30
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,

And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
 While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come!
 they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's Gathering" rose!
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes;—
 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
 Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills 50
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
 With the fierce native daring which instils
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's
 ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow 60
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and
 low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day

Battle's magnificently-stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay, 70
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

CHARLES WOLFE (1791–1823)

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE (1809)

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
 As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;
 Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
 O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
 The sods with our bayonets turning;
 By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
 And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
 Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him; 10
 But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
 With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers, we said,
 And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
 But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
 And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
 And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
 That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
 And we far away on the billow! 20

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
 And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
 But little he'll reckon, if they let him sleep on
 In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
 When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
 And we heard the distant and random gun
 That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
 From the field of his fame fresh and gory; 30
 We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
 But we left him alone with his glory.

FELICIA HEMANS (1794—1835)

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND

*Where's the coward that would not dare
 To fight for such a land?* MARMION

The stately Homes of England
 How beautiful they stand!
 Amidst their tall ancestral trees
 O'er all the pleasant land.
 The deer across their greensward bound
 Thro' shade and sunny gleam,
 And the swan glides past them with the sound
 Of some rejoicing stream.

The merry Homes of England!
 Around their hearths by night, 10
 What gladsome looks of household love
 Meet in the ruddy light!
 There woman's voice flows forth in song,
 Or childhood's tale is told,
 Or lips move tunefully along
 Some glorious page of old.

The blessed Homes of England!
 How softly on their bowers
 Is laid the holy quietness
 That breathes from Sabbath-hours! 20
 Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bells chime
 Floats thro' their woods at morn;
 All other sounds, in that still time,
 Of breeze and leaf are born.

The Cottage Homes of England!
 By thousands on her plains,
 They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
 And round the hamlet-fanes.
 Thro' glowing orchards forth they peep,
 Each from its nook of leaves, 30
 And fearless there the lowly sleep,
 As the bird beneath their eaves.

The free, fair Homes of England,
 Long, long, in hut and hall,
 May hearts of native proof be rear'd
 To guard each hallowed wall!
 And green for ever be the groves,
 And bright the flowery sod,
 Where first the child's glad spirit loves
 Its country and its God! 40

ENGLAND'S DEAD

Son of the Ocean Isle!

Where sleep your mighty dead?
 Show me what high and stately pile
 Is reared o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger! track the deep—
 Free, free the white sail spread!
 Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
 Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
 By the pyramid o'erswayed, 10
 With fearful power the noonday reigns,
 And the palm-trees yield no shade;—

But let the angry sun
 From heaven look fiercely red,
 Unfelt by those whose task is done!—
 There slumber England's dead.

The hurricane hath might
 Along the Indian shore,
 And far by Ganges' banks at night
 Is heard the tiger's roar;— 20

But let the sound roll on!
 It hath no tone of dread
 For those that from their toils are gone,—
 There slumber England's dead.

Loud rush the torrent-floods
 The Western wilds among,
 And free, in green Columbia's woods,
 The hunter's bow is strung;—

But let the floods rush on!
 Let the arrow's flight be sped! 30
 Why should they reck whose task is done?—
 There slumber England's dead.

The mountain-storms rise high
 In the snowy Pyrenees,
 And toss the pine-boughs through the sky
 Like rose-leaves on the breeze;—

But let the storm rage on!
 Let the fresh wreaths be shed!
 For the Roncesvalles' field is won,—
 There slumber England's dead. 40

On the frozen deep's repose
 'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
 When round the ship the ice-fields close,
 And the northern night-clouds lour;—

But let the ice drift on!
 Let the cold-blue desert spread!
 Their course with mast and flag is done,—
 Even there sleep England's dead.

The warlike of the isles,
 The men of field and wave!— 50
 Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
 The seas and shores their grave?

Go, stranger! track the deep—
 Free, free the white sail spread!
 Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
 Where rest not England's dead.

THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY
(1800—1859)

THE SPANISH ARMADA

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise:

I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in
ancient days,

When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Ply-
mouth Bay;

Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond
Aurigny's isle,

At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many
a mile.

At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial
grace;

And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close
in chase. 10

Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along
the wall;

The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty
hall;

Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the
coast.

And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland
many a post.

With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff
comes;

Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound
the drums;

His yeomen round the market-cross make clear an
ample space;

For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her
Grace.

And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance
the bells,

As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon
swells. 20

Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.

So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
Picard field,

Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Caesar's eagle
shield.

So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.

Ho! strike the flag-staff deep, sir Knight: ho! scatter
flowers, fair maids:

Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw
your blades:

Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft
her wide:

Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride. 30
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;

The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty
scroll of gold;

Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
shall be.

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,

That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day:
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,

High on St Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on
Beachy Head.

Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern
shire,

Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire. 40

The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves:

The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves:

O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew;

He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.

Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,

And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton down;

The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light.

Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike
silence broke,

And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city
woke. 50

At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
 At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
 spires;
 From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
 voice of fear;
 And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back
 a louder cheer;
 And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
 hurrying feet,
 And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed
 down each roaring street;
 And broader still became the blaze, and louder still
 the din,
 As fast from every village round the horse came
 spurring in:
 And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
 warlike errand went,
 And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant
 squires of Kent. 60
 Southward, from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
 bright couriers forth;
 High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
 for the north;
 And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded
 still:
 All night from tower to tower they sprang; they
 sprang from hill to hill:
 Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
 rocky dales,
 Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills
 of Wales,
 Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
 lonely height,

Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
 crest of light,
 Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
 stately fane,
 And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the
 boundless plain; 70
 Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
 And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale
 of Trent;
 Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burnt on Gaunt's
 embattled pile,
 And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers
 of Carlisle.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH (1807—1886)

SONNET ON ENGLAND

Peace, Freedom, Happiness, have loved to wait
 On the fair islands, fenced by circling seas;
 And ever of such favoured spots as these
 Have the wise dreamers dreamed, who would create
 That perfect model of a happy state,
 Which the world never saw. Oceana,
 Utopia such, and Plato's isle that lay
 Westwood of Gades, and the Great Sea's gate.
 Dreams are they all, which yet have helped to make
 That underneath fair polities we dwell, 10
 Though marred in part by envy, faction, hate.
 Dreams which are dear, dear England, for thy sake,
 Who art indeed that sea-girt citadel,
 And nearest image of that perfect state.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809—1892)

YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT EASE

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas?

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or foes
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown, 10
Where Freedom broadens slowly down
From precedent to precedent;

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fullness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute; 20

Tho' Power should make from land to land
The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should almost choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
 Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,
 And I will see before I die
 The palms and temples of the South.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
 The thunders breaking at her feet:
 Above her shook the starry lights:
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
 But fragments of her mighty voice
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt she down thro' town and field
 To mingle with the human race, 10
 And part by part to men reveal'd
 The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
 From her isle-altar gazing down,
 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
 And, King-like, wears the crown:

Her open eyes desire the truth.
 Tho' wisdom of a thousand years
 Is in them. May perpetual youth
 Keep dry their light from tears; 20

That her fair form may stand and shine,
 Make bright our days and light our dreams,
 Turning to scorn with lips divine
 The falsehood of extremes!

LOVE THOU THY LAND

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
 From out the storied Past, and used
 Within the Present, but transfused
 Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixéd poles,
 Love, that endures not sordid ends,
 For English natures, freemen, friends,
 Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
 Nor feed with crude imaginings 10
 The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings,
 That every sophister can line.

Deliver not the tasks of might
 To weakness, neither hide the ray
 From those, not blind, who wait for day,
 Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds:
 But let her herald, Reverence, fly ,
 Before her to whatever sky
 Bear seed of men and growth of minds. 20

Watch what main-currents draw the years:
 Cut Prejudice against the grain:
 But gentle words are always gain:
 Regard the weakness of thy peers:

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
 Of pension, neither count on praise:
 It grows to guerdon after-days:
 Nor deal in watchwords overmuch:

Not clinging to some ancient saw;
 Not master'd by some modern term; 30
 Not swift nor slow to change, but firm:
 And in its season bring the law;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
 With Life, that, working strongly, binds—
 Set in all lights by many minds,
 To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
 And moist and dry, devising long,
 Thro' many agents making strong,
 Matures the individual form. 40

Meet is it changes should control
 Our being, lest we rust in ease:
 We all are changed by still degrees,
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,
 And work, a joint of state that plies
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act;
For all the past of Time reveals 50
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States— 60

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapour, hard to mark;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head; 70
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star, ,
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
 Must ever shock, like arméd foes,
 And this be true, till Time shall close,
 That Principles are rain'd in blood; 80

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
 To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
 But with his hand against the hilt,
 Would pace the troubled land, like Peace;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
 Would serve his kind in deed and word,
 Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
 That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke
 From either side, nor veil his eyes: 90
 And if some dreadful need should rise
 Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke:

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
 As we bear blossom of the dead;
 Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

HANDS ALL ROUND

First pledge our Queen this solemn night,
 Then drink to England, every guest;
 That man's the best Cosmopolite
 Who loves his native country best.
 May freedom's oak for ever live
 With stronger life from day to day;
 That man's the true Conservative
 Who lops the moulder'd branch away.

Hands all round!

God the traitor's hope confound! 10
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
 And the great name of England, round and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long
 To keep our English Empire whole!
 To all our noble sons, the strong
 New England of the Southern Pole!
 To England under Indian skies,
 To those dark millions of her realm!
 To Canada whom we love and prize,
 Whatever statesman hold the helm. 20

Hands all round!

God the traitor's hope confound!
 To this great name of England drink, my friends,
 And all her glorious empire, round and round.

To all our statesmen so they be
 True leaders of the land's desire!
 To both our Houses, may they see
 Beyond the borough and the shire!
 We sail'd wherever ship could sail,
 We founded many a mighty state; 30
 Pray God our greatness may not fail
 Through craven fears of being great.

Hands all round!

God the traitor's hope confound!
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
 And the great name of England, round and round.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Half a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!
 Charge for the guns!" he said:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
 Was there a man dismay'd?
 Not tho' the soldiers knew
 Some one had blunder'd:
 Their's not to make reply,
 Their's not to reason why,
 Their's but to do and die:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

10

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them
 Volley'd and thunder'd;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell
 Rode the six hundred.

20

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
30 All the world wonder'd;
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
40 Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd:
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade? 50
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd,
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
(1852)

I

Bury the Great Duke

With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke

To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for, 10
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant; sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
 Remembering all his greatness in the Past. 20
 No more in soldier fashion will he greet
 With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
 Whole in himself, a common good.
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest yet with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war, 30
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good grey head which all men knew,
 O voice from which their omens all men drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fall'n at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
 Such was he whom we deplore. 40
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done:
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be toll'd.

Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river, 50
There shall he rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd;
And a reverent people behold
The, towering car, the sable steeds;
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd;
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd 60
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom;
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim 70
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such 'a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-ringing avenues of song.

VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest, 80
 With banner and with music, with soldier and with
 priest,

With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?

Mighty Seaman, this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea.

Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,

The greatest sailor since our world began.

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,

To thee the greatest soldier comes;

For this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea;

90

His foes were thine; he kept us free;

O give him welcome, this is he,

Worthy of our gorgeous rites,

And worthy to be laid by thee;

For this is England's greatest son,

He that gain'd a hundred fights,

Nor ever lost an English gun;

This is he that far away

Against the myriads of Assaye

Clash'd with his fiery few and won;

100

And underneath another sun,

Warring on a later day,

Round affrighted Lisbon drew

The treble works, the vast designs

Of his labour'd rampart-lines,

Where he greatly stood at bay,

Whence he issued forth anew,

And ever great and greater grew,

Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms, 110
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings, 120
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and overthrew. 130
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all, 140
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!

And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
 Eternal honour to his name. 150

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 His Saxon in blown seas and storming showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul 160
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust. 170
 Remember him who led your hosts;
 He bad you guard the sacred coasts.

Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever; and whatever tempests lour
 For ever silent; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent: yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power; 180
 Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life:
 Who never spoke against a foe;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke;
 Whatever record leap to light 190
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state. 200
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory:

He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory:
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upward, and prevail'd,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-lands
 To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he: his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his great example stand 220
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory:
 And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
 For many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him, 230
 Eternal honour to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung,
 By some yet unmoulded tongue

Far on in summers that we shall not see:
 Peace, it is a day of pain
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung;
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe hung. 240
 Ours the pain, be his the gain!
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere;
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane: 250
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so true
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
 And break the shore, and evermore 260
 Make and break, and work their will;
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul?
 On God and Godlike men we build our trust.

'Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears;
 The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
 The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust; 270
 He is gone who seem'd so great.—
 Gone; but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him. 280
 God accept him, Christ receive him.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812—1889)

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-west
 died away;
 Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz
 Bay;
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
 In the dimmest North-east distance dawned Gibraltar
 grand and gray;
 "Here and here did England help me: how can I,
 help England?"—say,
 Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
 and pray,
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

I

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

II

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows! 10
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew
All will be gay, when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower! 20

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806—1861)

From AURORA LEIGH (Book I)

Whoever lives true life will love true love,
 I learnt to love that England. Very oft,
 Before the day was born, or otherwise
 Through secret windings of the afternoons,
 I threw my hunters off and plunged myself
 Among the deep hills, as a hunted stag
 Will take the waters, shivering with the fear
 And passion of the course. And when at last
 Escaped, so many a green slope built on slope
 Betwixt me and the enemy's house behind, 10
 I dared to rest, or wander, in a rest
 Made sweeter for the step upon the grass,
 And view the ground's most gentle dimplement.
 (As if God's finger touched but did not press
 In making England), such an up and down
 Of verdure,—nothing too much up or down,
 A ripple of land; such little hills, the sky
 Can stoop to tenderly and the wheatfields climb;
 Such nooks of valleys lined with orchises,
 Fed full of noises by invisible streams; 20
 And open pastures where you scarcely tell
 White daisies from white dew,—at intervals
 The mythic oaks and elm-trees standing out
 Self-poised upon their prodigy of shade,—
 I thought my father's land was worthy too
 Of being my Shakespeare's..... ..

..... ..
 But then the thrushes sang,
 And shook my pulses and the elms' new leaves;

At which I turned, and held my finger up,
 And bade him mark that, howsoe'er the world 30
 Went ill, as he related, certainly
 The thrushes still sang in it. At the word
 His brow would soften,—and he bore with me
 In melancholy patience, not unkind,
 While breaking into voluble ecstasy '
 I flattered all the beauteous country round,
 As poets use, the skies, the clouds, the fields,
 The happy violets hiding from the roads
 The primroses run down to, carrying gold;
 The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out 40
 Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths
 "Twixt dripping ash-boughs,—hedgerows all alive
 With birds and gnats and large white butterflies
 Which look as if the May-flower had caught life
 And palpitated forth upon the wind;
 Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,
 Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills;
 And cattle grazing in the watered vales,
 And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,
 And cottage-gardens smelling everywhere, 50
 Confused with smell of orchards. "See," I said,
 "And see! is God not with us on the earth?
 And shall we put Him down by aught we do?
 Who says there's nothing for the poor and vile
 Save poverty and wickedness? behold!"
 And ankle-deep in English grass I leaped
 And clapped my hands, and called all very fair.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE
(1837—1909)

From THE ARMADA. Section VII. II

England, queen¹ of the waves whose green inviolate
girdle enrings thee round,
Mother fair as the morning, where is now the place
of thy foemen found?
Still the sea that salutes us free proclaims them
stricken, acclaims thee crowned.

Times may change, and the skies grow strange with
signs of treason and fraud and fear:
Foes in union of strange communion may rise against
thee from far and near:
Sloth and greed on thy strength may feed as cankers
waxing from year to year.

Yet, though treason and fierce unreason should league
and lie and defame and smite,
We that know thee, how far below thee the hatred
burns of the sons of night,
We that love thee, behold above thee the witness
written of life in light.

Life that shines from thee shows forth signs that none
may read not but eyeless foes: 10
Hate, born blind, in his abject mind grows hopeful
now but as madness grows: '
Love, born wise, with exultant eyes adores thy glory,
beholds and glows.

Truth is in thee, and none may win thee to lie,
forsaking the face of truth:

Freedom lives by the grace she gives thee, born again
from thy deathless youth:

Faith should fail, and the world turn pale, wert thou
the prey of the serpent's tooth.

Greed and fraud, unabashed, unawed, may strive to
sting thee at heel in vain:

Craft and fear and mistrust may leer and mourn and
murmur and plead and plain:

Thou art thou: and thy sun bright brow is hers that
blasted the strength of Spain.

Mother, mother beloved, none other could claim in
place of thee England's place:

Earth bears none that beholds the sun so pure of
record, so clothed with grace: 20

Dear our mother, nor son nor brother is thine, as
strong or as fair of face.

How shalt thou be abased? or how shall fear take
hold of thy heart? of thine,

England, maiden immortal, laden with charge of life
and with hopes divine?

Earth shall wither, when eyes turned hither, behold
not light in her darkness shine.

England, none that is born thy son, and lives, by
grace of thy glory, free,

Lives and yearns not at heart, and burns with hope
to serve as he worships thee;

None may sing thee: the sea-wind's wing beats down
our songs as it hails the sea.

ALFRED AUSTIN (*Born 1835*)

IN PRAISE OF ENGLAND

I

From tangled brake and trellised bower
 Bring every bud that blows,
 But never will you find the flower
 To match an English rose.
 It blooms with more than city grace,
 Though rustic and apart;
 It has a smile upon its face,
 And a dewdrop in its heart.

II

Though wide the goodly world around
 Your fancy may have strayed, 10
 Where was the woman ever found
 To match an English maid?
 At work she smiles, through play she sings,
 She doubts not nor denies;
 She'll cling to you as woodbine clings,
 And love you till she dies.

III

If you would put it to the proof,
 Then round the zodiac roam;
 But never will you find the roof
 To match an English home. 20
 You hear the sound of children's feet
 Still pattering on the stair;
 'Tis made by loving labour sweet,
 And sanctified by prayer.

IV

Go traverse tracts sublime or sweet,
 Snow-peak or scorched ravine,
 But where will you the landscape meet
 To match an English scene?
 The hamlet hallowed by its spire,
 The wildwood fresh with flowers, 30
 Garden and croft and thorp and byre
 Gleaming through silvery showers.

V

Across the wave, along the wind,
 Flutter and plough your way,
 But where will you a Sceptre find
 To match the English sway?
 Its conscience holds the world in awe
 With blessing or with ban;
 Its Freedom guards the Reign of Law,
 And majesty of Man! 40

HENRY NEWBOLT (*Born 1862*)

ADMIRALS ALL

A Song of Sea Kings

Effingham, Grenville, Raleigh, Drake,
 Here's to the bold and free!
 Benbow, Collingwood, Byron, Blake,
 Hail to the Kings of the Sea!

Admirals all, for England's sake,
 Honour be yours and fame!
 And honour, as long as waves shall break,
 To Nelson's peerless name!

*Admirals all, for England's sake,
 Honour be yours and fame!* 10
*And honour, as long as waves shall break,
 To Nelson's peerless name!*

Essex was fretting in Cadiz Bay
 With the galleons fair in sight;
 Howard at last must give him his way,
 And the word was passed to fight.
 Never was schoolboy gayer than he,
 Since holidays first began:
 He tossed his bonnet to wind and sea,
 And under the guns he ran. 20

Drake nor devil nor Spaniard feared,
 Their cities he put to the sack;
 He singed His Catholic Majesty's beard,
 And harried his ships to wrack.
 He was playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls
 When the great Armada came;
 But he said, "They must wait their turn, good souls,"
 And he stooped and finished the game.

Fifteen sail were the Dutchmen bold,
 Duncan he had but two; 30
 But he anchored them fast where the Texel shoaled,
 And his Colours aloft he flew.
 "I've taken the depth to a fathom," he cried,
 "And I'll sink with a right good will:
 For I know when we're all of us under the tide
 My flag will be fluttering still."

Splinters were flying above, below,
 When Nelson sailed the Sound:
 "Mark you, I wouldn't be elsewhere now,"
 Said he, "for a thousand pound!" 40
 The admiral's signal bade him fly,
 But he wickedly wagged his head:
 He clapped his glass to his sightless eye,
 And "I'm damned if I see it!" he said.

Admirals all, they said their say
 (The echoes are ringing still).
 Admirals all, they went their way
 To the haven under the hill.
 But they left us a kingdom none can take—
 The realm of the circling sea— 50
 To be ruled by the rightful sons of Blake
 And the Rodneys yet to be.

*Admirals all, for England's sake,
 Honour be yours and fame!
 And honour, as long as waves shall break,
 To Nelson's peerless name!*

THE HUNDRETH YEAR

"Drake and Blake and Nelson's mighty name"

The stars were faint in heaven
 That saw the Old Year die;
 The dream-white mist of Devon
 Shut in the seaward sky:
 Before the dawn's unveiling
 I heard three voices hailing,
 I saw three ships come sailing
 With lanterns gleaming high.

The first, he cried defiance—

A full-mouthed voice and bold— 10
“On God be our reliance,
Our hope the Spaniards’ gold!
With a still, stern ambuscado,
With a roaring escalado,
We’ll sack their Eldorado
And storm their dungeon hold!”

Then slowly spake the second—

A great sad voice and deep—
“When all your gold is reckoned,
There is but this to keep: 20
To stay the foe from fooling,
To learn the heathen schooling,
To live and die sea-ruling,
And home at last to sleep!”

But the third matched in beauty

The dawn that flushed afar:
“O sons of England, Duty
Is England’s morning star;
Then Fame’s eternal splendour
Be theirs who well defend her, 30
And theirs who fain would bend her
The night of Trafalgar!”

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (*Born 1859*)

THE SONG OF THE BOW

What of the bow?

The bow was made in England:
 Of true wood, of yew-wood,
 The wood of English bows;
 So men who are free
 Love the old yew-tree
 And the land where the yew-tree grows.

What of the cord?

The cord was made in England:
 A rough cord, a tough cord, 10
 A cord that bowmen love;
 And so we will sing
 Of the hempen string
 And the land where the cord was wove.

What of the shaft?

The shaft was cut in England:
 A long shaft, a strong shaft,
 Barbed and trim and true;
 So we'll drink altogether
 To the grey goose-feather 20
 And the land where the grey goose flew.

What of the mark?

Ah, seek it not in England,
 A bold mark, our old mark
 Is waiting over-sea.
 When the strings harp in chorus,
 And the lion flag is o'er us,
 It is there that our mark will be.

What of the men?
 The men were bred in England; 30
 The bowmen—the yeomen,
 The lads of dale and fell.
 Here's to you—and to you!
 To the hearts that are true
 And the land where the true hearts dwell.

RUDYARD KIPLING (*Born* 1865)

THE ENGLISH FLAG

Winds of the World, give answer! They are w
 pering to and fro—
 And what should they know of England who only
 England know?—
 The poor little street-bred people that vapour and
 fume and brag,
 They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp
 at the English Flag!

Must we borrow a clout from the Boer—to plaster
 anew with dirt?
 An Irish liar's bandage, or an English coward's shirt?
 We may not speak of England; her Flag's to sell
 or share.
 What is the Flag of England? Winds of the World,
 declare!

The North Wind blew:—"From Bergen my steel-shod
 van-guards go;
 I chase your lazy whalers home from the Disko floe; 10

By the great North Lights above me I work the will
of God,
And the liner splits on the ice-field, or the Dogger
fills with cod.

“I barred my gates with iron, I shuttered my doors
with flame,
Because to force my ramparts your nutshell navies came;
I took the sun from their presence, I cut them down
'with my blast,
And they died, but the Flag of England blew free
'ere the spirit passed.

“The lean white bear hath seen it in the long, long
Arctic night,
The musk-ox knows the standard that flouts the
Northern Light:
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my bergs
to dare,
Ye have but my drifts to conquer. Go forth, for it
is there!” 20

The South Wind sighed:—“From the Virgins my
mid-sea course was ta'en
Over a thousand islands lost in an idle main,
Where the sea-egg flames on the coral, and the long-
backed breakers croon
Their endless ocean legends to the lazy, locked lagoon.
“Strayed amid lonely islets, mazed amid outer keys,
I waked the palms to laughter—I tossed the scud in
the breeze—
Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
But over the scud and the palm-trees an English flag
was flown.

“I have wrenched it free from the halliard to hang
for a wisp on the Horn;
I have chased it north to the Lizard—ribboned and
rolled and torn;
I have spread its fold o’er the dying, adrift in a
hopeless sea;
I have hurled it swift on the slaver, and seen the
slave set free.

“My basking sunfish know it, and wheeling albatross,
Where the lone wave fills with fire beneath the
Southern Cross.
What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
reefs to dare,
Ye have but my seas to furrow. Go forth, for it is
there!”

The East Wind roared:—“From the Kuriles, the Bitter
Seas, I come,
And me men call the Home-Wind, for I bring the
English home.
Look—look well to your shipping! By the breath of
my mad typhoon
I swept your closed-packed Praya and beached your
best at Kowloon!

“The reeling junks behind me and the racing seas
before,
I raped your richest roadstead—I plundered Singapore!
I set my hand on the Hoogli; as a hooded snake
she rose,
And I flung your stoutest steamers to roost with the
startled crows.

“Never the lotos closes, never the wild-fowl wake,
But a soul goes out on the East Wind that died for
England’s sake—

Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride or maid—
Because on the bones of the English the English Flag
is stayed.

“The desert-dust hath dimmed it, the flying wild-ass
knows,
The scared white leopard winds it across the taintless
snows. 50

What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my sun
to dare,
Ye have but my sands to travel. Go forth, for it is
there!”

The West Wind called:—“In squadrons the thoughtless
galleons fly
That bear the wheat and cattle lest street-bred people
die.

They make my might their porter, they make my
house their path,
Till I loose my neck from their rudder and whelm
them all in my wrath.

“I draw the gliding fog-bank as a snake is drawn
from the hole,
They bellow one to the other, the frightened ship-bells
toll,

For day is a drifting terror till I raise the shroud
with my breath,
And they see strange bows above them and the two
go locked to death. 60

“But whether in calm or wrack-wreath; whether by
 dark or day,
 I heave them whole to the conger, or rip their plates
 away,
 First of the scattered legions, under a shrieking sky,
 Dipping between the rollers, the English Flag goes by.

“The dead dumb fog hath wrapped it—the frozen
 dews have kissed—
 The naked stars have seen it, a fellow-star in the mist.
 What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my
 breath to dare,
 Ye have but my waves to conquer. Go forth, for it
 is there!”

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

*Land of our Birth, we pledge to thee
 Our love and toil in the years to be:
 When we are grown and take our place,
 As men and women with our race.*

Father in Heaven who lovest all,
 O help Thy children when they call;
 That they may build from age to age
 An undefiled heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
 With steadfastness and careful truth;
 That, in our time, Thy Grace may give
 The Truth whereby the Nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly night and day;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Teach us to look in all our ends,
On Thee for judge, and not our friends;
That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed
By fear or favour of the crowd.

20

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
By deed or thought, to hurt the weak;
That, under Thee, we may possess
Man's strength to comfort man's distress.

Teach us Delight in simple things,
And Mirth that has no bitter springs;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And Love to all men 'neath the sun!

*Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died;
O Motherland, we pledge to thee,
Head, heart, and hand through the years to be!*

30

GOD SAVE THE KING

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,

God save the King.

Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,

God save the King.

O Lord our God arise,
Scatter his enemies,

And make them fall;

10

Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks,

On Thee our hopes we fix,

God save us all.

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On him be pleased to pour,

Long may he reign.

May he defend our laws,

And ever give us cause,

To sing with heart and voice

20

God save the King.

NOTES

From COLIN CLOUTS COME HOME AGAIN

Ll. 272—327

This Pastoral is a poetical record of one of Spenser's rare visits to London, giving his impressions of the Court of Elizabeth. It was first published in 1595, though the dedication to Sir Walter Raleigh is dated December 27th, 1591.

The highest form of patriotism is not that which seeks to glorify its own country by contrasting it with others which are less fortunate, but it is not surprising that Spenser, who was living in enforced retirement in Ireland, should conceive of no better way of praising England than by enumerating the miseries of the sister-isle.

His devotion to his fatherland is also very beautifully expressed in *The Faerie Queene*, Bk II. C. x. 69:

“Deare country! O! how dearely deare
Ought thy remembraunce and perpetuall band
Be to thy foster Childe, that from thy hand
Did commun breath and nouriture receive.
How brutish is it not to understand
How much to her we owe, that all us gave:
That gave unto us all whatever good we have.”

whilst *The Faerie Queene* is, in reality, one long glorification of England and Elizabeth.

1. **kend.** (A.-S. *cennan* = ‘to cause to know.’) Here used in sense of ‘to descry’ or ‘recognize.’

2. **jeopardie.** (O.F. *ju parti, jeu parti* = ‘divided play.’) Originally a term in chess used to signify uncertainty. Possibly by confusion with O.F. *jeu perdu* it means now ‘exposure to loss, danger or peril.’

6. **dame Cynthia.** i.e. Queen Elizabeth. Endowed as she was with splendid personal courage, keen intellect and intrepid will, Elizabeth combined in her person—at least, in the poets’ conception of her—the qualities of all the Goddesses. Cf. ll. 345—347 of this poem:

“Her power, her mercy, her wisdome, none
Can deeme, but who the Godhead can define.”

had been achieved, but at a tremendous cost; while Pitt's ministry, discredited by his efforts at Catholic Emancipation, had been replaced by that of the weak and incapable Addington (1801). No wonder then, that Wordsworth despaired!

1. **Milton.** The representative of the austere ideals—the plain living and high thinking' of the Puritans.

2, 3. **England...a fen of stagnant waters.** To Wordsworth's mind England needed stirring up to new activities and loftier aspirations. Stagnation means decay, and as he had written in a former sonnet:

“We must run glittering like a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest.”

3, 4. **Altar, sword and pen ..hall and bower.** i.e. ‘Not only the teachers and leaders of the nation (the Church, the Army and Literature) but also all ranks of society, from those who live in the one-roomed cottage to the dwellers in the lordly castle, men and women alike.’ Cf. Mrs Hemans’, “The cottage homes of England,” and “the stately homes of England.” According to the poet the whole nation had lost that blessing which was its glorious inheritance from the past, viz. the satisfaction which comes from the knowledge of duty done rather than from the possession of material advantages. Cf. Sonnet written in London, 1802:

“Rapine, avarice, expense,

This is idolatry: and these we adore;

Plain living and high thinking are no more.

The homely beauty of the good old cause

Is gone.”

4. **the heroic wealth ..bower.** A reference to the heroes who abounded in the days of chivalry. The “Hall,” the principal apartment in the castle, and the room where meals were taken, here represents the male element in the family; whilst “Bower,” the apartment reserved for the ladies, represents the female element. Cf. Spenser, *Astrophel*, 28:

“Merily masking both in bowre and hall.”

8. **manners (Lt. mores),** signifies morality in its very highest sense. Cf.:

“Manners are not idle—but the fruit

Of loyal nature, and of noble mind.”

so “virtue” (Lt. *virtus*) means more than mere ‘virtue’—it stands for ‘moral strength, courage and independence,’ and is connected with *vir*, ‘a man.’

Cynthia is another name for the great Greek goddess Artemis, twin-sister of Apollo.

7. **Armulla**. Spenser's name for the fertile valley in Co. Cork through which the Mulla flowed. See below.

12. **thy Fanchins praise**. Fanchin or Funchoen a trout stream near to Kilcolman, Spenser's Irish residence near Buttevant in Cork. In spite of the misery of existence in Ireland at this time, Spenser was never tired of praising its natural advantages: "And sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any is under heaven, seamed throughout with many goodly rivers replenished with all sortes of fish."

13. **Allo**. According to Mr P. W. Joyce (Paper on Spenser's Irish Rivers, published in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. x. p. 1 (1866—1869)), the Allo is another name for the Blackwater, for in l. 122, Spenser relates how old Father Mole did not wish his daughter Mulla to wed the Bregoge, but

"Did think to match her with the neighbour flood,
Which Allo hight, Broadwater called farre."

The Broadwater was the early name for Blackwater.

Mulla Spenser's poetical name for the little river Awbeg, noted for excellent trout, eels and salmon. Cf. *F.Q.* iv. C. xi. 41 :

"Strong Allo tumbling from Slewlogher steep,
And Mulla mine, whose waves I whilom taught to weep."

18. **No wayling there**, etc. Nothing in history is sadder than the pictures of the condition of Ireland at this time. Not only men, but even women and children were cruelly butchered by the English, whilst year after year the crops were systematically destroyed. See the account of what Spenser himself witnessed in his *View of the State of Ireland*, published 1596 :

"Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legges could not beare them: they looked like anatomies of death, they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves: they did eat the dead carrion:...and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast."

20. **sweard** = 'sword.'

21. **bordrags**, probably a corruption of some Irish word meaning 'A hostile incursion or border raid.' Cf. *F.Q.* II. C. x. 63 :

"Long time in peace his realme established,
Yet oft annoyd with sondry bordragings
Of neighbour Scots."

24. **ravenous wolves.** Wolves, foxes and other wild animals abounded in Ireland at this time. See Holinshed, vi. 459 :

“The land itself, which before these wars was populous, well inhabited and rich in all the blessings of God..., is now become...so barren.. that the very wolves, foxes, and other ravening beasts many of them laie dead, being famished ; and the residue gone elsewhere.

25. **fell.** (It. *fello* = ‘fierce.’ Cf. ‘felon.’) Cruel, savage. Cf. Byron, *Ch. Harold*, I, 15 :

“And earth from fellest foemen purge.”

raunger = (1) ‘A wanderer or rover.’

(2) ‘A forest officer or gamekeeper.’ Now only applied to the keepers of the Royal Parks. *The Shepherds’ Calender*, “September” ll. 159, 160 :

“They (i.e. wolves) walke not widely as they were wont,
For feare of raungers.”

27. **Poets’ wits are had in peerlesse price.** On the whole Spenser seems to have fared better than most literary men at the hands of his patrons. Sir Philip Sidney, one of the most cultured men of the age was his friend, Sir Walter Raleigh succeeded in 1591 in procuring for him a pension of £50 a year, which he enjoyed till his death. But even so, the poet recounts in bitter words the humiliation he experienced as a suitor at Elizabeth’s court :

“Full little knowest thou that hast not tried

What hell it is in sung long to bide,

To loose good dayes, that might be better spent ;

To wast long nights in pensive discontent ;” etc.

(*Mother Hubbard’s Tale*, 895—908.)

28. **Religion hath lay powre.** By this time (1595) the religious settlement effected by Elizabeth and Archbishop Parker was accepted by all classes. The attempts of the supporters of Mary Queen of Scots, on Elizabeth’s life, and later, of Philip on England, had produced a sturdy patriotism that rose superior to the claims of party or creed.

THE BATTLE OF ALCAZAR

This passage is from one of the many plays, written during the Elizabethan Age, to glorify the marvellous enterprises of heroes like Drake and Hawkins, or adventurers like Sir Thomas Stukeley—men whose instinct for warfare and adventure was transmuted by patriotism into devotion to Queen Elizabeth.

Published in 1594, the lines are an evident recapitulation of the fate of the Armada :

“Which roaring came with wide and dreadful jaws
To swallow up our Kingdom, Ships, and Nation.”

(T. Heywood, *Dick of Devon.*)

Sebastian. King of Portugal.

4. **her highness reigns.** Queen Elizabeth.

5. **heavens and destinies attend.** It must be remembered that to all the writers of her day, Elizabeth stood for England personified, and loyalty to her as the representative of England, meant loyalty to their country. Peele is even more flattering in his *Descensus Astraeae*, 1591 :

“Honour attends her throne; in her bright eyes
Sits Majesty; Virtue and Steadfastness
Possess her heart; sweet Mercy sways her sword.
.....And Time and Kind (Nature)
Produce her years to make them numberless.”

9-11. **Nature...Fortune ..Time,** are here personified, and portrayed as the willing servants of Elizabeth :

“That dear beloved, whom to preserve
The winds were called to fight, and storms to serve.”

(Ben Jonson.)

17. **their ships in pieces split.** A reference to the storm that finally shattered the Armada off the coast of Scotland.

Three lines are omitted here, as the text is hopelessly corrupt and has no meaning.

24. **Distains.** i.e. ‘excels,’ ‘outshines.’

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Of all the 15,000 lines which Michael Drayton wrote none are more strikingly patriotic than this short ode entitled *To my Friends the Cambro-Britons and their Harp*, better known as *The Ballad of Agincourt*.

Never before in England had fighting been sung in so swift and powerful a measure. In every line of the poem we hear the sharp twang of the British harp and the tramp, tramp of the marching army, nor shall we hear them again until, as the disciple of Drayton, Tennyson echoes them in his *Charge of the Light Brigade*.

"The very first line of the poem, implying, as it does, that the heavenly powers were leagued with England, is," says Canon Beeching, "an inspiration as happy as was the old Hebrew boast 'The stars in their courses fought against Sisera'; whilst the rhetorical question in the last verse 'Oh, when shall Englishmen etc.' is an equally happy touch, testifying as it does to the growing modesty of the best type of English patriot, and reflecting an equal restraint and moderation with Shakespeare's treatment of the same subject."

6. **Kaux.** A small fishing village, on the site of which, a century later, Louis XII laid the foundation of Havre.

9. **And taking many a fort.** After landing at Kaux, Henry took and sacked Harfleur, after a siege of 36 days. Thence he proceeded, without opposition, towards the then fortified English town of Calais, but his approach was cut off by the French army at Agincourt.

17. **Which in his height of pride, etc.** A difficult stanza. The meaning seems to be: 'whereas the French general mockingly suggested to Henry the advisability of preparing a ransom, the king with angry disdain waved aside the implied insult, and, instead, prophesied the Frenchmen's defeat.'

27. **Though they to one be ten.** Whilst it is certain that the English soldiers did not exceed 10,000; the French have been variously estimated at from 50,000—150,000: the latter number is however a gross exaggeration.

41. **Poitiers and Cressy tell.** At Poitiers, in 1356, the Black Prince, at the head of 8000 English and Gascon soldiers, defeated an army of 50,000 French troops. At Cressy between 80,000 and 40,000

of the French are said to have been slain—mainly by the English archers—in the memorable battle on August 26th, 1346.

45. **our grandsire great.** Edward III, great-grandfather of Henry V, who laid claim to the French throne, through his mother Isabella of France.

48. **Lopp'd the French lilies.** i.e. the French standard, which was three golden lilies on a white ground.

49, 50. **The Duke of York . . the eager vaward led.** 'Vaward,' for 'vanguard' (Fr. *avant* = 'before,' *garde* = 'guard'), means 'the fore part or front line of an army.'

On this occasion the main body under Henry himself formed the centre: the vanguard, under Edward, Duke of York, was posted as a wing to the right: and the rear-guard commanded by Lord Camois, as a wing to the left. The archers were placed between the wings, in the form of a wedge.

52. **henchmen.** (Du. *hengst* = 'a male horse.') Originally 'an attendant on a horse, a groom,' came to mean later—'any attendant or follower.'

53. **Excester.** i.e. John Holland, afterwards Duke of Exeter, who was present in the battle, but was not in command of the rear-guard.

66. **Erpingham.** Sir Thomas Erpingham, the Marshal of the English army.

68. **To our hid forces.** Henry had placed 200 of his best archers in ambush, in a low meadow, on the flank of the first line of the French. After the English had discharged a flight of arrows among the crowded ranks of the enemy—at a given signal—the archers in ambush arose, and, discharging their arrows on the flank of the French line, threw it into disorder.

73. **Spanish yew.** Spanish yew was preferred to all other woods for the manufacture of bows; but, to prevent a too rapid consumption of yew, archers were ordered to make four ash or elm bows to one of yew.

74. **cloth-yard.** In those days there were several varying measures for a yard. The cloth-yard was the yard by which cloth was measured, and the usual length of the arrow of the long bow: now our statute yard of 36 inches. Cf. Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* :

"A cloth-yard shaft
Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew."

82. **bilbous.** So called from Bilbao in Spain, where the best sword-blades were manufactured. The weapons actually drawn were not swords but 'bills,' an obsolete weapon, which varied in form from a simple blade with a long handle to an axe with a spike at the back and its shaft ending in a spear-head.

91. **ding** = 'to deal heavy blows,' 'to knock or beat.' Cf. 'To ding to death' = 'to kill by repeated blows.'

94. **besprent** = 'besprinkled.' Used of moisture of any kind, or of dust. Cf. Milton, *Comus*, 542: "Knot-grass, dew-besprent."

97. **Glo'ster.** Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, youngest brother to the king, fought by his side in the battle.

102. **a maiden knight.** i.e. 'a knight taking part in battle for the first time.' Though the Duke of Clarence played an important part in the French wars, he was not present at the battle, nor was the Earl of Warwick.

113. **St Crispin's day.** October 25th, the day on which the battle was fought, is the feast of SS. Crispinus and Crispinianus, two saints who were martyred at Soissons in France, about 288 A.D. They were shoemakers by trade.

From RICHARD II

1. **Gaunt.** "Old John Gaunt, Time-honoured Lancaster," the venerable uncle of the young and spendthrift king Richard II is a familiar figure in history. Times have changed since Shakespeare lived and wrote, but this noble apostrophe of his has lost none of its freshness and vitality. We have still reason to be proud of the gifts with which Nature has endowed "this sea-girt land," and we can sympathize fully with the intensity of the appeal to what is best in our military and social traditions, as, with a dying man's clearer vision, Gaunt bursts forth, "England, bound in with the triumphant sea...is now bound in with shame, with inky blots and rotten parchment bonds."

8. **Light vanity, insatiate cormorant.** i.e. 'the king's inordinate vanity, like the insatiable greediness of a cormorant, will soon bring about his own destruction.' The cormorant is a large sea-bird noted for its voracity,

11. **this seat of Mars.** This, whilst the glories of Creçy and Poitiers were still fresh in men's minds, is a natural boast. The Hundred Years' War, interrupted during the reigns of Richard II and Henry Bolingbroke, was renewed by Henry V. Cf. Goldsmith, *The Traveller* :

"The land of scholars and the nurse of arms."

13. **This fortress for herself.** Cf. the words Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Cymbeline's queen :

"Remember, Sir,—my liege,
The kings your ancestors, together with
The natural bravery of our Isle, which stands
As Neptune's Park, ribb'd and paled in
With rocks unscalable, and roaring water,
With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats,
But sucks them up to the topmasts."

(*Cymbeline*, III. Sc. 1.)

14. **Against infection.** Primarily, bad influences from abroad ; possibly also, a reference to the Black Death, which devastated England 1346-1349, is here intended.

15. **this little world.** Cf. Cloten's humorous words :

"Britain is
A world by itself, and we will nothing pay
For wearing our own noses."

(*Cymbeline*, III. Sc. 1.)

16, 17. **This precious stone of a wall.** Cf. Thomas Tickell's long-forgotten poem *On the Prospect of Peace* :

"Amidst the world of waves so stands serene
Britannia's Isle, the ocean's stately queen :
In vain the nations have conspired her fall,
Her trench the sea, and fleets her floating wall."

19. **Against the envy.. lands.** "Less happier," for 'less happy.'

24. **For Christian service,** etc. A reference to the part played by Richard I and Edward I in the Crusades, the ostensible object of which was to win back the Holy Sepulchre from the Turks.

29. **leas'd out.** Richard II granted the privilege of farming the revenues of all his lands and of taxation to his favourites, among them the Earl of Wiltshire, in return for a fixed sum of money, paid monthly.

30. **tenement.** (Fr. *tenir* = 'to hold.')

A 'dwelling, erected for the purpose of being rented.'

80. **pelting.** i.e. 'paltry, petty or worthless.' Cf.:

"Every pelting petty officer,
Would use his heaven for thunder."

(*Measure for Measure*, II. Sc. 2.)

32, 33. **Whose rocky shore beats...of watery Neptune.** Cf. *King John*, II. Sc. 1:

"Together with that pale, that white-faced shore,
Whose foot spurns back the ocean's roaring tides,
And coops from other lands her Islanders."

As an 'Islander' it was fitting that Shakespeare should glory in the natural advantages of his sea-girt land, and that he should repeatedly direct England to place her confidence in the element to which she owed her greatness

35, 36. **That England, that was wont . conquest of itself.** The idea seems to be that, whereas it had once been England's glory to win lands from others, now her lands were being parcelled out to any stranger who could buy, and so, in this sense, she was conquering herself. Much the same idea is expressed by Faulconbridge, the Bastard, in *King John*, v. Sc. 7:

"This England never did, nor never shall
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself."

HENRY V. ACT III. SC. 1

Henry V was Shakespeare's ideal patriot, embodying the noblest characteristics of the English race. Sturdy, independent, brave and resolute, filled with a marvellous devotion to his country, a soldier, exacting and yet at the same time merciful, he never allowed his desire for victory to overrule his sense of justice or to provoke him to deeds of vengeance.

3. **In peace, there's nothing,** etc. Contrast Henry's healthy instinct with the natural pugnacity of the undisciplined mob in *Coriolanus*, v. Sc. 5: "Let me have war, it exceeds peace as far as day does night, it's sprightly, waxing, audible and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy, muffled, deaf, sleepy, insensible ... Ay, and it makes men hate one another."

9. **aspect.** Accented on the last syllable, as everywhere else in Shakespeare. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, II. Sc. 1 :

“And other of such vinegar aspect.”

10. **portage.** The sockets of the eyes are compared to a ship's portholes.

11. **o'erwhelm** = ‘overhang.’ Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, v. Sc. 1 :

“In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows.”

12. **galléd.** Fretted, worn by the waves.

13. **jutty.** Project like a jetty.

18. **fet** = ‘fetched.’ (O. Eng. *fat*, A.-S. *fatan* = ‘to fetch.’) Now obsolete.

19. **so many Alexanders.** Alexander the Great, king of Macedon, 362 B.C.

25, 26. **good yeomen, etc.** Cf. *The Song of the Bow*, Conan Doyle:

“The men were bred in England,
The bowmen—the yeomen.”

27. **The mettle of your pasture.** i.e. ‘the spirit engendered by your birth and breeding.’

31. **like greyhounds.** A metaphor from the coursing field. Shakespeare's love of the country and country sports is continually shown in his plays.

34. **Saint George.** The patron saint of England.

From HENRY V. ACT IV. SC. 3

4. **My cousin Westmoreland?** Westmoreland was not present in France at this time. The wish was uttered by the knight Sir Walter Hungerford and answered by Henry as follows: “I would not have a single man more. If God gives us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His Grace. If not, the fewer we are the less loss for England.”

5, 6. **we are enow...country loss.** i.e. ‘If the fortune of war be against us and we die, the smaller the loss for England.’

11. **It yearns me not.** “Yearn,” an old transitive verb meaning ‘to pain or vex.’ Cf. the lines: “She laments sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it.” *Merry Wives*, III. Sc. 5.

15. **my coz.** An abbreviation of cousin; used in familiar conversation, not necessarily of a relative.

20. **he which hath no stomach, etc.** Compare these sentiments

with those expressed by Thomas Heywood, in a play bearing the curious title, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, where a passing reference is made to Queen Elizabeth's visit to the fleet at Tilbury :

"*Eliz.* Now—noble soldiers, rouse your hearts like men

To noble Resolution, if any here

There be that loves us not, or harbours fear

We give him liberty to leave our camp without displeasure.

Our army's royal, so be equal our hearts.

For with the meanest here I'll spend my blood,

And so to lose it count my only good.

A march! lead on! we'll meet the worst can fall

A maiden-queen will be your general."

22. **crowns for convoy.** i.e. 'money for the expenses of his journey home.'

24. **That fears his fellowship to die,** etc. Means 'that is afraid of sharing death with us.'

25. **Crispian.** See note on St Crispin, page 97.

30. **vigil.** (Lt. *vigilare* = 'to watch.') The name given to the evening before a festival.

35. **remember with advantages.** Means, 'he will add to the tale of his prowess by boasting.'

37. **Familiar in his mouth...words.** See Robert Redman or Redmayne, *Memorials of Henry V*:—"Nostra monumenta, nostri triumpho, et trophæe de Gallis acquisitæ in omnium ore ac sermone versantur" ("Henry's Speech before Agincourt").

48. **shall gentle his condition.** i.e. 'shall ennoble or dignify his circumstances.'

51. **hold their manhoods cheap.** Means 'they shall hang their heads for shame that they had not the same chance as we had of proving their manly qualities.'

From HENRY VIII. ACT V. SC. 5

This passage affords a striking example of the perfect way in which Shakespeare identified himself with the prevailing patriotic spirit of his day, i.e. with the national worship of the Virgin Queen.

The spirit of the age must be the excuse for his excessive eulogy of Elizabeth, and her inglorious successor. It was the fashion to pay

the Queen extravagant compliments, and if, as is most probable, the play was written in the first half of James's reign, then these prophetic lines are not so grossly exaggerated, as history has proved.

With all his unbounded admiration of England, Shakespeare never descended to that fatuous adulation of Princes that mars so much of the best work of Spenser and his school.

7. **Saba.** The Queen of Sheba, who came from "the uttermost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon" 1 Kings x.

9. **all princely graces, etc.** Cf. Spenser's description of Elizabeth. *F. Q. I. Int.*:

"O Goddess heavenly bright!

* Mirrour of grace and Majestie divine,

Great Ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light

Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine."

10. **That mould up.** i.e. 'that go to the making up of such a perfect piece of work.'

14. **She shall be lov'd and fear'd.** Compare the charmingly dainty compliment paid to the Queen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. Sc. 2, where Oberon refers to her numerous suitors in the lines beginning:

"My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou remember'st

Since once I sat upon a promontory,

And heard a mermaid..."

14-16. **her own shall bless her.. with sorrow.** The same enthusiastic admiration for this greatest of sovereigns is expressed by Lyly in his *Euphues*: "What hath this chaste Virgin Elizabeth done, who by the space of twenty yeares with continual peace against all polcies with sundry myracles, contrary to all hope, hath governed that noble island. Against whom neyther forren force, nor civill fraude, neyther discorde at home nor conspiracies abroad could prevaile."

17, 18. **every man shall eat. what he plants.** From Micah iv. 4: "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid."

24. **the maiden phoenix.** Cf. Thomas Heywood, *Fair Maid of the West*:

"Why? England's Queen,

She is the only Phoenix of her age,

The Pride and Glory of the Western Isles."

The phoenix was a mythical bird which was said to live for five or

six hundred years in the Arabian desert. Cf. *Samson Agonistes*, 1703:

“Like that self-forgotten bird,
In the Arabian woods embost,
That no second knows nor third.”

At the end of that time—according to one version of the fable—it burnt itself to ashes, on a funeral pyre, lighted by the sun, and fanned by its own wings; and, emerging from the flames with renewed youth, it lived for another cycle of years. The other version of the fable—and the one here used by Shakespeare—was that a worm emerged from the ashes and became the young phoenix.

27. So shall she leave ..to one. James I.

33. and like a vine grow to him. i.e. ‘cling to him as a vine clings to its supports.’

36. make new nations. Malone suggests that this refers to the settlement of the Colony of Virginia in 1607.

IN PRAISE OF DEVONSHIRE

These lines were written by William Browne, one of Spenser’s numerous disciples. They were published in 1613, in a book of poems entitled *Britannia’s Pastorals*. For staunchly patriotic sentiment they may be compared with Drayton’s tribute to Warwickshire, beginning:

“My Native County then, which so brave spirits hast bred,
If there be virtue yet remaining in thy earth,

Accept it as thine own, whilst now I sing of thee
Of all thy later Brood th’ unworthiest though I be”

(*Polyolbion*, Song XIII.);

and Kipling’s well-known panegyric of Sussex:

“God gives all men all earth to love,
But since man’s heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
Beloved over all.

Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me,
In a fair ground—in a fair ground,
Yea, Sussex by the Sea.”

(*The Five Nations*, “Sussex.”)

8. **sea-ruling men.** Devonshire was the home of all the greatest Elizabethan seamen.

10. **Grenville.** Sir Richard Grenville (1541—1591) was sprung from an old Cornish family. He is the hero of Tennyson's immortal ballad *The Last Fight of the Revenge*, when he with only one English ship set at defiance fifty-three Spanish galleons.

Davies. John Davys, who was born at Sandridge near to Dartmouth about 1550, was a great navigator and explorer. He was killed by pirates off the coast of Singapore, 1605. Davis Strait is named after him.

Gilbert. Sir Humphrey Gilbert was a step-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh. Soldier, seaman, and patriot, he planted the first English colony in America, 1583. His ship was lost, with all on board, off the Azores in September of that year.

Drake. Sir Francis Drake (1540?—1596) a bold adventurer, who owed his knighthood to the queen's approval of his daring attacks on Spanish treasure-ships. He was the first Englishman to sail round the world, and this achievement is celebrated in a charming little poem, published 1641, *The Fame of Sir Francis Drake*:

“Sir Drake, whom well the world's end knew,
Which thou did compass round,
And whom both poles of Heaven once saw
Which North and South do bound.
The starres above would make thee know
If men here silent were:
The sun himself cannot forget
His fellow-traveller.”

11. **worthy Hawkins.** Sir John, son of William Hawkins, head of the dockyards under Mary Tudor and Elizabeth. One of the Captains of the English Fleet against the Armada, but his memory is stained by the fact that he was the first Englishman to import African slaves into America.

13. **for whose richest spoil, etc.** The Spaniards directed all their energies towards the invasion of England, thinking that it was a prize worth any sacrifice.

15. **quit cost** = ‘compensate for any loss.’ Compare the phrase ‘To be quits.’

From A PANEGYRIC TO MY LORD PROTECTOR

These verses are taken from Edmund Waller's notable eulogy on Cromwell, a poem of 47 stanzas, published May 31st, 1655, entitled *A Panegyric to my Lord Protector, of the Present Greatness and Joint Interest of his Highness and this Nation.*

Of them Dr Johnson in his *Life of Waller* writes: "The Panegyric upon Cromwell has obtained from the Public a very liberal dividend of praise, which however cannot be said to have been unjustly lavished;.. Of the lines, some are graceful and all are musical...but its great fault is the choice of a hero."

It must not be forgotten however that Cromwell was a kinsman of Waller, on his mother's side. Still we feel that there was little true appreciation of worth when the same poet is shortly found congratulating Charles II in the following enthusiastic words:

"Faith, Law and Piety (that banish'd train)

Justice and Truth, with you return again:

The city's trade and country's easy life,

Once more shall flourish without fraud and strife."

(*To the King, Upon his Majesty's Return, May 30th, 1660.*)

5. **partial spirits.** Evidently the beaten Royalists.

9. **Above the waves.** Adapted from Fairfax's *Translation of Tasso*:

"Above the waves as Neptune lifts his eyes,

To chide the winds that Trojan ships oppressed,

And with his countenance calmed seas, winds and skies;

So looked Rinaldo when he shook his crest."

15. **where the Irish come.** Ireland had been thoroughly cowed by Cromwell's massacres at Drogheda and Wexford.

16. **And the unwilling Scots.** Referring to the constant efforts made by the Scotch in the Stuart cause, which ended in their complete subjugation after the battle of Worcester. Cf. Dryden, *Stanzas on Oliver Cromwell*:

"Her safety rescued Ireland to him owes,

And treacherous Scotland to no interest true,

Yet blessed that fate, which did his arm dispose

Her land to civilize, as to subdue."

17. **The sea's our own.** It was during the Commonwealth that England wrested from the Dutch the supremacy of the seas, not quite a hundred years after the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

19. **Your power extends, etc.** Cf. *Stanzas on the War with Spain*, by the same author:

"From whence
Our Red Cross they triumphant see,
Riding without a rival on the sea."

21, 22. **Heaven.. to balance Europe.** Cf. Addison, *Letter from Italy*:

, "Tis Britain's care to watch o'er Europe's fate
And hold in balance each contending state."

29. **Hither th' oppresséd etc.** This privilege has been so much abused that in 1905 it was found necessary to pass an "Alien Act," limiting the number of foreign immigrants.

30. **Justice to crave, and succour.** This verse recalls some equally vigorous and prophetic words on the future world-wide influence of England and London, written by Pope, just about the time of the Peace of Utrecht, 1713:

"I see, I see, where two fair cities bend
Their ample bow, a new Whitehall extend!
There mighty nations shall enquire their doom
The world's great oracle in times to come;
There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen
Once more to bend before a British Queen."

41. **Our little world.** Cf. Shakespeare, *Richard II*, II. Sc. 1:
"This little world."

44. **as tribute from the waves.** Cromwell's Navigation Act laid the foundation of England's commercial greatness. From this time England and not Holland absorbed the great carrying trade of Europe.

53. **To dig for wealth.** England's rich stores of minerals were as yet almost wholly undeveloped.

60. **Could never make this...own.** The Romans, though they succeeded in conquering England, never succeeded in conquering Great Britain, and the Roman wall of Antoninus between the Firths of Clyde and Forth marks the limit of their power.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

After the Battle of Edgehill, October, 1642, the Royalists marched towards London. Milton, who was Latin Secretary to Cromwell, and a vigorous pamphleteer on the Parliamentary side, naturally feared that his house in Aldersgate Street would be an object of attack, should the army succeed in entering the city. His fears proved groundless however, for the Royalists were stopped at Brentford, by the Parliamentary army, under the Earl of Essex.

1. **Colonel.** Note that "colonel" (It. *colonello* = 'the leader of a little column') is here a trisyllable.

5. **He can requite thee.** i.e. 'He can render thee famous by hymning thy praises in immortal verse.'

9. **Muses' bower.** i.e. the Poet's house.

10. **Emathian conqueror.** i.e. Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia, of which Emathia was a province.

bid spare. "Bid" is a form of the past tense from the past part. 'bidden'; usual form 'bade.'

11. **The house of Pindarus.** The story is that on the accession of Alexander the Great, the Thebans (who had been subdued by his father, Philip of Macedon), attempted to recover their liberty: and in order to punish them Alexander ordered the whole city, excepting Pindar's house, to be destroyed. Pindar (522—442 B.C.) was the greatest lyric poet of Greece.

12. **repeated air.** i.e. 'the air or chorus having been repeated.' We are told that when the Spartans took Athens in 404 B.C., they were deterred from destroying the city by hearing a Phocian singer recite part of one of the choruses from *Electra*.

13. **sad Electra's poet.** i.e. Euripides, 480—406 B.C. He is called 'sad Electra's poet,' because in one of his tragedies, he deals with the history of Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon, who is represented by all Greek poets as constantly bemoaning her father's fate.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL

Among the great numbers of eulogies that this age produced, not one that celebrates the name of Cromwell can vie with the matchless fourteen lines penned by Milton, in May 1652, six months after the battle of Worcester. It should be compared with Andrew Marvell's fine Horatian ode *Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* (1650), one of the truly noble patriotic efforts of the century: and also with his less celebrated poem *On the Death of the Lord Protector*, which is a worthy tribute to the first of England's great "Empire-builders":

"Who planted England on the Flandrick shore,
And stretched her frontier to the Indian ore:
Whose greater truths obscure the fables old
Whether of British saints, or worthies bold."

(Marvell, *On the Death of the Lord Protector*.)

1. **through a cloud.** The meaning is 'Who hast ploughed thy way not only through a cloud of war (cf. "Nubem belli," *Aeneid* x. 809) but also through a cloud of rude detractions.' Cromwell, as the leader of the new Republic, was naturally the first object of the Royalists' censure and abuse.

5. **neck of crownéd Fortune.** i.e. Charles I. Cf. "Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies," Gen. xlix. 8.

7. **Darwen stream.** A small river flowing into the Ribble, near Preston, where Cromwell defeated the Scottish army under the Duke of Hamilton in July, 1648.

imbrued = 'stained or dyed.'

8. **Dunbar.** Here Cromwell defeated the Scots on September 3rd, 1650.

9. **Worcester's laureat wreath.** The Battle of Worcester was fought on the anniversary of Dunbar, September 3rd, 1651. "Laureat wreath," i.e. a wreath composed of laurel, the sign of victory, because Cromwell always spoke of this battle as his "crowning mercy."

9, 10. **Yet much remains to conquer.** i.e. 'much remains to be conquered.' Cf. 'a house to let,' 'a horse to sell,' etc.

11. **new foes arise.** Milton was afraid that the Presbyterians and a certain section of the Independents, who were intensely intolerant, would succeed in imposing too great restrictions on religious thought.

14. **Of hireling wolves.** Milton here expresses his contempt for the mercenary self-seeking clergy, who serve the Church solely for pay. Cf. *Lycidas*, 114, 115 :

“Enow of such, as for their bellies sake,
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold.”

maw. The stomach, here used for the appetite or desire. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, Bk. x. 990—991 :

“Death shall with us two,
Be forc'd to satisfy his rav'nous maw.”

RULE BRITANNIA

Rule Britannia appeared in *The Masque of Alfred*, the joint work of Thomson and Mallet, which was published in 1740.

As a national song its fame is still unrivalled, and there is no doubt that it will be the political hymn of England so long as she retains her naval supremacy.

1, 2. **When Britain first azure main.** Cf. Blake, *Edward III* :

“If so, we are not sovereigns
Of the sea, our right that Heaven gave
To England, when, at the birth of Nature
She was sealed in the deep; the Ocean ceased
His mighty roar, and fawning play'd around
Her snowy feet, and own'd his awful Queen.”

2. **main.** Elliptical for “main-sea.” Cf. Tennyson, *The Princess*, VII. 21 :

“As one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main.”

3. **charter.** i.e. ‘a written document recognizing the rights of a people.’ Cf. Blake, *Edward III* :

“Let Liberty, the charter'd right of Englishmen,
Won by our fathers in many a bloody battle,
Enerve my soldiers!”

17. **generous flame.** (Lt. *generosus* = ‘of high birth.’) And so, in the full meaning of the old word = ‘will rouse the fire of truly high-bred indignation.’

19. **rural reign.** Admiration for the rural beauty of England may be read in every line of Thomson's poetry. Cf. *Liberty*, Part v :

"Eternal verdure crowns
Her meads; her gardens smile eternal spring.

.
She, whitening o'er her downs, diffusive, pours
Unnumbered flocks; she weaves the fleecy robe,
That wraps the nations."

23. **still** = 'always.'

ODE WRITTEN IN 1746

The Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 claims to be the inspiration of this most exquisite ode by William Collins. Written during a period of military disaster, it is a poet's fairest tribute to the British soldiers who perished in the battles of Prestonpans (1745) and Falkirk (1746), before the victory of Culloden dashed for ever the hopes of the Stuarts, and brought relief to England.

3-11. **Spring Honour Freedom.** Collins's taste for personification is used with exceptionally happy effect in this poem. Spring, Honour, and Freedom are a fitting trio of mourners for our fallen heroes, clad, according to the poet's fancy "in the soft habiliments of woe."

7. **By fairy hands their knell is rung.** Cf. Campbell, *The Battle of the Baltic* :

"Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!"

Also Shakespeare's dirge in *The Tempest*, i. Sc. 2 :

"Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell!
Hark! now I hear them,—Ding-dong, bell."

11, 12. **Freedom shall...a weeping hermit, there.** Cf. Coleridge, *Sonnet to Burke* :

"As late I lay in slumber's shadowy vale;
With wetted cheek, and in a mourner's guise,
I saw the sainted form of Freedom rise."

From THE TRAVELLER

Written by the poet of whom Johnson justly said that—

“Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit,”

this passage from *The Traveller* is a noble illustration of the conviction expressed at the beginning of the same poem :

“Such is the Patriot’s boast, where’er we roam,
His first, best country ever is at home.”

“The plan of *The Traveller*,” says Macaulay, “is at once both simple and noble.” Seated on a crag among the Alps, near the point where three countries meet, the author recalls the varieties of their scenery, climate, government and religion, and reviews their national characteristics in an attempt to show that the happiness of a country depends more on national temperament than on political and natural conditions. An incidental reference to the name of Britain directs his thoughts homewards, and occasions this outburst of patriotic optimism.

1. **Fir’d at the sound.** i.e. animated by the mention of the name of Britain in the previous line.

3. **lawns extend.** Here the word “lawns” appears to be used in the sense of tracts of grassy land, meadows. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iv. 252, 253 :

“Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed.”

that scorn Arcadian pride. i.e. ‘that not only outrival the boasted loveliness of the Arcadian valleys, but treat the mere idea of comparison with scorn.’ Arcadia was situated in the middle of the Peloponnesus, now the Morea. Its valleys have always been celebrated by poets for their fertility and picturesqueness.

4. **fam’d Hydaspes.** One of the principal rivers of the Punjab (India). Its present name is Jelum. Many wonderful stories seem to have been told about it by the poets, whence Horace speaks of it as “Fabulosus Hydaspes.” (*Carm.* i. 22. 8.)

5. **gentlest breezes stray, etc.** Surely a somewhat optimistic view of our climate. We cannot but feel that there is more sincerity in Cowper’s tender regard for England, when he writes :

“England, with all thy faults, I love thee still,
My country!.....Though thy clime

Be fickle, and thy year most part deformed
 With dripping rains, or withered by a frost,
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies
 And fields without a flower, for warmer France
 With all her vines."

(*The Task*, Bk. II. 206.)

Cf. also Shakespeare's testimony to the depressing effects of the climate in "that nook-shotten Isle of Albion":

"Dieu de batailles! Where have they this mettle?
 Is not their climate foggy, raw, and dull?
 On whom, as in despite, the sun looks pale,
 Killing their fruit with frowns?"

(*Henry V*, III. Sc. 5.)

8. **Extremes are...master's mind** = 'Ideas or feelings which surpass the true bounds of moderation.' The word "master" seems here to denote the Englishman, the master of the soil.

10. **irregularly**. Either 'immoderately' or else merely, 'always great, but greater at one time than another.'

11. **Pride in their port**. "Port" (Lt. *portare*, 'to carry') = 'carriage, or the manner in which a person bears himself.' Cf. Gray, *The Bard*, speaking of Queen Elizabeth,

"In the midst a form divine!

Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line

Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face."

12. **the lords of human kind**. It must be remembered that Goldsmith was writing at a time when our military successes had greatly increased our national vanity, when, as a consequence, all foreigners (and particularly the French) were regarded as inferiors.

17. **While e'en the peasant**. Goldsmith was no doubt mentally contrasting the wretched condition of the French peasantry at the time. Cf. Tennyson, *You ask me, why*:

"It is the land that freemen till," etc., etc.

BOADICEA

Boadicea, Queen of the British tribe of the Iceni, suffered violence with her daughters at the hands of the Romans, and on her escape headed a revolt, in which most of the tribes of the East and South joined. In 61 A.D., Suetonius, the Roman general, hurried from Mona (Anglesey), where he had been attacking the stronghold of the Druids, and crushed the rebellion.

6. **Druid.** The Druids were the priests and teachers of the Early Britons.

20. **the Gaul is at her gates** The Gauls attacked Rome in the early stages of her history, 390 B.C. But it was the Goths who overthrew the Roman Empire in the 5th century A.D.

23. **Sounds, not arms, etc.** After the decline of the Roman Empire, Italy became famous for Music, Art and Literature.

25. **the progeny that springs.** i.e. 'the ships of war made from the forest trees and loaded with guns.' These ships preceded our modern ironclad.

39. **Rush'd to battle, fought, and died.** Boadicea is said to have killed herself after her defeat, to escape falling into her enemy's hands. Another account says that she died in battle.

From SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE NEAR CALAIS,
AUGUST 1802

Wordsworth's *Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty*, (1802—1816), are one long avowal of love for the country of which he wrote—"Earth's best hopes are all with thee," whilst they are the only national sonnets that are at all comparable with those written by Milton a century and a half earlier.

This sonnet was not published until 1807.

The following extract from his sister Dorothy's Journal explains the circumstances under which it was written: "Arrived at Calais at four in the morning of July 31st. Delightful walks in the evenings: seeing far off in the west coast of England, like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the evening Star, and the glory of the sky; the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself;

purple waves brighter than precious stones for ever melting away upon the sands." Cf. also the sonnet written at the same time :

"It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration."

6, 7. **Thou.. should'st be my country's emblem.** It is just possible that the poet had in mind the recently adopted Stars and Stripes of the newly formed Republic of the United States of America.

11, 12. **one hope, one lot, one life, one glory!** Cf. Tennyson, *Opening of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition* :

"One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne;
Britons, hold your own!"

14. **men who do not love her.** The strained relationships between France and England were only temporarily soothed by the peace of 1802, for war broke out in the following year.

LONDON 1802

This sonnet belongs to a group of sonnets which include the one beginning "O Friend! I know not which way I must look." Of this latter sonnet Wordsworth writes: "This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet and, I may say, the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth."

Wordsworth might well despair of the social conditions he found in England on his return from France. True! peace with France had been signed at Amiens in 1802; but during the war that preceded it, all Pitt's efforts at social progress were baffled. He had vainly attempted to reform Parliament; the Navy had been tampered with, in 1797, at Spithead and the Nore; bread was dear; the population had increased; wages were low; Parliament was swayed by the wealthy Whig landowners; and his Economic Bill—a wise measure for the relief of the poor—had been thrown out. The Union with Ireland

had been achieved, but at a tremendous cost; while Pitt's ministry, discredited by his efforts at Catholic Emancipation, had been replaced by that of the weak and incapable Addington (1801). No wonder then, that Wordsworth despaired!

1. **Milton.** The representative of the austere ideals—"the plain living and high thinking" of the Puritans.

2, 3. **England...a fen of stagnant waters.** To Wordsworth's mind England needed stirring up to new activities and loftier aspirations. Stagnation means decay, and as he had written in a former sonnet:

"We must run glittering like a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest."

3, 4. **Altar, sword and pen ..hall and bower.** i.e. 'Not only the teachers and leaders of the nation (the Church, the Army and Literature) but also all ranks of society, from those who live in the one-roomed cottage to the dwellers in the lordly castle, men and women alike.' Cf. Mrs Hemans', "The cottage homes of England," and "the stately homes of England." According to the poet the whole nation had lost that blessing which was its glorious inheritance from the past, viz. the satisfaction which comes from the knowledge of duty done rather than from the possession of material advantages. Cf. Sonnet written in London, 1802:

"Rapine, avarice, expense,

This is idolatry: and these we adore;

Plain living and high thinking are no more.

The homely beauty of the good old cause

Is gone."

4. **the heroic wealth ..bower.** A reference to the heroes who abounded in the days of chivalry. The "Hall," the principal apartment in the castle, and the room where meals were taken, here represents the male element in the family; whilst "Bower," the apartment reserved for the ladies, represents the female element. Cf. Spenser, *Astrophel*, 28:

"Merily masking both in bowre and hall."

8. **manners (Lt. mores),** signifies morality in its very highest sense. Cf.:

"Manners are not idle—but the fruit

Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

so "virtue" (Lt. *virtus*) means more than mere 'virtue'—it stands for 'moral strength, courage and independence,' and is connected with *vir*, 'a man.'

10, 11. **Thou hadst a voice . free.** Amply justified by the magnificent grandeur of Milton's style, as well as by the fearlessness of his utterances in works like the *Areopagitica*, the *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio*, and the *Eikonoclastes*. Cf. Tennyson, *Milton* :

"O Mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity
God-gifted organ-voice of England."

14. **The lowliest duties.** Although one of our greatest poets, yet, at the call of duty, Milton sacrificed his natural instincts, and gave up some of the best years of his life to the drudgery of teaching, and to the thankless task of defending (in prose) the new Commonwealth. "The words of Milton," wrote Carlyle, "are true in all times, and were never truer than this: 'He who would write heroic poems must make his whole life an heroic poem.'" (Carlyle's *Paraphrase of Milton*.)

IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF

This sonnet was first published in the *Morning Post* for April 16th, 1803.

4. **with pomp of waters unwithstood.** A quotation from *The Civil Wars* of Samuel Daniel, published in 1597, Bk. II. St. 7 :

"And looke how Thames, enrich with many a Flood,
Glides on with pompe of waters unwithstood."

6. **Which spurns the check of salutary bands.** Professor Dowden suggests that Wordsworth is here referring to the agitation connected with the passing of the Reform Bill, and Catholic Emancipation; to both of which the poet was averse.

11-13. **the tongue that Shakespeare spake.. the faith...Milton held.** Cf. Swinburne, *England* :

"All our past proclaims our future: Shakespeare's voice and
Nelson's hand,
Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust in this our chainless land,
Bear us witness: come the world against her, England yet shall
stand!"

14. **have titles manifold.** Cf. Kipling's *Song of the English* :

"Fair is our lot—O goodly is our heritage."

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803

This sonnet *To the Men of Kent*, was written in October, 1803, and was first published in 1807.

1. **Vanguard of liberty, ye men of Kent.** Cf. Drayton's *Barons' Wars*:

“Then those of Kent, unconquered of the rest,
That to this day maintain their ancient right.”

4. **Now is the time.** The news that Napoleon had assembled an immense army for the invasion of England roused the spirit of English patriotism as it had not been roused since the days of the Armada. By August 10th, we are told, over 300,000 volunteers had been enrolled, while “all the male population of the kingdom, from seventeen years to fifty-five, were divided into classes to be armed and exercised.”

hardiment. ‘Boldness, courage or daring.’ Cf. Sir Walter Scott, *Rokeby*, i. 7:

“The full carouze, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.”

5. **words of invitation.** Here, more in the sense of a challenge, than in the usual act of inviting or requesting anyone to come and take part in something.

9. **Left single, in bold parley, etc.** This refers to a legend, which describes how the men of Kent, with boughs in their hands, met William I, during his progress through the south of England, immediately after the battle of Hastings, and wrested from him a confirmation of their rights. (Freeman, Vol. III. p. 538, note.)

There is no reason, however, for believing that the men of Kent were treated with less harshness than the rest of William's new subjects.

13. **We all are with you.** In spite of Wordsworth's natural aversion to military despotism, his was a true soldier's spirit; for with the fear of invasion he gave himself up, whole-heartedly, to the militant patriotism of the hour: “Come ye,” he wrote in his
On the Expected Invasion, 1803:

“Whate'er your creed—O waken all,
Whate'er your temper, at your Country's call;
Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
Or save this honoured Land from every Lord
But British reason, and the British sword.”

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

The Battle of Trafalgar took place on October 21st, 1805, and this poem, written early in 1806, was primarily intended as a panegyric on Lord Nelson. But the splendid qualities described in the poem are not all applicable to our greatest seaman, and it seems best, therefore, to take the character as quite general in its application.

Writing to Sir Walter Scott, on February 4th, 1806, Southey says: "Wordsworth was with me last week; he has of late been more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others; but one piece he has written upon the character of a soldier, than which I have never seen anything more full of meaning and sound thought. The subject was suggested by Nelson's most glorious death, though having no reference to it." In his own note on the poem, Wordsworth writes: "Many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John....His messmates used to call him 'the Philosopher'...He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors."

5. **Upon the plan that...thought.** Few boys ever reach the summit of their ambition in the exact way they contemplated in their childhood. Nelson was a great exception, and his "generous" (i.e. 'high-bred') nature was faithful to a single aim, while his spirit was disciplined by education to face cheerfully and readily the problems of life.

12-20. **doom'd to go.. pain, and fear, etc.** These cruel necessities of the warrior's career will make him anxious to do his best—in spite of a natural shrinking from them—to mitigate their harshness.

21-26. **Is placable...to tenderness.** The ideal warrior, in spite of the warlike profession he has chosen, is to be a peace-lover, and his higher moral code must make him purer, braver, and more tender. As Tennyson very aptly says:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,

These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

(*Enone.*)

27. **whose law is reason.** Cf. Tennyson, *Enone* :

"Acting the law we live by without fear;

And, because right is right, to follow right

Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

85, 86. **Who, if he rise...by open means.** Wordsworth wrote a

a time when bribery and corruption were shamelessly practised; notwithstanding the noble scorn of Chatham and Pitt. The "Happy Warrior" will prefer to sink his own wishes rather than gratify them at such a cost, and will not allow any tampering with the purity of his will.

41-44. **And therefore does not stoop...come at all, etc.** Hence he will not condescend to grasp after honour or wealth, even though they may be his due. But, if they come, he will take them silently and with a gentle reserve, realizing that they are the free gift of God, like the manna He gave to the children of Israel.

45-52. ***Whose powers...man inspired.** i.e. 'The extraordinary powers of the true hero will penetrate the most ordinary things of life, and invest them with peculiar grace. But it is when the great need arises that the truly heroic soul flashes out in all its strength and splendour.'

59. **master-bias.** The "bias" is the name given to a weight fixed in the side of a bowl to give it the necessary inclination. Cf. Shakespeare, *Taming of the Shrew*, iv. Sc. 5:

"Well, forward, forward, thus the bowle should run,
And not unluckily against the Bias."

So the warrior may have a genius for war and tumult, but the real trend of his character is towards a peaceful and quiet life. Nelson was before all things attached to his home. We are told that, in Merton, stories of his goodness to little children still live, whilst his fatherly care of his midshipmen is well known.

64. **More brave for this, that...much to love.** Tennyson expresses the same idea very beautifully in the verse in *The Princess*:

"Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums
That beat to battle where he stands:
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee."

72. **Whom neither shape of danger can dismay.** Nelson seemed to love danger for its own sake: "But no sooner was he in battle where his squadron was received with the fire of more than a thousand guns, than, as if that artillery, like music, had driven away all care

and painful thoughts, his countenance brightened; and, as a bystander describes him, his conversation became joyous, animated, elevated and delightful. (Southey's *Life of Nelson*, Chapter VII.)

75. Looks forward, persevering to the last. Cf. Scott, *The Field of Waterloo* :

“Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down :
 ’Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
 The discipline so dreaded and admir’d,
 In many a field of bloody conquest known,
 —Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired—
 ’Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
 Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.”

From MARMION. INTRODUCTION TO CANTO I. ll. 53—205

Though Scotch by birth, yet, in every other respect, Sir Walter Scott was a true Briton, to whom is owing quite as much gratitude for the pictures he has drawn of the England of the past, in such novels as *Woodstock*, *Peveil of the Peak*, and *Kenilworth*, as for his stories of Scottish life and adventure. Of his patriotic poetry, one instinctively recalls the fine description of the Battle of Flodden; the dying moments of Marmion, the proud English baron; and the noble testimony to England's greatest seaman, and her rival statesmen Pitt and Fox; as well as this most passionate of all patriotic appeals :

“Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,
 This is my own, my native land!
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
 From wandering on a foreign strand!”

(*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*.)

20. victor died. Lord Nelson won the battle of Trafalgar over the combined French and Spanish fleets, on October 21st, 1805, and though himself mortally wounded, foiled for ever Napoleon's cherished scheme of invading England.

Gadite wave. Cadiz was called by the Romans, 'Gades,' hence the adjective "Gadite." Cape Trafalgar is about 30 miles south of Cadiz.

21. **levin**, a word of obscure origin = 'a flash of lightning,' 'any bright light or flame.' Cf. Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, v. St. 6, 40 :

"As when the flashing levin haps to light
Upon two stubborne oakes."

28. **Who bade...go forth.** i.e. the younger Pitt, second son of the Earl of Chatham, who was made Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1784.

30. **Hafnia.** i.e. Copenhagen, from Danish *Kjöbenhavn* = 'haven of the merchants.'

The line has reference to Nelson's three great victories :

(1) The Battle of the Nile, 1798.

(2) The Battle of Copenhagen or the Baltic, 1801. (See Campbell.)

(3) The Battle of Trafalgar, 1805.

31. **emprize.** (O.F. *emprendre* = 'to take in hand.') So, 'an enterprise or undertaking, especially of an adventurous nature.'

32. **early wise.** Pitt was only 24 when called to the highest political office in the State.

34. **early grave.** He died in January, 1806, at the age of 46, quite poor, in spite of his high position.

39-44. **Who, when the frantic crowd ..freeman's laws.** Reference is here made to the internal troubles that threatened England at the close of the 18th century, the Bread Riots of 1793 and 1800, the Mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, in 1797, and the very natural sympathy that was aroused in England during the early years of the French Revolution. Pitt's restraining influence checked all practical sympathy with the Revolutionists, and in time he was supported by the whole nation, in his policy of resistance to France.

44. **And brought...laws.** Notice that these spirited lines end with an Alexandrine. See also l. 153 :

"The Bard | you deigned | to praise, | your death | less names | has sung."

52. **the tottering throne.** George III had already given signs of the mental weakness which, in later years, necessitated a regency.

53. **broke**, for 'broken.' Often for the convenience of the verse, the poets use the form of the Past Tense for the Past Participle.

59. **Palinure's unaltered mood.** Palinurus was the helmsman of Aeneas. He refused to entrust the helm to the God of Sleep, who

appeared to him disguised as Phorbas, and thereupon was thrown, along with the helm, which he would not relinquish, into the sea. (Vergil, *Aeneid*, v, 833.)

Like Palinurus, Pitt refused to desert his post, even though the hard work and anxiety it entailed threatened to kill him.

64. **The steerage...gave way.** On Pitt's death, his colleagues were wholly unable to direct affairs, and his ministry was succeeded by a coalition known as the ministry of 'All the Talents,' directed by Grenville and Fox, Pitt's great rival.

68. **tocsin** (from O.F. *toquer* = 'to touch, strike,' and *sein* = 'a bell') is an alarm bell. The tocsin was rung in France as a signal for the massacres of September 1792.

76. **requiescat.** *Requiescat in pace* = 'may he rest in peace'; a prayer for the repose of the soul.

77. **Fox's tomb.** Fox was Pitt's great rival, and the two came to issue on the Regency Bill, when Fox advocated the claims of his friend the Prince of Wales. He was, from the first, a staunch supporter of the French Revolution, and, with Burke, of the claims of Ireland. He was the most brilliant orator of his day, but was notorious as a gambler.

86. **could not save from error.** This, from a Tory point of view, may refer to Fox's known sympathy with the Revolutionists.

90. **Here.** i.e. in Westminster Abbey, where Pitt and Fox lie almost side by side. Cf. Tennyson, *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*:

"And in the vast cathedral leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him."

94. **fretted aisles.** "Fretted" = 'worn away,' i.e. aisles adorned with rich and delicate carved work. They are here represented as prolonging the sound of the music by retaining the notes among the tracery. Wordsworth expresses the same idea in his beautiful *Sonnet on King's College Chapel, Cambridge*, where he describes the roof as

"Scooped into ten thousand cells,

Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die."

96. **agen** is an old spelling for 'again.'

101. **Fox a Briton died.** Exception was taken, at the time, to these words, implying, as they do, that though Fox may have died a Briton, he certainly had not lived like one.

102. **When Europe crouch'd.** When Fox took office Napoleon's

position was so strong, that he might truthfully be said to have all Europe in his power.

103. **Austria bent.** Referring to the Battle of Austerlitz and the Treaty of Pressburg (Dec. 26th, 1805) which sealed the humiliation of Austria.

Prussia broke. After the Battle of Austerlitz, Hangerkowitz, the Prussian minister, made peace with France, but it is hardly true to speak of "Prussia broke" until the Battle of Jena (Oct. 14th, 1806), after which Napoleon said with perfect truth, "The whole of the Prussian monarchy is in my power." As Fox died before the Battle of Jena, it would be historically more correct to interchange the words *bent* and *broke* in this line.

105. **timorous slave.** In 1806 D'Oubril, the Russian minister at Paris, was cowed by Napoleon into making a dishonourable peace, the terms of which Alexander of Russia refused to ratify.

106. **dishonour's peace he spurn'd.** When Fox came into office as Foreign Secretary, he entered into negotiations for peace. However the terms proposed by the French Emperor were so dishonourable to England, that he was forced to break them off and renew the war.

109. **nail'd her colours to the mast.** A metaphor from naval warfare. A captain who has determined at no cost to surrender his ship, sometimes nails his colours to the mast, so that they cannot be lowered, in token of submission.

124, 125. **Spells of such force...Thessalian cave.** Thessaly, the mountainous district in the North of Greece, was the reputed home of wizards and sorcerers.

129. **lees.** i.e. 'dregs.' Cf. *Macbeth*, II. Sc. 3:

"The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is left."

151. **Border Minstrel,** a reference to Scott's volume of ballads entitled *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

152. **Gothic harp,** as opposed to Classic, because Scott's poetry was not based on classical models, nor did it treat of classical subjects.

153. **The Bard you deign'd to praise.** Both Pitt and Fox greatly admired Scott's ballads. On one occasion, Pitt, after repeating some lines from *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, is reported to have said: "This is the sort of thing which I might have expected in painting, but could never have fancied capable of being given in poetry."

From FEARS IN SOLITUDE

Like his contemporaries Wordsworth and Southey, Coleridge was an enthusiastic sympathizer with the French Revolution in its early stages. Fired by its principles of 'Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality,' he, with Lovell and Southey planned an ideal community on the banks of the Susquehanna. The only practical outcome of the scheme however was the marriage of its three authors with the sisters Sara, Mary and Edith Fricker, and by 1796 all revolutionary ardour had completely cooled, and Coleridge was settled with his wife in a small cottage at Nether Stowey, near Bridgewater, not far from the Wordsworths at Alfoxden. Here the idea of the *Lyrical Ballads* was discussed and completed (1798).

9. **from thy lakes and mountain-hills.** Nether Stowey was situated among the Quantock Hills only a few miles from the Bristol Channel. Until he was ten years old, Coleridge lived at Ottery S. Mary, in the midst of the charming scenery of South-East Devonshire. In 1796 he went for a walking tour among the mountains and lakes of North Wales, and evidently his impressions are recorded in this poem, for it was not until 1800 that he moved to Greta Hall near Keswick. He was always passionately fond of mountain scenery.

19, 20. **my sole and...temple.** Coleridge left England for his first German tour on September 16th, 1798, and thenceforward he devoted himself more than ever to the study of metaphysics; and never again wrote so beautifully of England.

THE BRITISH STRIPLING'S WAR-SONG

This is a translation of the German poem entitled *Lied eines Deutschen Knaben*, written by Count Stolberg in 1774.

15. **the Hero of France.** Napoleon; the one national touch to the otherwise German poem.

19. **scimitars** (It. *scimitarra*) 'a curved sword' used in the East.

21-24. I sped to yon heath . my arm. This is the poet's graphic rendering of the prosaic

"Ich aber, vater, härmte mich,
Und prufte meinen Arm"

in the original poem. This picture of childish enthusiasm is natural to Coleridge, who was a very precocious and imaginative child and lived by himself in a fairy world of nursery rhymes. He himself tells us that he read incessantly: "And I used to lie by the wall and mope; and my spirits used to come upon me sudden, and in a flood; and I then was accustomed to run up and down the churchyard and act over again all I had been reading to the docks and the nettles and the rank grass." In later years, imagining—in one of his day-dreams—that he was Leander swimming the Hellespont, his hands came in contact with a gentleman's pocket in the street, and he narrowly escaped the charge of pocket-picking.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

Thomas Campbell is the author of some of our finest patriotic ballads, and, as long as the Union Jack floats over our navy, so long will these poems be the pride of our sailors; so vivid is the emotion, so majestic the rhythm, so simple and yet so strong the imagination they embody.

Ye Mariners of England, written in the winter of the year 1800, appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, with the title "Alteration of the Old Ballad *Ye Gentlemen of England*, composed in the prospect of another foe." It was signed "Amator Patriae."

The old ballad of Martyn Parker (1630) opened thus:

"Ye gentlemen of England,
That live at home at ease,
Ah! little do you think upon
The dangers of the seas.
Give ear unto the Mariners
And they will plainly show
The cares and the fears
When the stormy winds do blow."

6. **To match another foe.** In 1800 a league was formed between Paul I, 'the mad Tsar' who admired Napoleon, with Sweden, Denmark and Prussia, which was known as 'The Armed Neutrality.' Its object was to withstand British claims to the right of searching ships. The English government chose to regard this action as equivalent to a declaration of war, and sent a fleet, under Admiral Parker, to the Baltic, in order to break up this alliance. This led to the Battle of Copenhagen, celebrated in Campbell's next ballad.

15. **Blake** (1599-1657), after Nelson, the greatest of English admirals. He gave the final blow to the supremacy of Holland on the sea during the Commonwealth. On one occasion he performed the daring feat of sailing into the harbour of Santa Cruz, under fire, and capturing a large fleet of Spanish galleons. He died on his return journey almost within sight of home and was buried in Westminster Abbey. See Newbolt, *The Hundredth Year*, p. 80.

Nelson. This stanza must have been altered after Nelson's death. It was originally:

"Where Blake, the pride of freedom, fell."

21. **Britannia needs no bulwarks.** Cf. T. Augustus Arne (1710-1778): "Britain's best bulwarks are her wooden walls."

22. **steep** = 'cliffs.' The adjective is used for the noun. Cf. Milton, *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, v. 19:

"With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving."

24. **Her home is on the deep.** Cf. Waller, *Stanzas on the War with Spain* (publ. 1651):

"Others may use the Ocean as their road,
Only the English make it their abode;
Whose ready sails with every wind can fly,
And make a covenant with th' inconstant sky;
Our oaks secure, as if they there took root,
We tread on billows with a steady foot."

31. **The meteor flag of England.** A fine example of Campbell's vivid descriptive power, recalling Milton's

"Th' imperial ensign...

Shone like a meteor, streaming in the wind."

(*Paradise Lost*, I. 537.)

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC (1801)

1. **Of Nelson.** On the morning of April 1st, 1801, Nelson, Admiral Parker's second in command, led the attack against the Danish fleet, off Copenhagen. The enemy's fire was exceedingly heavy and well sustained, whilst some of the English ships, running aground, were soon put out of action. It was then, we are told, that Parker hoisted a signal to Nelson to discontinue the fight; and that the latter, clapping his telescope to his blind eye, declared that he could not see it, and won the victory. See *Admirals All*, p. 80.

the North. i.e. the Northern Confederation, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia.

10. **leviathans.** The name of a huge sea-monster (real or imaginary) often mentioned in Hebrew poetry, and frequently identified with the whale. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, vii. 412:

“There Leviathan,

Hugest of living creatures, on the deep

Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps.”

21. **And her van.** (Fr. *avant*.) Short for vanguard = ‘the front or first line of an army.’ Cf. Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*, 186:

“Van to van the foremost squadrons meet,

The midmost battles hastening up behind.”

28. **Hearts of oak.** Cf. S. J. Arnold, *The Death of Nelson*:

“Our ships are British oak

And hearts of oak our men.”

24. **adamantine.** i.e. ‘made of adamant.’ ‘Adamant’ originally an adjective, meaning ‘invincible’ (Gk. δ = ‘not,’ $\delta\alpha\mu\delta\omega$ = ‘I tame’) came to be applied to the hardest metal or gem known. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, ii. 646:

“Three folds were brass, three iron, three of adamantine rock.”

26. **the hurricane eclipse.** The smoke from the firing of the guns hid the ships as heavy storm-clouds obscure the sun.

40. **And we conquer but to save.** After the fighting had continued for some hours without silencing the land batteries, Nelson sent a flag of truce ashore to the Crown Prince of Denmark, offering to save the lives of those whom he had taken prisoners, if firing ceased. Hostilities were suspended for 24 hours, and an armistice of 14 weeks followed.

68. **Elsinore.** Danish Helsingør, a seaport town on the island of Seeland, at the narrowest part of the Sound, about 22 miles from Copenhagen. It is the scene of Shakespeare's tragedy of *Hamlet*.

67. **gallant good Riou**, in command of a squadron during the fight. Though severely wounded by a splinter, Riou was yet sitting on a gun-carriage encouraging his men, when a cannon-ball struck and killed him. Parliament voted a monument to his memory, and Nelson lamented his loss, but it is Campbell who has secured his fame for all time.

70. **And the mermaid's song condoles.** Cf. Collins, *Ode to the Brave*:

"By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung";

and see note, p. 110. The introduction of mermaid's is condemned by critics as unnatural.

MEN OF ENGLAND

This poem was first published in *The New Monthly Magazine*, under Campbell's editorship about the year 1821.

3. **undegenerate spirit.** i.e. 'whose spirit is still unspoiled.'

8. **Navies conquer'd—kingdoms won!** The naval victories of Blake, Rodney, Hawkins, Howe and Nelson, over Holland, Spain and France had secured England's supremacy on the sea; whilst the successes of Wolfe, Clive and Wellington on land, had by this time gained for her the ascendancy in Canada, India and Europe.

17. **Pageants.** Here mean empty shows, without substance or reality. But the modern Pageant is doing much to awaken interest in 'our storied past.'

19. **civic heroes.** Notice that the three men, whose names are quoted below, are famed as politicians rather than as soldiers.

21. **Hampden**, John (1596-1643), English patriot, who refused to pay Ship Money, and was imprisoned. He was a Parliamentary ard was killed at the Battle of Chalgrove Field. Gray refers to him in his *Elegy*.

Russell (1639-1683), a great Whig statesman, beheaded in Charles II's reign for supposed complicity in the Rye House Plot, though ably defended by his wife.

22. **Sidney.** Algernon Sidney (1622–1683), friend of Russell, fellow-conspirator in the Rye House Plot, and executed at the same time.

26. **Crown'd and mitred tyranny.** This refers to Charles I's misgovernment and to the harsh and autocratic rule of Archbishop Laud. Compare with this poem of Campbell's some fine lines by Tennyson descriptive of our patriots' influence (*Tiresias*, 116–126):

“My son,

No sound is breathed so potent to coerce,
 And to conciliate, as their names who dare,
 For that sweet mother-land, which gave them birth
 Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their names,
 Graven on memorial columns, are a song
 Heard in the future; few, but more than wall
 And rampart, their examples reach a hand
 Far thro' all years, and everywhere they meet
 And kindle generous purpose, and the strength
 To mould it into action pure as theirs.”

From CHILDE HAROLD. CANTO III. STANZAS 21—28

It is a great misfortune that Byron chose to fight for other countries rather than his own. His customary attitude towards England was one of grudging admiration, which he humorously describes in the half cynical stanzas in *Beppo*, 47–49.

Yet it is to him that we are indebted for the only poem of note commemorating the events immediately preceding the Battle of Waterloo, the famous lines in Canto III of *Childe Harold*, beginning:

“There was a sound of revelry by night.”

These stanzas will always find a place in the pages of our national poetry, and so will the tender yet somewhat sarcastic farewell in Canto I of the same poem:

“Adieu! Adieu! my native shore
 Fades o'er the waters blue;
 The night wind sighs, the breakers ro
 And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
 Yon sun that sets upon the sea
 We follow in his flight,
 Farewell awhile to him and thee
 My native land,—Good-night!”

1. **revelry by night** The evening of June 15th, 1815, the Duchess of Richmond gave this famous ball at Brussels, the headquarters of the Duke of Wellington. On the afternoon of that day, Wellington received the news that Napoleon had crossed the Sambre, and had arrived at Charleroi with 130,000 men and 300 guns. Wellington went to the ball, but about midnight he and many of his officers left to rejoin their regiments.

18. **the cannon's opening roar.** It is not true that firing was heard at Brussels during the ball. No fighting took place till the afternoon of the next day, when Napoleon attacked and defeated the Prussians at Ligny, whilst Ney was repulsed at Quatre Bras by Wellington.

20. **Brunswick's fated chieftain,** is Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick, who fell, at the head of the Black Brunswickers, in the Battle of Quatre Bras on the following afternoon.

25. **his father on a bloody bier.** The father of the Duke of Brunswick was mortally wounded when commanding the Prussians at the battle of Jena, 1806, and died a month afterwards.

27. Note the alliteration in this line.

35. **mutual eyes.** A beautiful and not incorrect use of the word *mutual* which means 'acting from one to the other, and vice versa,' and here applies to the love glances exchanged at parting. Cf. C. III. St. 13:

"The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language."

42. **alarming drum.** Here used in the sense of 'calling to arms,' from the Italian *All' arme* = 'to arms!'

45. **The foe! They come!** There was an alarming panic in Brussels on the afternoon of the 16th, when news was brought, by some fugitives from Quatre Bras, that Wellington had been defeated, and that the French were rapidly advancing.

46. "**Cameron's gathering**" = 'the Cameron's war-cry,' i.e. the music of the bag-pipes which the Cameron Highlanders played as they marched out of Brussels, early on the morning of the 16th, to join Wellington's army at Quatre Bras.

47. **Lochiel.** The family estate of the Camerons.

Albyn's hills. *Albyn* = 'highlands' (from *Ailp*, the Celtic for 'hill,' and *Inn* = 'island'), and here means 'the Highlands of Scotland.'

49. **noon of night.** A striking poetic expression for midnight.

pibroch. (Gael. *piobaireachd*, from *piobair* = 'a piper,' *piob* = 'a pipe') and so means 'the music of the bag-pipes.'

54. **Evan's, Donald's fame.** Sir Evan or Euan, Cameron fought at Killiecrankie on the side of James II in 1689. His grandson Donald took the Young Pretender's side in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. His name is still cherished among the Highlanders as the 'gentle Lochiel' (see Campbell's *Lochiel's Warning*).

55. **Ardennes.** To suit his purpose, Byron arbitrarily chose to regard the wood of Soignies, which lay behind Wellington's position at Waterloo, as part of the Forest of Ardennes, situated miles away. As he himself wrote, "I have ventured to adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter." In the same way he speaks all through the poem as if the ball immediately preceded the actual battle of Waterloo, which did not take place until Sunday, the 18th, two days later.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE

This poem was written by Charles Wolfe, an Irish clergyman, and the author of not more than fifteen other poems.

It first appeared anonymously in the *Newry Telegraph*, on April 19th, 1817, and quickly attracted the notice it deserved.

It affords a striking example of the effect that can be produced by a plain unvarnished narration of facts. The story is told in the simplest possible words, and the tone of the poem is characterised by a sincerity and self-restraint which not only give poignancy to the grief it expresses, but also rank it with the finest patriotic dirges in the language. Cf. Cowper's *Toll for the Brave*.

Even Byron is reported to have spoken of the poem as "Such an ode as only Campbell could have written."

The masterly retreat of this brilliant general is one of the most dramatic incidents of the Peninsular War.

Sir John Moore had diverted Napoleon's attention from the Spaniards to himself and his little force; and he retreated northward, hoping to join the fleet at Corunna. But Marshal Soult forced a battle, and, as the fleet had not arrived, Moore had to fight,

January 16th, 1809. The battle was won, but the gallant general was killed, and during his funeral the long-delayed embarkation took place.

4. **our hero.** No British commander was ever more popular than Sir John Moore. Napoleon said of him that "His talents and firmness alone saved the British army (in Spain) from destruction, he was a brave soldier, an excellent officer and a man of talent."

5. **darkly.** Refers not only to the darkness of night, but also to the secrecy that was observed, for fear of the enemy.

23. **reck.** (A.-S. *recan* = 'to care for'). i.e. 'take heed or mind.' So also 'reckless.' Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II. 50:

"Of God or Hell or worse he reck'd not."

31, 32. **We carved not a line...his glory.** Cf. Mrs Hemans' *England's Dead*:

"The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave!—
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave?"

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND

Mrs Hemans was a true patriot; at the early age of 14 she wrote a long poem called *England and Spain* or *Valour and Patriotism*, which is a remarkable production for one so young, not only for the historical knowledge it displays, but also for the sturdiness of its patriotism. Here is one of the opening verses:

"Hail Albion, hail, thou land of freedom's birth!
Pride of the main, and Phoenix of the earth!
Thou second Rome, where Mercy, Justice, dwell,
Whose sons in Wisdom as in arms excel."

In our day her work is treated with contemptuous indifference, but as the author of *The Homes of England* and the beautiful and touching *England's Dead* she claims our gratitude, and takes her place in the ranks of the "Laudatores Patriae."

1-8. **The stately homes of England, etc.** Cf. Alfred Austin, *On Returning to England*:

"The comely homes one just can see
Through flowering belts of bush and tree,

That all combine, all, all conspire,
 To more than satisfy desire,
 'To make one love this lovely earth,
 And bless Heaven for one's British birth."

ENGLAND'S DEAD

9. **Egypt's burning plains.** From 1798 to 1801 there was a struggle in Egypt between the French and the English, made glorious by the latter at the battles of the Nile and Alexandria, and by the siege of Acre. By the Convention of Cairo, 1801, both French and English evacuated Egypt, which was restored to the Turks.

18. **Indian shore.** Though the victories of Clive and Eyre Coote (1755—1783) had secured for England her supremacy over the French in India, the native princes, headed by Tippoo Sahib, sultan of Mysore, were constantly intriguing against us. But in 1799 Seringapatam was captured by the English and Tippoo was killed.

27. **Columbia.** i.e. America, so called from Christopher Columbus, who discovered the West Indies.

39. **Roncesvalles.** A pass in the Pyrenees, famous for the great battle in A.D. 778 won by Charlemagne over the Moors. In June, 1813, Wellington beat Joseph Bonaparte at Vittoria, a month later there were several battles in the Pyrenees between the French under Soult and the English under Wellington, who was victorious.

41. **frozen deep's repose.** This refers to the many lives lost in the search for the North-West and North-East Passages respectively, and in more modern times for the North Pole.

55, 56. **Wave may not foam...England's dead.** Cf. W. E. Henley's lines :

"We tracked the winds of the world to the steps of their very throne ;

The secret parts of the world were salted with our bones ;
 Till now the name of names, England, the name of Might,
 Flames from the Austral fires to the bounds of the Boreal night."

THE SPANISH ARMADA

Civic patriotism is the spring of Macaulay's inspiration. His *Lays* are conspicuous as records of that patriotic valour which leaves all to fight for home and king and country :

" For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son, nor wife, nor limb, nor life
In the brave days of old."

And what is true of his Roman *Lays*, is equally true of his English *Lay*, the vivid fragment, telling of the advent of the Armada, and also of the splendidly martial *Battle of Naseby*, one of the finest songs in existence commemorating the Civil Wars.

5. **It was...summer day.** On the afternoon of Friday, July 30th, 1588, news reached Plymouth that the Spanish Armada had been sighted, and soon it sailed up the Channel in a half-crescent. Then, and not till then, Drake consented to leave his game of bowls, and go in hot pursuit. See *Admirals All*, page 79.

7. **Aurigny's isle.** The island of Alderney, one of the Channel Isles.

12. **Edgecumbe's lofty hall.** Mount Edgecumbe is situated on the west side of Plymouth Sound.

14. **many a post.** i.e. 'a messenger or courier.' The term was applied in early times to special messengers bearing despatches.

16. **halberdiers.** i.e. 'Soldiers or guards armed with halberds.' The *halberd* was a weapon consisting of a sharp-edged blade ending in a spear, mounted on a long pole.

20. **blazon.** (A word of Teutonic origin, probably from *blasen* = 'to blow') originally meant a shield, here used for a banner bearing a coat of arms.

21. **Lion of the sea.** In the Tudor flag the lions of England were quartered with the lilies of France. Cf. Peele's *Descensus Astraeae* :

" These British Lions-rampant in this field,
That never learn'd in battle's rage to yield,
Breathe terror to the proud aspiring foe
Ranging the world, commanding where they go."

23. **Picard field.** The battle of Crecy, in Picardy.

24. **Bohemia's plume.** John, the blind old king of Bohemia was killed at Crecy, and his crest—the three ostrich feathers with the motto, *Ich dien* = 'I serve'—was taken by the Black Prince, and has since been the crest of our Princes of Wales.

Genoa's bow. Referring to the Genoese cross-bowmen who took part in the battle.

Caesar's eagle shield. i.e. Charles, son of the king of Bohemia, who was present at the battle of Crecy, and who afterwards became Emperor = 'Caesar.' For the same use of the word *Caesar* to equal 'sovereign,' compare Andrew Marvell's Horatian Ode:

"Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent;
And Caesar's (i.e. Charles I) head at last
Did through his laurels blast."

30. **Semper eadem** = 'ever the same.' Queen Elizabeth's motto.

35. **Eddystone.** A reef of rocks about 14 miles south of Plymouth. A much needed lighthouse was erected here about 1700.

Eddystone to Milford Bay. In other words 'the beacon fires spread the news from South to North and from East to West of the country.'

41. **Tamar's glittering waves** The estuary of the Tamar formed a good harbourage for ships.

43. **Longleat, in Wiltshire.** The country seat of the Marquis of Bath; built in 1567. Bishop Ken died here.

Cranbourne, in Dorsetshire. It was probably here that Boadicea fought against the Romans, and there are many early British fortifications in the neighbourhood.

44. **Beaulieu.** A Cistercian Abbey in Hampshire, near Southampton Water. The privilege of Sanctuary belonged to it, and it sheltered Perkin Warbeck in 1498.

55. **wards.** The name given to the districts into which a town or city is divided for the purposes of elections, and for the transaction of public business.

56. **roaring street.** A good example of transferred epithet.

65. **the proud peak.** i.e. The Peak in Derbyshire, the southern spur of the Pennine Chain.

Darwin's rocky dales. Possibly the river Darwin in Lancashire (see note, page 107) is here confused with the Derwent, which rises in the Peak district.

68. **the Wrekin.** A solitary peak in Shropshire.

69. **Ely's stately fane.** Fane (Lt. *fanum* = 'a shrine'), here the beautiful Cathedral of Ely. Cf. Scott, *The Lord of the Isles*, iv. 10: "To old Iona's holy Fane."

71. **Belvoir.** The seat of the Dukes of Rutland, and one of the finest country seats in the Midlands.

73. **Gaunt's embattled pile.** i.e. Lancaster Castle, which was partially rebuilt by John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

SONNET ON ENGLAND

Richard Chevenix Trench, Archbishop of Dublin (1864) was in no small degree a genuine patriotic poet. His sonnets do not attain to the majesty of Wordsworth's, but they are the utterances of a truly Christian scholar. He is better known for his theological and philological writings, especially *Notes on the Parables and Miracles*; *English Past and Present* and *Select Glossary of English Words*.

6. **Oceana.** The name of an imaginary Commonwealth described by James Harrington (1611-1677) in his political romance of that name.

7. **Utopia.** (Gk. οὐ = 'no,' τόπος = 'place.') The name given by Sir Thomas More to his ideal Commonwealth.

Plato's Isle. The mythical island of Atlantis, situated, according to Plato (*Timaeus*), west of the Pillars of Hercules in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

8. **Gades.** Cadiz, situated on the South-West of Spain between the Straits of Gibraltar and the mouth of the Guadalquivir. It was the chief Phoenician colony outside the Pillars of Hercules, and was regarded by the Greeks and Romans as the most westerly point of the known world.

Great Sea's gate. The Straits of Gibraltar.

10. **fair polities** (Gk. πολιτεία) = 'forms of government,' 'state-organization.'

YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT EASE

As a writer of ballads and lyrics, Tennyson contributed more than any 19th century poet to the patriotic element in our literature. His *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* is one of the finest eulogies in the language; his *Charge of the Light Brigade* takes high place among our few really successful war pieces; and there is nothing in English verse nobler than the simple record of the Patriot's dying cry:

"I have fought for Queen and Faith, like a valiant man and true,

I have only done my duty, as a man is bound to do:

With a joyful spirit I—Sir Richard Grenville die!"

or more soul-stirring than the thrilling description of the assault of the Redan in *The Defence of Lucknow*. Surely lines like these are full justification for the poet's own plea:

"The Singer for his Art

Not all in vain may plead,

The Song that nerves a nation's heart

Is in itself a deed!"

(*Epilogue to the Charge of the Heavy Brigade.*)

According to Mr Aubrey de Vere, this and the two following poems were occasioned by the popular agitation connected with the rejection of the Reform Bill by the Lords, in 1831, and its subsequent passing in the following year. They were not, however, published until 1842.

Speaking of their "extraordinary strength and majesty," Aubrey de Vere says: "Their massive grandeur results mainly from their brevity and the austere simplicity of their diction." Certainly so luminous an account of the English political spirit has never been expressed in fewer words. The whole series bespeaks an immense reverence for the past, and at the same time embodies Tennyson's conviction that progress could lie only along the lines of Law and Order.

5. It is the land . . . till. Cf. Cowper, *The Task*, II. 37:

"We have no slaves at home; then why abroad?

Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs

Receive our air, that moment they are free."

To Tennyson Britain was the home of Freedom. Cf. his *Ode to*

the Duke of Wellington, where he urges on her Statesmen the duty of guarding England, and calls on them to

“Save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ”

9-16. A land of settled government...and spread. Law, order and self-restraint are the keynotes of Tennyson's creed. He could not tolerate the “falsehood of extremes” any more than he could understand the “blind hysterics of the Celt.”

12. From precedent to precedent. i.e. ‘has become by rule a custom’: referring to the gradual growth and establishment of popular representation from earliest times. The poet had a great regard for time-honoured customs and institutions.

17. Should banded unions, etc. Tennyson was no democrat, indeed he greatly feared the tyranny of the masses. To him the patriot-statesman is the man whose voice is as

“Music heard

Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of feud
And faction,”

and whose will is a

“Power to make

This ever-changing world of circumstance,
In changing, chime with never-changing Law.”

(*To the Duke of Argyll.*)

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS

1. Of old sat Freedom on the heights. Cf. Thomson's description of the majestic figure of Liberty:

“Not as of old

Extended in her hand the cap and rod
Whose slave-enlarging touch gave double life,
But her bright temples bound with British oak
And naval honours nodded on her brow.
Sublime of port; loose o'er her shoulders flowed
Her sea-green robe, with constellations gay.
An island-goddess now; and her high care
The queen of Isles, the mistress of the main.”

(*Poem on Liberty.*)

6. **Self-gather'd** = 'deep in contemplation.'

15, 16. **God-like...crown.** Here Tennyson identifies the Goddess of Freedom with the well-known figure of Britannia, *god-like*, because the trident she carries is the common attribute of the sea-god Neptune; *king-like*, because Britannia wears the crown, the symbol of royalty.

18. **The wisdom of a thousand years, etc.** Cf. *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After* :

"Step by step we gain'd a freedom known to Europe, known to all ;"

Step by step we rose to greatness,—thro' the tonguesterr we may fall."

21. **That her fair form...shine.** See Blake's *Edward III* :

"Liberty shall stand upon the cliffs of Albion
Casting her blue eyes over the green ocean :
Or towering stand upon the roaring waves
Stretching her mighty spear o'er distant lands,
While with her eagle wings she covereth
Fair Albion's shores and all her families."

24. **The falsehood of extremes.** Whether of the Court or of the mob. Tennyson deplored the excesses of the French Revolution; moderation in all things is the burden of his song. Cf. *The Princess*, Conclusion, 53-66.

LOVE THOU THY LAND

1-8. In this truly patriotic poem Tennyson urges that love of country—which will be constant, pure and comprehensive—must be based on the remembrance of its past and present greatness, with a stout hope for its future.

5. **turn'd round on fixéd poles.** Cf. Bacon, essay on *Truth* : "It is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth."

9-20. **But pamper not, etc.** The poet, whilst warning the patriot against a hasty, ill-considered, though doubtless a popular policy, pleads for those of his fellow countrymen who are imperfectly educated, and insists on the cultivation of the spirit of reverence.

12. **sophister.** The older form for 'sophist,' i.e. 'one who,

claiming more knowledge than he actually possesses, uses it for unworthy ends.'

lime. Those whom the sophist entangles in his wily arguments are like birds ensnared by bird-lime.

17, 18. **Make knowledge circle...**Reverence, fly. Cf. *In Memoriam*, 25, 26 :

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell."

21-28. **Watch what main-currents**, etc. The patriot must follow carefully, with an unprejudiced mind, all the chief trends of thought in his country's politics, and he will restrain both his tongue and his ambition.

22. **Cut Prejudice against the grain.** A strong expression. Prejudice is to be hacked and spoiled as wood is when cut against the grain.

24. **peers** (*Lat. pares*) = 'equals.'

25, 26. **touch of pension.** i.e. 'for pay.' Cf. Wordsworth, *The Happy Warrior* :

"Who...does not stoop nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours or for worldly state."

27. **guerdon.** Usually a noun, here a verb = 'reward.'

29-36. **Not clinging to some ancient saw**, etc. Worn out truisms and modern catch-words are equally to be avoided, and the judgment—like everything in nature—is to be matured slowly. The common good will be attained only when questions affecting it have been discussed and looked at from every point of view, and when all have contributed something towards it.

36. **To close** = 'to enclose or include.'

41. **Meet is it changes should control.** Just as natural objects are in a constant though imperceptible state of change, so too is the mind ; but the soul's foundations must be firmly fixed. Cf. l. 5 supra.

45-52. **So let the change which comes**, etc. The idea seems to be that of a machine, propelled by two forces that meet and are welded into one ; whilst sympathy is compared to the oil which makes the machine run easily.

When there is a change of thought, the new must be so welded into the old that there is no violent upheaval, even though Experience may often show that Theory and Practice have in the past come into conflict in their common application to the Art of Life.

53-64. *Ev'n now we hear*, etc. Tennyson was writing at a time (1832) when the spirit of progress and revolution was in the air. He foresaw that the coming years must bring startling changes in governments, and that Power, the great driving force of the world, was shortly to be manifested in many forms for his country's ultimate good, though he admitted that it would grow to its full strength only by slow and painful processes.

60-65. *New Majesties*, etc. France was to have her third Revolution, Italy was to be freed from Austria, Prussia was rapidly rising.

61. *The warders of the growing hour*, etc. The then disturbed state of European politics, with its swift changes of governments, may well be the poet's excuse for this strong imagery. Progress is represented as assuming many shadowy shapes, difficult to see, impossible to grasp, but destined to become realities.

67-72. *Regard gradation*, etc. A wholesome warning: the formation of a more perfect State is to proceed gradually, and with caution. The new gods of the nation are to be set up without discord, otherwise they will be discredited.

76. *the brazen bridge of war*. A fine metaphor. Professor Churton Collins in his edition of *The Early Poems of Tennyson* says this phrase is "possibly suggested by Homer's expression, *ἀνὰ πολέμοιο γεφύρας*, *Iliad*, VIII 549; but Homer's and Tennyson's meaning can hardly be the same. In Homer the 'bridges of war' seem to mean the spaces between the lines of tents in a bivouac: in Tennyson the meaning is probably the obvious one."

This stanza and the next show Tennyson's great fear that his countrymen would not be able to refrain from civil war during their efforts at reform. He was ever a peace lover. Cf. *Epilogue to the War pieces*:

"You wrong me, passionate little friend,
I would that wars should cease,
I would the globe from end to end
Might sow and reap in peace."

85. *dogs of Faction bay*. Cf. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III. Sc. 1:

"Let slip the dogs of war."

However much he may personally hate war, the patriot is bound to fight in case of need, though not until a peaceful settlement has been proved impossible.

" 91, 92. **And if some dreadful need...would strike.** Cf. *Maud*, Part I. 13 :

"For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
 And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of
 the foam,
 That the smooth-faced snub-nosed rogue would leap from his
 counter and till,
 And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yard-wand
 home!"

93-96. **To-morrow yet would reap to-day**, etc. The poem ends with an appeal to the patriotic reformer to husband his resources, and, in general, to "make haste slowly."

HANDS ALL ROUND

The first version of this poem was written in 1852 when Tennyson regarded France under Napoleon III as dangerous to the peace of Europe. On February 9th, 1852, John Forster, writing to Mrs Tennyson said: "I must send you what Landor says in a note this morning, *Hands all Round* is incomparably the best (convivial) lyric in the language, though Dryden's *Drinking Song* is fine." Edward FitzGerald records that Tennyson said to him "I know I wrote these lines with the tears running down my cheeks." The poem was recast and published in 1882, and it is by kind permission of Messrs Macmillan, the owners of the copyright, that this version is included here.

3. **Cosmopolite.** (Gk. *κόσμος* = 'the world,' *πολιτής* = 'a citizen.') Means 'one whose city is the world.' The more usual form of the word is 'cosmopolitan.'

7. **Conservative.** The deeply rooted principle of the Conservative party is to preserve established order and custom. According to the poet, however, true Conservatism will not hesitate to sacrifice what has become useless through change or decay.

14. **English Empire whole.** Possibly an attack on the "Little Englander" whose distorted view of patriotism was as great a menace to England then as it is to-day. In the dedication poem appended to

the *Idylls of the King* Tennyson utters the same warning in stronger terms in the passage beginning :

“So loyal is too costly! friends your love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond and go.
Is this the tone of empire? here the faith
That made us rulers?”.....

(ll. 16-33.)

16. **New England of the Southern Pole.** Australia. Since the recent explorations of Lieutenant Shackleton it is the glory of England to have penetrated the continent nearest the South Pole.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

was an incident of the siege of Sebastopol during the Crimean War. The allied French and English forces were constantly being hampered by the Russian troops that ravaged the country within a few miles of the fort. On October 25th, 1854, was fought the Battle of Balaclava, where the incompetence of the generals was redeemed by the valour of the British cavalry, and especially by the two charges of the Heavy and Light Brigades.

Lord Raglan, the commander-in-chief, sent an order to Lord Lucan, the commander of the Light Brigade, to advance with six hundred men against the enemy in order to prevent them from carrying off certain guns that had been abandoned earlier in the day. About 11 o'clock the six hundred started on their fatal ride. They fought gallantly against fearful odds, for the Russian cavalry and artillery surrounded them on three sides, and they actually cut down the Russian gunners at the end of the plain. They were rescued by the French cavalry and the British Heavy Brigade, but not before 10 officers, 147 men, and half the horses had been killed, and 120 officers and men wounded.

Writing on August 8th, 1855, Tennyson says: “Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on *The Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava*, I have ordered a thousand copies of it to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but, if what I have heard be true,

they will not be displeased to receive these copies from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honour them."

34. **Cossack.** (Russian, *kosák*, Turk. *kazák*.) A warlike Turkish people inhabiting the country north of the Black Sea, and subject to Russia. From them was organized a body of light horsemen, who now form an important element of the Russian army.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON (1852)

This famous ode was written on the occasion of the death of the Duke of Wellington, and was published on the day of his funeral, September 22nd, 1852. The "Great Duke" died on September 14th at Walmer Castle, where he had been living in his official capacity as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. After the Lying-in-State at Chelsea Hospital, the public funeral took place with all the pomp and ceremony due to a nation's hero. The service—an impressive and beautiful one—was held in St Paul's Cathedral and was attended by the chief officers of state; the procession was witnessed by over a million people.

6. **Warriors.. pall.** The coffin rested upon a high carriage and the whole was covered by a black pall held up by his fellow officers.

13. **pageant.** A military funeral partakes of the nature of a pageant, with its procession of soldiers and ceremonial array.

23. **state-oracle.** The Duke had been Prime Minister from October, 1828, to November, 1830, and up to the time of his death was busied with affairs of State. The people's trust in the great general was unbounded, because of his conspicuous single-minded integrity.

24. **blood.** i.e. 'character,' 'reputation.'

38. **tower of strength.** Cf. *Paradise Lost*, I. 589-591:

"He above the rest

In shape and gesture proudly eminent

Stood like a tower."

89. **Which stood four-square ..that blew.** Cf. *The Princess*:

"Follow us; who knows? we four may build some plan
Foursquare to opposition."

42. **World-victor.** i.e. Napoleon, who overran so much of Europe and even of Africa and Asia that men feared he would eventually conquer the whole world.

46. **Let the bell be toll'd.** The tolling of the great bell of St Paul's was a special honour for Wellington, since it was usually rung only at the death of members of the Royal Family, the Bishop, the Dean and the Lord Mayor of London.

49. **cross of gold.** The gold cross on the dome of St Paul's which looks over the whole city.

55. **sablé** = 'black,' 'dark.' Cf. Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 35 :

"And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn."

56, 57. **Bright..fold.** The names of Wellington's victories were inscribed in gold letters upon the front of the black velvet pall.

59. **knoll'd** or 'knelled.' (Ice. *gnoll* = 'a shrill cry.') Cf. *Macbeth*, v. Sc. 8 : "And so his knell is knelled."

64. **many a clime.** Wellington had served in India, Spain, Portugal, France and Belgium.

66. **Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.** Here the sound of the words conveys the sense, i.e. *onomatopoeia*.

68. **Guarding...kings from shame.** Napoleon had placed his brother Joseph upon the throne of Spain in place of Ferdinand VII the lawful heir. In 1810 Wellington drove the French out of Portugal, Joseph fled, and in 1813 Ferdinand was restored.

73. **in dispraise.** The refusal of Wellington to support the Reform Bill in 1830 drove him from office, and caused his temporary unpopularity.

74. **well-attemper'd.** i.e. 'regulated to bear any strain.' Cf. *Julius Caesar*, v. Sc. 5 :

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world—'This was a man.'"

80-82. **Who is he,** etc. These words are supposed to be spoken by Lord Nelson, beside whose remains the Duke was buried in the crypt of St Paul's.

83. **Mighty Seaman.** Nelson.

99. **Assaye.** Where Wellington defeated the Maráthá army, consisting of a force ten times larger than his own and with seven times as many guns, in 1803.

103-105. drew the treble works, etc. Wellington fighting against the French in Portugal, and not being supported from home, was obliged to construct a triple line of fortifications at Torres Vedras, and retire behind them during the winter of 1810. On leaving his retreat, in March 1811, he defeated General Massena, and in 1813 finally drove the French forces over the Pyrenees.

112. eagles. The Roman eagle, adopted by France at Napoleon's bidding. The old standard was the *fleur-de-lis*. See Macaulay, *The Armada*, 22.

122. Duty's iron crown. Cf. Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*.

123. that loud sabbath. The Battle of Waterloo was fought on Sunday, June 18th, 1815.

126. foam'd themselves away. Cf. Jude, verse 13: "Raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame."

127. Last, the Prussian trumpet blew. At 7 o'clock in the evening the Prussian corps under Blucher came up, and together the English and Germans overcame the French.

145, 146. The proof...voice. Cf. Gray's *Elegy*, 64: "And read their history in a nation's eyes," also contrast Milton's *Lycidas*, 78:

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
.....nor in broad rumour lies."

170. But wink . overtrust. Tennyson felt very strongly about a bill for the organization of the militia, which had been brought in in February 1852, but had been rejected by the Commons.

172. He bad you.. coasts. In 1848 Wellington advocated the complete fortification of the Channel Islands and several southern ports, with further raising of troops against invasion.

179-189. Who never sold the truth .our English Duke. For the application of this character to life see Newbolt, *Clifton Chapel*:

"My son, the oath is yours—

To set the cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize,
To honour, while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes;
To count the life of battle good,
And dear the land that gave you birth,
And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth."

194. the brave of other lands. Wellington's coffin was followed by representatives of all the great European Powers, except Austria.

202. The path...glory. Cf. Wordsworth, *Ode to Duty* :

"O Duty! if that name thou love

Thou who art victory and law."

255, 256. Until we doubt...do. Cf. Matthew Arnold, *Rugby Chapel* :

"That force

Surely hath not been left vain!

Somewhere, surely, afar,

In the sounding labour-house vast

Of being, is practised that strength";

also Milton, *Lycidas* :

"Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore."

262. in myriad myriads. Cf. Tennyson, *Lucretius* :

"I saw the flaring atom-streams

And torrents of her myriad universe,

Ruining along the illimitable inane,

Fly on to clash together again."

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

There is a curious absence of the patriotic element in Browning's poetry, due no doubt to his prolonged sojournings abroad, and to the fact that he was steeped in Greek ideas. His conception of what practical patriotism only too often means is graphically described in his poem, *The Patriot*, where the people's hero of a year ago is led out to die, since those whom he had served have changed their views—the old story of the "stormy people, unsad and ever untrue."

Sometimes, however, his thoughts stray homewards, as on the occasion of this poem, when, gazing at the scene of Nelson's victories, he is constrained to cry: "Here and here did England help me!" or when with longing, he sighs for the charm of an English spring-time.

But these are passing moods, what Browning loved best in all the world

“Was a castle, precipice-encurled,
In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.”

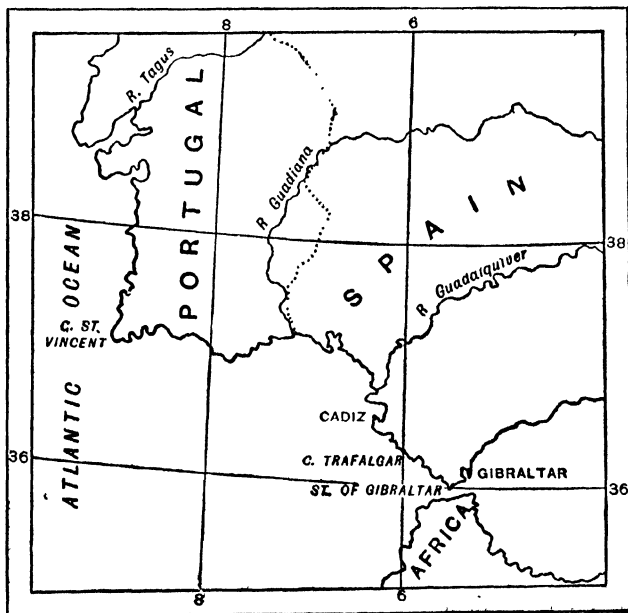
He lacked the insular prejudice of Tennyson, and the passionate devotion of Swinburne, and his heroes are found in Italy, Greece or France, but very rarely are they chosen from among his own countrymen :

“Open my heart and you will see
Graved inside of it, ‘Italy.’”

(“*De Gustibus—*”)

These two short lyrics appeared in 1845 amongst *Dramatic Lyrics*.

1. Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent ..away. The accompanying map will show the position of the places mentioned here.



2. **Sunset...Cadiz Bay.** The rays of the setting sun would be reflected straight on Cadiz and Trafalgar.

4. **Gibraltar grand and gray.** Gibraltar, situated on the extreme end of a sandy low peninsular is a majestic mass of grey rock, bare and repellent.

5. **Here and here.** Trafalgar and St Vincent on the one hand, Gibraltar on the other.

7. **Jove's planet.** i.e. Jupiter, the leader of the minor planets.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

2. **Now that April's there.** Swinburne also records his preference for an English spring-time, in spite of the chilly Nor'easters and drenching Sou'westers that invariably accompany it. In lines written 'In Defence of English Spring' he contends that not all the glories of the South can match :

“At least for him who loves to watch

The wild flowers come, hear wild birds sing,

The rapture of an English spring.”

6. **bole.** (Old Norse *bole* or *bule*) = 'the stem or trunk of a tree.'

10. **whitethroat.** Only a summer visitant to our shores. Its song is very persistent but not beautiful.

20. **gaudy melon-flower.** Referring to the bright yellow colour of the melon blossom.

From AURORA LEIGH (Book I)

Like that of her husband, Mrs Browning's poetry only fitfully concerns itself with England; but the passage quoted from Aurora Leigh is so appreciative of the calm beauty of the English countryside that no apology is needed for its inclusion here. In its whole-hearted admiration for the charms of the country, it recalls some earlier passages from Thomson, Goldsmith and others, whilst the idea underlying it has been developed by the more modern poets,

particularly Swinburne, Austin, and occasionally Kipling, as e.g. in that fascinating glimpse of England :

“See you the dimpled track that runs
 All hollow through the wheat?
 O that was where they hauled the guns
 That smote King Philip’s fleet.

 Trackway and Camp and City lost
 Salt Marsh where now is corn ;
 Old wars, old Peace, old Arts, that cease
 And so was England born !”

Puck’s Song, from *Puck of Pook’s Hill*.

12. **most gentle dimplement.** i.e. ‘the slight hollowings of the ground.’ For this beautiful description of the landscape compare that given by E. Nesbit in her poem entitled *England* :

“Downs where the white sheep wander, little gardens in blossom,
 Roads that wind through the twilight up to the lights of home.
 Lanes that are white with hawthorn, dykes where the sedges
 shiver,
 Hollows where caged winds slumber, moorlands where winds
 wake free.”

23. **mythic oaks.** A reference to the worship conducted by the Druids under the shade of the oak tree.

24. **prodigy of shade.** i.e. ‘the wonderful expanse of shade’ cast by the spreading branches of the oak and elm trees.

41. **tolerant.** (Lt. *tolerans*, pres. part. of *tolerare* from the root *tol*, whence *tollere* ‘to lift up,’ ‘to bear.’) Gives a good picture of the cow placidly chewing its cud.

From THE ARMADA. SECTION VII. No. II

This passage is from Mr Swinburne’s *Poems and Ballads*, 3rd Series, 1889, where it forms part of *The Armada*, Section VII. 2. It was written to celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of the great Armada defeat, of which the poet writes : “No day more great in the roll of fate filled ever with fire the sky.” Swinburne loved his country

in the same way as the patriotic Athenian loved Athens in days of old, and the poem is a fine expression of his passionate devotion to

“England, mother born of seamen, daughter, fostered of the sea
Mother more beloved than all who bear not all their children
free.” (Section I. 1.)

17. plain=‘to lament, mourn.’ Cf. Surrey, *Tottell’s Miscellany*:
“I wish for night, more couertly to playn.”

18. and thy sun-bright brow...the strength of Spain. Cf. Section II. 2:

“For the light that abides upon England, the glory that rests on
her godlike name,
The pride that is love, and the love that is faith, a perfume
dissolved in flame,
Took fire from the dawn of the fierce July when fleets were
scattered as foam...and she
Laughed loud to the wind as it gave to her keeping the glories
of Spain and Rome.”

25, 26. none that is born ..worships thee. Cf. Bailey, *Festus*:
“England, my country, great and free!
Heart of the world, I leap to thee.”

IN PRAISE OF ENGLAND

This poem is reprinted, by kind permission of the author, from the little volume entitled *Songs of England*.

1. brake=‘a clump of brushwood or briars,’ ‘a thicket.’ Cf. Shelley’s *Adonais*, 18:

“The amorous birds now pair in every brake.”

31. croft. (O.E. *croft*=‘an enclosed field.’) So ‘a small piece of arable land attached to a dwelling.’ The tenants of these small holdings are known in the Scotch Highlands as ‘Crofters.’

thorp. (Cognate with the Dutch *dorp*=‘a village.’) Meant originally a cluster of houses around a farm.

byre. (O.N. *byr*.) Usually a cow-house or shed; sometimes used to mean a farmyard and buildings, as if from the Icelandic *baer*.

ADMIRALS ALL

Henry Newbolt has won a considerable reputation as a writer of patriotic verse. As an Englishman he rejoices in the great deeds of his countrymen, and whilst his best pieces—such as *The Fighting Temeraire*, *Admirals All* and *Drake's Drum*—strike exactly the true patriotic note, his other poems—*The Old Superb*, *Gillespie*, *John Nicholson* and *He Fell Among Thieves*—are entirely free from that boastful and narrow excitement that is so often mistaken for patriotism.

1. **Effingham.** Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord High Admiral of England in the reign of Elizabeth. Commanded the English fleet against the Armada. Under him served Grenville, Raleigh and Drake.

Grenville. See note, page 104.

Raleigh, Sir Walter (1552?—1618). Courtier, explorer, scholar. One of Elizabeth's great favourites, he founded the Colony of Virginia, named after the Queen. He wrote *The History of the World* during his imprisonment in the Tower. On his release in 1615 he penetrated up the Orinoco river in search of gold for James I; but his expedition was a failure, and he was beheaded in 1618 to please the Spaniards.

Drake. See note, page 104.

3. **Benbow,** John (1650—1702). Vice-Admiral of the Fleet in 1700. Noted for his bravery, and his celebrated four-days' attack, single-handed, on a French squadron, when the captains of his five best ships refused to take part in the action.

Collingwood, Cuthbert, Lord (1750—1810). A distinguished sea-captain. He was present at the Battle of St Vincent, and was second in command under Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar. He was greatly beloved by his men, both for courage and his gentle consideration for others.

Byron, John (1723—1786). Grandfather of Lord Byron the poet. In 1764 he was sent with two ships on a voyage of discovery to the South Seas, but though absent for twenty-two months he seems to have made very little use of his opportunities. (See Byron's "Journal" in *Hawkesworth's Voyages*.) As Vice-Admiral of the Fleet he com-

manded an ineffectual expedition against the French off the West Indies, 1778-79.

Blake, Robert. See note, page 126.

13. **Essex, Earl of (1567-1601).** The favourite of Queen Elizabeth's later years. He utterly failed to crush the Irish rebels, and having incurred the Queen's displeasure was executed in 1601.

15. **Howard.** i.e. Lord Howard of Effingham. See supra, page 152.

23. **singed His Catholic...beard.** In 1587 Drake sailed into Cadiz harbour and burnt several of the Spanish ships, thus delaying the Armada's departure for a year. An interesting punning reference to Drake in Dekker's play, *The Whore of Babylon*, describes how Elizabeth sent forth

“A Drake

Which from their rivers beat their water-fowls,
Tore silver feathers from their fairest swans,
And plucked the Halcyon's wings that rove at sea :
And made their wild-ducks under water dive
So long, that some never came up alive.”

25. **He was playing.** A reference to the well-known story.

30. **Duncan, Adam, 1st Viscount Camperdown (1731-1804)** took part with distinction in two expeditions for the relief of Gibraltar. In 1794 he received command of a fleet stationed in the North Sea to watch the Dutch fleet at the Texel. Owing to the mutiny at the Nore he found himself left with only two ships to blockade the enemy, but he held his ground, and having later, by a successful ruse, allowed the Dutch Admiral, De Winter, to put to sea, he attacked him and gained a decisive victory off Camperdown, capturing ten battleships, including the admiral's ship.

38. **Nelson sailed the Sound.** A reference to Nelson's part in the Battle of the Baltic. See Campbell's poem, page 37, and note, page 127.

48. **the haven under the hill.** A beautiful metaphor. Cf. Tennyson :

“And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill,”

and Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, i. C. ix. 40 :

“Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please.”

THE HUNDREDTH YEAR

This poem was first published in *The Year of Trafalgar*, a book written by Newbolt to commemorate the Centenary of the battle.

5—8. **Before the dawn's unveiling**, etc. Contrast these lines with those which express the same idea in Newbolt's *Fighting Temeraire* :

“There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.”

6. **three voices**, those of England's greatest seamen, Drake, Blake, and Nelson.

9. **The first**. Sir Francis Drake. See note, p. 104.

13. **ambuscado**. Archaic = ‘ambuscade,’ ‘ambush.’ Cf. J. Hogg, *Flodden Field* :

“Till some English, like tornado,
Rushed from deepest ambuscado.”

14. **escalado**. (Sp. *-ada*.) For *escalade* = ‘to scale or climb over a wall or rampart by means of ladders.’

15. **Eldorado**. (Sp. *el* = ‘the,’ *dorado* = ‘gilded.’) The name given by the Spaniards to a fabulous city, whose houses and streets were supposed to be built of solid gold, and which was thought to be situated on the Amazon, in Guiana. Cf. the title of Sir Walter Raleigh's book, *Discoverie of Guiana, with a relation of the Great and Golden city of Manoa, which the Spaniards call El Dorado*, published 1596.

17. **the second**. Robert Blake. See note, page 126.

23. **To live and die sea-ruling**. Our national love of the sea, and the conviction that her sovereignty was England's destiny came into the island along with the Viking spirit of our ancestors. Cf. Alfred Austin, *Look Seaward, Sentinel* :

“And, though the world together band,
Not all the legions of the land
Shall ever wrest from England's hand
The sceptre of the Sea.”

24. **And home at last to sleep**. Blake died within sight of England on his return from his mighty exploit of destroying the

Spanish fleet in the Harbour of Santa Cruz in the Canary Islands. Cf. Newbolt, *The Death of Admiral Blake* :

“Only to look once more on the land of the memories of childhood,
Forgetting weary winds and barren foam :

Only to bid farewell to the combe and the orchard and the moorland
And sleep at last among the fields of home !”

25. **the third.** Lord Nelson. See note, page 127.

27, 28. **Duty is England's morning star.** A beautiful reference to Nelson's never to be forgotten signal “England expects that every man this day will do his duty.”

THE SONG OF THE BOW

As a weapon of warfare the bow has become quite obsolete, but it must never be forgotten that the most famous victories of the Middle Ages were due to the skill of our archers. The Battle of Hastings (1066) was won by the prowess and daring of the Norman archers. In 1298 Edward I introduced the long bow which he had seen used with such effect in the Crusades ; and the Battles of Crecy (1346), Poitiers (1356) and Agincourt (1415), were all won by England's superior skill in its use.

Before the advance of fire-arms, however, it fell into disuse as a military weapon, though numerous statutes testify to its importance until quite late in Tudor times. In Richard III's reign a law was passed ordering that for every tun of Malmsey or Tyne wine brought into England ten bowstaves should be imported.

3. **of yew-wood.** The yew has always been regarded as the best wood for the manufacture of bows. See note, page 96. Cf. Drayton, *Ballad of Agincourt* :

“With Spanish yew so strong
Arrows a cloth-yard long.”

14. **wove** = ‘woven,’ the past tense for the past participle.

18. **Barbed.** (Lt. *barba* = ‘a beard.’) The two little hooks curving backwards at the point of an arrow.

20. **grey goose-feather.** Henry V ordered the sheriffs of every county to take six wing-feathers from every goose for the feathering of arrows.

27. **the lion flag.** The Royal standard.
31. **yeomen.** Originally the free tenant farmers who were all armed with the bow. The Yeoman of the Guard, founded by Henry VII, were at that time all archers.
32. **The lads of dale and fell.** This seems to imply that the Northerners were specially skilled archers.

THE ENGLISH FLAG

As the author of some ambitious patriotic lyrics, notably *The Song of the English*, *The Recessional*, and of that fine *Children's Song* quoted on pages 87—88, Rudyard Kipling takes his place in the front rank of the Empire Poets.

In this, his most powerful ballad, the Winds of the world testify in turn to the omnipresence of the Union Jack, the silent witness of England's boundless empire. The same idea is characteristically expressed by W. E. Henley, *Rhymes and Rhythms*:

“And the call of her morning drum goes in a girdle of sound,
Like the voice of the sun in song, the great globe round and round

And the shadow of her flag, when it shouts to the mother-breeze
Floats from shore to shore of the universal seas.”

4. **to yelp at the English Flag.** Author's note: “*National Observer*, 4th April, 1891. At the burning of the Court-House at Cork, ‘Above the portico a flagstaff bearing the Union Jack remained fluttering in the air for some time, but ultimately when it fell the crowds rent the air with shouts, and seemed to see significance in the incident.’—*Daily Papers*.”

5. **clout.** (A.-S. *clut*, ‘a little cloth,’ ‘a patch.’) So ‘a small piece of cloth, a rag.’

10. **Disko floe.** Floe ice is the surface ice formed in Polar oceans. Disko Bay is on the west coast of Greenland, N. Lat. 69°. At its mouth is a barrier which prevents the escape of icebergs, thus causing a blocking of the bay with ice.

12. **the Dogger.** (*Dogger* = ‘a cod-fish,’ also used for a certain kind of fishing boat.) The Dogger Bank is in the North Sea, and is famous for cod-fish.

17. **long, long Arctic night.** In the Polar regions the sun does not appear above the horizon during the winter months.

18. **musk-ox...Northern Light.** The musk-ox inhabits North America, north of N. Lat. 60°. The Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis, more frequent and brilliant in the high northern latitudes.

21. **From the Virgins.** A group of small islands in the West Indies, between Porto Rico and the Lesser Antilles.

23. **sea-egg** = 'the sea urchin.'

25. **outer keys.** *Keys* or *Cays* from a Spanish word for 'reefs,' is sometimes used for the smaller coral islands in the West Indies.

29. **the Horn.** Cape Horn, the most southerly point of South America.

34. **the Southern Cross.** A remarkable group of stars, arranged not quite symmetrically in the form of a cross, in a brilliant section of the Milky Way, close to the Coal Sac. It is not visible now in Northern Latitudes.

37. **the Kuriles, etc.** The Kurile Islands lie off the east of Asia, and stretch from Kamtschatka to Japan, shutting in the sea of Okhotsk. A cold arctic current sets south from Behring Sea, passes by the Kurile Isles, and lowers the temperature of the Sea of Okhotsk—the shores of the sea are frozen from November to April.

39, 40. **By the breath...Kowloon.** A typhoon is the name given to the tropical cyclones of the China Seas; they often cause much damage to shipping.

Praya. Part of the town of Victoria on the island of Hong Kong, used as a shipping wharf.

Kowloon. Is opposite the island of Hong Kong, on the mainland to the north. It would be possible during a typhoon for ships, anchored off the Praya, to be driven on to the mainland opposite, at Kowloon.

43. **set my hand ..rose.** The Hooghly is the main channel of the Ganges delta. When the monsoon blows up the stream, the tidal bore sometimes rushes up the river at the rate of 22 miles an hour, and this, together with the dangers of navigation, owing to the sandbanks, causes sudden destruction to vessels in the river.

46. **But a soul...sake.** Cf. *England's Dead* by Mrs Hemans: *

“Go, stranger, track the deep—

Free, free the white sail spread!

Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,

Where rest not England's dead.”

Ben Jonson, to music by Dr John Bull, Organist of the Chapel Royal, and first Professor of Music at Gresham College, for the occasion of a dinner given by the Merchant Taylors' Company to James I in 1607.

In support of this theory it is contended that the sentiment of "God save the King" must have been very closely connected with the Gunpowder Plot, for the old ditty:

"Please to remember the fifth of November,
Gunpowder treason and plot":

with its closing refrain

"Halloo Boys, Halloo Boys,
Make the bells ring,
Halloo Boys, Halloo Boys,
God save the King,"

dates from this period.

If Jonson were not the author, the composition of the Anthem is delayed for over a century, when it is said to have appeared amidst the excitement which attended the Rebellion of 1745. Amongst others, George Saville Carey in 1795, claims both words and music for his father Henry Carey, the author of the well-known air *Sally in our Alley*. Here again there is no certain proof, for Carey died two years at least before the Rebellion and no mention of the Anthem is found among a long list of his works.

Apart from the question of authorship, which it seems impossible to decide, some of the variations of the Anthem, as we now have it, are interesting. Here is a version composed about 1756:

"Fame, let thy trumpet sound
Tell all the world around,
Great George is King.
Tell Rome, and France, and Spain
Britannia scorns their chain,
All their vile arts are vain
Great George is King.

He peace and plenty brings,
While Rome's deluded kings
Waste and destroy,
Then let her people sing
Long live great George our King,
From whom such blessings spring,
Freedom and joy."

Another by The Rev. W. D. Tattersill with music by T. S. Dupuis was written "for the occasion of Jan. 1st, 1793, being the hundred and fourth year of Britain's liberty":

"England's staunch soldiery,
 Proof against treachery
 Bravely unite;
 Firm in his country's cause,
 His sword each hero draws,
 To guard our King and laws
 From factions might.

When insults rise to wars,
 Oak-hearted British tars
 Scorn to be slaves;
 Rang'd in our wooden walls,
 Ready when duty calls,
 To send their cannon balls
 O'er ocean's waves";

whilst the following verse is taken from the *Philanthropic Gazette* published July 8th, 1818:

"God bless our favour'd land!
 Firm may Great Britain stand,
 Freedom's bright throne!
 Knowledge diffuse around,
 Error and vice confound,
 May love and peace abound
 To none unknown."

It is not for its intrinsic worth, however, nor yet for the stirring melody that accompanies it, but rather for the wealth of historic and patriotic associations clustering round it during the course of years, that the Anthem holds so high and permanent a place in the hearts of the nation. The late Professor Churton Collins, while deploring its defects, wrote of it: "I should be sorry for it to go. Sentiment is a powerful factor in most things, and sentiment is in favour of retaining the dear old shameful doggerel."

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