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The "Teaching of English" Series

General Editor—DR. RICHARD WILSON

THE TIDE OF TIME
in English Poetry



SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

*From a pen drawing by F. Heber
Thompson, after a medallion by
F. Spicer Simpson*

THE TIDE of TIME

in English Poetry

BY

HENRY NEWBOLT



SPECIMEN.

“The ude of time flow'd back with me,
The forward flowing tide of time.”

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THE TIDE OF TIME IN ENGLISH POETRY

INTRODUCTION

THIS little book craves leave to make a personal statement. In his youth the writer of it devoured all the poetry within his reach, and now, after more than fifty years of enjoyment, finds himself with an appetite still new every morning for the poems of the day, as well as for those of all the yesterdays. There are many in the like case—more than ever before in England—and one natural result is a crop of anthologies beyond all experience. Those who have travelled in other countries like to have a handy volume of photographs, which will bring back to them at any time, and wherever they may be, not only a memory of their experience, but a clearer memory than they could call up for themselves—in some degree a repetition of their first enjoyment. But photographs, like other souvenirs, have this defect—they recall something, but not all. They cannot give back the air, the weather, the company of the long-ago voyage, nor anything of the character and culture of the people inhabiting those scenes. Still less can you get from them, however continually you keep them in view, any further insight into the real nature of that which delighted you.

A collection of poems is not on all fours with a collection of photographs, but the analogy will carry us

as far as this, that the use of anthologies is no satisfactory substitute for revisiting the poets in their own homes. To offer you two or three short poems or passages by a poet of rank is to raise a memory of past pleasure, but not to bring you back (if you were ever there) into the country which he created for himself and you. For a moment you may feel again its air, its storm or sunshine, and recognize the sound of a voice, but you cannot go farther with a friendship or deeper into a unique philosophy of life. Moreover, the significance of even the best short poems is actually diminished, or is in danger of being diminished, when each one is read, not by itself or with those of its own blood, but ranged or jumbled among a crowd which have been chosen on the principle of "excellence." Anthologies, in the original and ordinary sense, are collections of "flowers." They exemplify the poets, no doubt, but rather as a pressed violet may exemplify England and an edelweiss Switzerland: the taste of the collector is all that unifies such a book, and that is a matter of limited and even disputable interest.

What says Montaigne—"A posy here I bring,
But nought of it's my own, except the string" .

The string, of course, may be something, and our best anthologists soon saw that their opportunity lay there. *Nightingale Valley*, edited by "Giraldus" in 1860, was a collection which delighted me in youth, but its method was the old one. "We desire," says the Preface, "to present a jewel, aptly arranged of many stones, various in colour and value, but all precious." The image could not be more exactly chosen to convey a view of poetry as a thing brilliant, polished, and outside the scheme of animate nature. In 1877 Francis Palgrave, with the assistance of Tennyson, greatly improved on this. *The Golden Treasury*

is merely the book's name, and the inanimate connotation is completely repudiated in the Preface, where it is claimed that the volume "accurately reflects the natural growth and evolution of our poetry," and its contents, it is hoped, "present a certain unity, as episodes (in the noble language of Shelley) to that great Poem which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world "

The string here is a good one—the thread of historical development—that is, the development of ideas, and there is a second strand implied in the quotation from Shelley, which has not been so often remembered, but which is inseparably interwoven with it, as I hope to show. Another fine thread is offered by Mr Robert Lynd in his introduction to one of Sir A M Methuen's new collections—nothing less than the attempted definition of the nature of Poetry. This would give a far better principle of selection than the personal taste of any individual, and would lead—since there are many proposed definitions of poetry—to a considerable variety in the future harvest of anthologies.

The present book, though it is in effect an anthology, looks unlike one, and has its own reason for that. The collection has not been made on the principle of taste or excellence, but in pursuance of an old and never-ending inquiry. The collector feels that there are many whose taste is better than his own, but none (he believes) with more appetite for poetry. This is not a painful admission, because appetite seems to be a more essential part of life than taste, especially when the appetite is not for the material and the transient, but for knowledge of the world and of men, and of that which lies above, beyond, beneath, or deep within them. Starting from this impulse, this desire to see life at work in literature, the first step was to make a general survey, and some four years ago an English Anthology was compiled of prose and

poetry, showing the Main Stream of English Literature from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. In it the writers were arranged in a chronological succession—not by the year of their entry into life as infants, but according to the time of their arrival in the society of their generation as literary influences. Open the book at any name you will, and you can see at once, by looking back or forward, what was the possible amount of this man's inheritance from his predecessors, and what the possible range of his influence on posterity. The national literature is regarded as an old family receiving accessions of wealth from its members, or as a great river continually broadened by the inflow of tributary streams.

Of this river it is permissible, even for one who has only mapped its course, to say that its depth and fertilizing power have proved to be great beyond expectation, and also that every day spent upon its waters must increase the desire to know more intimately the secret of the bright speed it has, and to follow many of its tributaries to the high Pamirs from which they came. We all love the great bend, or the little back-water, by which we ourselves happen to live, but that is partly, as Mr Kipling says, because our hearts are small, and partly because we may gain in depth of knowledge though we lose in novelty. Yet the exploration of origins, the voyage upstream, is for some irresistible, and for nearly all rewarding. Certainly it is not less full of discoveries than the rush towards the newer ground ahead, and it is, perhaps, more certain to bring us sooner or later among the inexhaustible peaks. No man can discover the future unless he finds it in the past, and that, Sir Thomas Browne tells us, is exactly what we may expect to do.

In any case there will probably be general agreement on one point among all who read poetry with any ardour. The first and greatest pleasure of the explorer is a kind of self-discovery. He reads a poem

which is classical, inevitable, satisfying, it is new to him but instantly familiar—he finds himself wondering when he read it before, and why he had forgotten it. It may be the thought, the metre, or the diction that so takes him with a sense of kinship, or even of ownership—more probably it is the complex rhythm of words and feeling, which so corresponds with his own spiritual wave-length that the message is received with perfect clearness, and seems like a stirring of memory, a repayment by the unconscious to the conscious of things long possessed

After this, it seems to me, comes the discovery of the poet in his poems—the realization of the man with his feelings and thoughts, the maker with his “heaven-sent moments for this skill” As we love to understand a friend, to see him acting in accordance with his known character—quite apart from the question of agreement or approval—so it is one of the deeper pleasures to live with a poet till you know him by every outward sign and inward rhythm Then comes a still greater reward when once you have set out on this intimacy, ideas begin to spring up in you like flowers, planted by no hand of yours You become aware of significances, of interactions of form and sense, of rhythm and emotion, of metre and diction; you begin to gain an insight into the essential nature of Poetry, the power and art of the artist, whose work alone in this world can be called creation—the power and art by which a man may build his own world out of the thoughts of the imagination of his heart, and compel others to the end of time to come and live there with him Then at last you know that you are watching a mystery you ask of the poet, as the poet once asked of another mystery—

- What is your substance, whereof are you made,
- That millions of strange shadows on you tend ?

You perceive that the maker is not alone, nor un-

aided, you see him in his solitude, in his inner room, in the chamber of his heart, working because he must work, but not by himself nor for himself alone—how could he, seeing that he is not a separate individual existence, but a member of a multitude, all not independent but interdependent, all receiving the best part of that which they have to give?

Poets have often claimed immortality for their work, but never, I think, merit. They know well enough how involuntary are their deepest moments, how they draw upon hidden sources—either upon the stores of their own long-unconscious memory, or upon those older poets whose descendants or reincarnations they are, or upon that universal spirit to whose power so many of them in so many ages (as we shall see presently) have borne sincere and moving testimony. We, the readers, must, on our part, dismiss with equal frankness all thought of demerit. A poet may receive from another without theft, borrowing, or indolence, and without being a lesser artist and creator. The question to be faced is not, "Whence came that form or that material?" but "To what end has it been used?" The great builders are not known for their care to make their own bricks and shape their own stone—they take what they need wherever they find it, as Michael Angelo quarried the Roman temples for his own church. Scruples on this point are irrelevant, and so is that other anxiety, lest poetry should suffer by the continued treatment of old themes, the continued use of old forms and metres. What real poet ever doubted his own originality? What real critic ever failed to hear a new voice because it sang of the old things in the old modes of our music? Neither poet nor critic worth the name will ever tire of the immemorial lights of earth

When I am weary of praising the dawn and the sunset,
May I be no more numbered among the immortals

Our object, then, in noting or tracing out the resemblances and inheritances among the poets we read, is not in any way to accuse or to appraise them ; it is to learn something of the movement of the human spirit when flowing at its fullest tide of power. It is a movement as mazy and mysterious as that of the sacred river of Xanadu, and as impossible to state in direct terms , it can only be observed in glimpses, and only by long familiarity and reflection could we hope to form a coherent theory of it But the theory can be left to wait, if only we can gain some idea of the secret forces at work, their power and their endless multiplicity, their depth and the depth of the source from which they are flung up momentarily and for ever.



THE POET AND HIS RAW MATERIAL · PROSE

THE word poetry is commonly used in two different senses it may mean either a kind of feeling or vision, or an artistic product In England more than a thousand people are to-day producing poetry—that is, writing and printing it, and we may say of the remaining forty millions, who do not write or print, that there is almost always some poetry in them, either in their childhood, or when they fall in love, or at some crisis of their own fate or their country's, or later when they look back upon the great moments of their life But these are not poets, because though they can see and feel and express, they cannot so use language as to express the significance, as well as the mere fact, of their emotion, they have not the power to carry it into the heart of others and make there a new world—a world in which the elements of common life are lost and found again, as notes are lost and found again in the music of a great composer

It has been believed in the past, and will some day be again believed, that this power of transmuting the world is the greatest and most vital known to man The unique word "creative" has been allotted to art, and especially to poetic art "In the whole universe," says the Italian, "there is none that deserves the name of Creator save God and the poet" Those who understand this even in a vague or limited way, and especially those who desire to awaken themselves or others to a fuller understanding, are naturally impelled to search out the workings of such a power, and even to speculate upon its origin, just as men of Science

are impelled to investigate the nature and origin of the material atom. In the one case as in the other, the first thing necessary is to observe the facts, to see the forces at work, and to compare their effects in different circumstances. To watch the forces of poetry at work is to see the spirit of man, as those others may be said to see the invisible atom with its electric charge and its immeasurable power ; and for us the search is even more enthralling, because the intellect of the inquirer into poetry is supplemented by no mechanical instruments but by the most delicately responsive balance and the most concentrated vision of his own nature. To exercise continually this vision and this balance is not only to use means to an end, to "see into the life of things," it is to "be with that which thou dost seek," and even to become a part of it. That is the meaning of scholarship, at present so little understood by the crowd and their universal providers, and it is so far from being one with pedantry or academicism that it can save even a profound philologist here and there. Browning's Grammarian appeared to be unnecessarily busy over elementary rules and particles, but his real inquiry was, "Show me their shaping—Theirs who most studied man, the bard and sage." To show the shaping of the poets is a bold ambition, but it may have useful results if these two conditions are kept—first, it must be man who is studied, in his use of language, and, second, our learning must not omit or despise elementary observations, for no one can know where the secrets of Poetry are hidden or when and how she will give them up to the seeker.

Let us begin, then, with one or two simple examples of the process by which the poet chooses his raw material and makes what he will of it. In lyrical poetry these are not easy to find, but there is one example worth quoting here, of a lyric poem indisputably spontaneous but in the main a tissue of

borrowed materials — Ben Jonson's famous song,
To Celia

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
 And I will pledge with mine ,
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup
 And I'll not look for wine
 The thirst that from the soul doth rise
 Doth ask a drink divine ,
 But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
 I would not change for thine

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
 Not so much honouring thee
 As giving it a hope that there
 It could not withered be ,
 But thou thereon didst only breathe,
 And sent'st it back to me ,
 Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
 Not of itself but thee !

" This immortally careless rapture," says Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, " is pieced together from scraps of the Love Letters of Philostratus, a Greek rhetorician of the 2nd century A D " I cannot lay my hand upon Philostratus, but I learn from Mr W R Paton's volume of Love Epigrams from the Palatine Anthology that the original source of Philostratus' compliments is this epigram by an anonymous Greek —

*πέμπω σοι μύρον ἡδύ, μύρω παρέχων χάριν, οὐ σοί,
 αὐτῇ γὰρ μυρίσται καὶ τὸ μύρον δίδασται*

I send thee gifts of myrrh, dear heart,
 As honouring them, not thee ,
 Because I know that where thou art
 Ev'n sweets will sweeter be

In later pages lyrics will be found which may appear to resemble this in origin The difference is that they are translations, or transmutations, of poem into

poem, and not of raw material into poem. Wotton's and Dyer's poems of "Happy Life" come nearest to our present point, but in general when a poet makes a lyric his material can hardly be said to be "raw," or to be chosen by him. It is given to him by the outer world as a perception of his own, presented to his consciousness as an intuition or act of spiritual vision, and remains in his own keeping to be mingled with his own thoughts and other feelings until—perhaps long afterwards—he recollects the old emotion in a moment of tranquillity. Then, when he is no longer driven by the urge of the senses, or by lack of leisure, to express himself in prose—that is, imperfectly and insignificantly,—he sets himself to create the beauty which he now sees to have been at the heart of his pain or pleasure. If he is a good poet he will appear to be doing this naturally and easily, as a creature who warbles his native woodnotes wild, but in truth, whether he is Shakespeare or another, his easiest and most natural perfection is due not to a rawness but a ripeness of knowledge, not to a happy ignorance but to a wisdom deeper than the depth of any single personality.

In a narrative or dramatic poem all this is seen more plainly and unmistakably. The material is visible, for it is external. It consists first of a story or plot, secondly, of characters, both must be partly old, for all the possible stories have been told long ago, and no character can be human and yet entirely invented. The more a writer struggles to invent the less he is likely to create. His true way is a different one. He finds his material among the accumulated stores of the race, whether ancient or modern, he sets to work to reject all that he judges unnecessary or unfit, to add all that is lacking, and finally, without effort, almost without consciousness of his power, he endows his work with his own personal quality in the act of making it serve his own purpose. It is

this which ensures originality ; the inheritance of a poet may be great, and his resemblances may be numerous and easily perceived, but if he is sincerely bent upon his own business it will belong to him and to no other.

This may be exemplified by any of Shakespeare's best plays—those in which he was not intentionally including the work of other men in blocks unchanged. A good one for our purpose is *Antony and Cleopatra*, because the raw material comes from a single source, and that source may be traced back to a still remoter origin. The whole play should be read, but what we give here will suffice—the two scenes of the death of Antony and the death of Cleopatra, the second of which contains the separate scene of Cleopatra with the Clown and the Asp. There is no need to speak of the dramatic power shown here, or of the strange and moving poetry of such words as Antony's, "I am dying, Egypt, dying," or Cleopatra's "Give me my robe, put on my crown, I have Immortal longings in me," and "I am fire and air, my other elements I give to baser life." These, one might say, are Shakespeare's own—he could never have found them in Sir Thomas North. True, he did not find them, but he found other immortal words. "The miserable change now at my end," says Antony, "Lament nor sorrow at." The phrase is North's—"the miserable change of fortune at the end of his days"—and North was here doing Shakespearean work himself, for it was he who added that one word "miserable" which makes the profound pathos of the line. In the original Plutarch, which is given below, the phrase is "not to lament for him in these last changes (of fortune)." To note this is no diminution of Plutarch's splendour, if he had had a word so perfect as "miserable" he might have risked for it the masterly and heroic terseness of his style, the whole passage is throbbing with the intensity of the Greek restraint,

and it offers to both the Englishmen the equally perfect pride of "overcome, not cowardly but valiantly, a Roman by a Roman." Here, then, in our first hour of upstream exploration, we come on Shakespeare receiving from North that which North had received, and also that which he had not received, from Plutarch; and so entering into the very form and pressure of times and characters long past, that he is at once transforming and transformed, in a kind of creative evolution

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV SCENE XIII *A Monument*

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS

Enter ANTONY, borne by the Guard

Cleo O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in ! darkling stand
The varying shore o' the world ! O Antony,
Antony, Antony ! Help, Charmian, help, Iras, help;
Help, friends below, let's draw him hither

Ant Peace !
Not Cæsar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumphed on itself

Cleo So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony, but woe 'tis so !

Ant I am dving, Egypt, dving, only
I here importune Death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips

Cleo I dare not, dear—dear my lord, pardon—I
• dare not,
Lest I be taken. Not the imperious shrew
Of the full-fortuned Cæsar ever shall

Be brooched with me ; if knife, drugs, serpents, have
 Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe
 Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
 And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
 Demuring upon me —But come, come, Antony—
 Help me, my women,—we must draw thee up.
 Assist, good friends

Ant Oh ! quick, or I am gone

Cleo Here's sport, indeed !—How heavy weighs
 my lord !

Our strength is all gone into heaviness ;
 That makes the weight Had I great Juno's power.
 The strong-winged Mercury should fetch thee up,
 And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little—
 Wishers were ever fools—O come, come, come ,

[*They draw ANTONY up.*]

And welcome, welcome ! die, where thou hast lived .
 Quicken with kissing , had my lips that power,
 Thus would I wear them out

All A heavy sight !

Ant I am dying, Egypt, dying ,
 Give me some wine, and let me speak a little

Cleo No, let me speak , and let me rail so high,
 That the false housewife Fortune break her wheel,
 Provoked by my offence

Ant One word, sweet Queen
 Of Cæsar seek your honour, with your safety —Oh !

Cleo They do not go together

Ant Gentle, hear me.
 None about Cæsar trust, but Proculeius

Cleo My resolution, and my hands, I'll trust ;
 None about Cæsar

Ant The miserable change now at my end,
 Lament nor sorrow at , but please your thoughts,
 In feeding them with those my former fortunes,
 Wherein I lived the greatest prince o' the world ,
 The noblest , and do now not basely die,
 Nor cowardly put off my helmet to

My countryman, a Roman by a Roman
 Valiantly vanquished. Now, my spirit is going ;
 I can no more [Dies.

Cleo. Noblest of men, woo't die ?
 Hast thou no care of me ? shall I abide
 In this dull world, which in thy absence is
 No better than a sty ?—Oh ! see, my women,
 The crown o' the earth doth melt —My lord !—
 Oh ! withered is the garland of the war,
 The soldier's pole is fallen , young boys and girls
 Are level now with men , the odds is gone,
 And there is nothing left remarkable
 Beneath the visiting moon [She faints.

Char. Oh, quietness, lady !

Iras She is dead too, our sovereign.

Char Lady !

Iras. Madam !

Char. O madam, madam, madam !

Iras Royal Egypt !

Empress !

Char Peace, peace, *Iras*

Cleo No more, but e'en a woman ; and commanded
 By such poor passion as the maid that milks,
 And does the meanest chares —It were for me
 To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods ,
 To tell them that this world did equal theirs,
 Till they had stolen our jewel All's but naught ;
 Patience is sottish , and impatience does
 Become a dog that's mad. Then is it sin,
 To rush into the secret house of Death,
 Ere Death dare come to us ?—How do you, women ?
 What, what ? good cheer ! Why, how now, Charmian ?
 My noble girls !—Ah, women, women ! look,
 Our lamp is spent, it's out —Good sirs, take heart —

[To the Guard below.

We'll bury him , and then, what's brave, what's noble,
 Let's do it after the high Roman fashion,
 And make Death proud to take us. Come, away ;

This case of that huge spirit now is cold.

Ah, women, women ! come , we have no friend

But resolution, and the briefest end

[*Exeunt , those above bearing off ANTONY'S body.*]

ACT V SCENE II *A Room in the Monument*

* * * * *

Cleo Shew me, my women, like a queen —Go fetch
My best attires , I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony —Sirrah, Iras, go —
Now, noble Charmian, we'll despatch indeed ,
And, when thou hast done this chare, I'll give thee
leave

To play till Doomsday Bring our crown and all —
Wherefore's this noise ? [*Exit IRAS A noise within.*]

Enter one of the Guard

Guard Here is a rural fellow,
That will not be denied your Highness' presence
He brings you figs

Cleo Let him come in [*Exit Guard*] What a poor
instrument

May do a noble deed ! he brings me liberty —
My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me Now from head to foot
I am marble-constant , now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine

Re-enter Guard, with a Clown bringing a basket

Guard This is the man

Cleo Avoid, and leave him [*Exit Guard.*]
Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,
That kills and pains not ?

Clown Truly I have him but I would not be the
party that should desire you to touch him ; for his
biting is immortal. Those that do die of it, do seldom
or never recover.

Cleo. Remember'st thou any that have died on it ?

Clown Very many, men and women too I heard of one of them no longer than yesterday—a very honest woman, but something given to lie, as a woman should not do, but in the way of honesty—how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt —Truly, she makes a very good report o' the worm, but he that will believe all that they say, shall never be saved by half that they do But this is most fallible, the worm's an odd worm

Cleo Get thee hence, farewell

Clown I wish you all joy of the worm

Cleo Farewell [*Clown sets down the basket.*]

Clown You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind

Cleo Ay, ay, farewell

Clown Look you, the worm is not to be trusted, but in the keeping of wise people, for, indeed, there is no goodness in the worm

Cleo. Take thou no care, it shall be heeded

Clown Very good, give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding

Cleo Will it eat me ?

Clown You must not think I am so simple, but I know the Devil himself will not eat a woman I know that a woman is a dish for the gods, if the Devil dress her not But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women, for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five

Cleo Well, get thee gone, farewell

Clown Yes, forsooth, I wish you joy of the worm.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter IRAS, with a robe, crown, etc

Cleo Give me my robe, put on my crown, I have Immortal longings in me. Now no more The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.— Yare, yare, good Iras, quick —Methinks I hear Antony call, I see him rouse himself

Char. In this vile world So, fare thee well.—
 Now boast thee, Death ! in thy possession lies
 A lass unparalleled —Downy windows, close ;
 And golden Phœbus never be beheld
 Of eyes again so royal ! Your crown's awry ;
 I'll mend it, and then play . . .

Enter the Guard, rushing in

1 *Guard.* Where is the Queen ?

Char Speak softly, wake her not

1 *Guard.* Cæsar hath sent . .

Char Too slow a messenger.

[Applies the Asp

Oh, come ! apace, despatch ! I partly feel thee.

1 *Guard.* Approach, ho ! All's not well Cæsar's
 beguiled

2 *Guard.* There's Dolabella sent from Cæsar, call
 him

1 *Guard.* What work is here ?—Charmian, is this
 well done ?

Char It is well done, and fitting for a princess
 Descended of so many royal kings
 Ah, soldier !

[Dies.

The End of Antony and Cleopatra

AT last there came a secretarie unto him called Diomedes, who was commaunded to bring him into the tombe or monument where Cleopatra was When he heard that she was alive, he verie earnestlie prayed his men to carie his bodie thither, and so he was caried in his mens armes into the entry of the monument. Notwithstanding, Cleopatra would not open the gates, but came to the high windowes, and cast out certaine chaines and ropes, in the which Antonius was trussed :

and Cleopatra her owne selfe, with two women only, which she had suffered to come with her into these monuments, trised Antonius up. They that were present to behold it, said they never saw so pitiefull a sight. For, they plucked up poore Antonius all bloody as he was, and drawing on with pangs of death, who holding up his hands to Cleopatra, raised up him selfe as well as he could. It was a hard thing for these women to do, to lift him up, but Cleopatra stowping downe with her head, putting to all her strength to her uttermost power, did lift him up with much a doe, and never let goe her hold, with the helpe of the women beneath that bad her be of good corage, and were as sorie to see her labor so, as she her selfe. So when she had gotten him in after that sorte, and layed him on a bed: she rent her garments upon him, clapping her brest, and scratching her face and stomake. Then she dried up his blood that had berayed his face, and called him her Lord, her husband, and Emperour, forgetting her owne miserie and calamity, for the pitie and compassion she tooke of him. Antonius made her cease her lamenting, and called for wine, either bicause he was a thirst, or else for that he thought therby to hasten his death. When he had dronke, he earnestly prayed her, and perswaded her, that she would seeke to save her life, if she could possible, without reproache and dishonour: and that chiefly she should trust Proculeius above any man else about Cæsar. And as for him selfe, that she should not lament nor sorowe for the miserable chaunge of his fortune at the end of his dayes: but rather that she should thinke him the more fortunate, for the former triumphes and honors he had received, considering that while he lived he was the noblest and greatest Prince of the world, and that now he was overcome, not cowardly, but valiantly, a Romane by an other Romane. . . .

For those whom Cæsar sent unto her ran thither in all hast possible, and found the souldiers standing at

the gate, mistrusting nothing, nor understanding of her death. But when they had opened the dores, they founde Cleopatra starke dead, layed upon a bed of gold, attired and araied in her royall robes, and one of her two women, which was called Iras, dead at her feete : and her other woman called Charmion halfe dead, and trembling, trimming the Diademe which Cleopatra ware upon her head. One of the souldiers seeing her, angrily sayd unto her : Is that well done Charmion ? Verie well sayd she againe, and meete for a Princes discended from the race of so many noble kings. She sayd no more, but fell downe dead hard by the bed. Some report that this Aspicke was brought unto her in the basket with figs, and that she had commaunded them to hide it under the figge leaves, that when she shoulde thinke to take out the figges, the Aspicke shoulde bite her before she should see her : howbeit, that when she would have taken away the leaves for the figges, she perceived it, and said, Art thou here then ? And so, her arme being naked, she put it to the Aspicke to be bitten. Other say againe, she kept it in a boxe, and that she did pricke and thrust it with a spindell of golde, so that the Aspicke being angerd withall, lept out with great furie, and bitte her in the arme.

Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans :
"Life of Marcus Antonius," by SIR THOMAS
 NORTH, 1579

Extracts from Plutarch : "Antonius"

LXXVII.

Καταπαύσας δὲ τὸν θρήνον αὐτῆς Ἀντώνιος ἤτησε πιεῖν οἶνον, εἴτε διψῶν, εἴτε συντομώτερον ἐλπίζων ἀπολυθῆσθαι.* Πιὼν δὲ παρήνευσεν αὐτῇ τὰ μὲν ἑαυτῆς, ἃν ᾗ μὴ μετ' αἰσχύνῃς, σωτήρια τίθεσθαι, μάλιστα τῶν Καίσαρος

ἑταίρων Προκλήϊψ πιστεύουσιν, αὐτὸν δὲ μὴ θρηνεῖν ἐπὶ ταῖς ὑστάταις μεταβολαῖς, ἀλλὰ μακαρίζειν ὧν ἔτυχε καλῶν, ἐπιφανέστατος ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος καὶ πλείστον ἰσχύσας καὶ νῦν οὐκ ἀγεννῶς Ῥωμαῖος ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίου κρατηθεῖς.

LXXXV.

τῶν δὲ γυναικῶν ἡ μὲν Εἰράς λεγομένη πρὸς τοῖς ποσὶν ἀπέθνησκει, ἡ δὲ Χάρμιον ἤδη σφαλλομένη καὶ καρη-
βαροῦσα κατεκόσμει τὸ διάδημα τὸ περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς. Εἰπόντος δὲ τινος ὀργῇ· Καλὰ ταῦτα, Χάρμιον;
κάλλιστα μὲν οὖν, ἔφη, καὶ πρέποντα τῇ τοσούτων ἀπογόνῳ βασιλέων. Πλέον δὲ οὐδὲν εἶπεν, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ
παρὰ τὴν κλίνην ἔπεσε.

THE POET AND HIS RAW MATERIAL : TRANSLATION

THE translation of a poem from one language into another is in most cases not the making of poetry but the destruction of it. The aim of the translator, properly so called, is a daring and benevolent one : wishing to share his own pleasure with others less fortunate, he imports, as it were, into remote and birdless islands a cargo of mechanical nightingales and cuckoo clocks. These have no life or beauty, but their sound and motion satisfy people to whom the originals are unknown. Of translations such as these it is often said that "they give the sense," or "they give the substance," or even that "they give all you really need." They do give something—if you cannot see the garden in flower it is something to look into it even in the dead of winter ; but how comparatively little the something is may be shown by the first example to hand. In six famous lines Catullus made out of the Epicurean hopelessness and frivolity of the Roman world a song of sombre and haunting beauty.—

Vivamus mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius aestimemus assis
Soles occidere et redire possunt,
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux
Nox est perpetua una dormienda

The most exact English version of this is as follows :—

Let us live, my Lesbia, and love, and value at one farthing all the talk of crabbed old men. Suns may set and rise again. For us, when the short light has once set, remains to be slept the sleep of one unbroken night.

Beyond this no translation, properly so called, can be expected to go ; it is the work of an honoured scholar who was also a writer of fine English prose, and he had the help of six other eminent scholars in preparing his complete version of Catullus. He gives " the sense," but does he give " the substance " of the original ? Is it not something quite different by which those lines have haunted the imagination of men ever since they were first written ?

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the safer sort our deeds reprove
Let us not weigh them Heaven's great lamps do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive ,
But soon as once is set our little light,
Then must we sleep one ever-during night

The rest is not Catullus, perhaps, but it is at any rate Campion—the whole thing is a poem made out of a poem ; and its likeness—that by which it gives you of the original " all you really need "—lies in the sad music of it, in that which is, though in the voice of another people, the sound of the meaning. Strange that the meaning of words should lie in their sound rather than their sense ; but that is the truth of poetry, and one of its oldest secrets

The poet, then, as I understand the matter, sometimes uses an old poem in a foreign language as raw material for a new poem in his own. Sometimes, however, he has the real translator's ambition, and matches his poetic power against the difficulties of a really heroic enterprise, undertaking, perhaps, to interpret a whole epic to his countrymen. These attempts are generally more famous than familiar among us. Many have heard of Chapman's *Homer*, Derby's *Iliad*, Pope's *Iliad*, but few have read them. Tennyson's single scene in the Trojan camp at night is well known, and shows that though he had better use for

his time, he could when he chose bring to work of this kind some of his own peculiar power. If we go back up the stream we shall find Lord Derby, the least poetical of the four, aiming at accuracy and simplicity rather than any more brilliant quality. Pope allows himself more room—he makes 36 lines out of the original 20—in order to get in the polished phrases and balanced turns of rhythm in which alone he could express his spirited and imaginative mood—the mood of a Georgian who knew very little of Greek or of the Greeks. Chapman comes last in literal exactness, and also, I think, in mastery of his instrument; but he comes nearest to poetic truth in one important matter—he saw that Homer must remain for ever unknown in any English verse which does not keep some memory of the long rolling waves, the surge and thunder, as Andrew Lang called it, of the Greek hexameter. The four styles may be compared by taking the same line or passage from each and placing them side by side, thus —

Tennyson

And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest

Derby

And every crag and every jutting peak
Stands boldly forth, and every forest glade;
Even to the gates of Heaven is opened wide
The boundless sky

Pope

Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies.

Chapman.

And even the lowly valleys joy to glitter in their sight,
When the unmeasured firmament bursts to disclose her
light.

If Homer is to be done into verse rather than prose—and in spite of the fine work of those four great scholars, Butcher, Lang, Myers, and Leaf, the verdict will probably go that way—some such metre as that of Chapman's choice is a first necessity. Judgment has indeed already been given: it was not any prose, nor any heroic verse, but the long "fourteeners" of the Elizabethan, which gave Keats the sense of staring at the wide expanse of a new-found ocean.

I

The Trojan Camp at Night

Specimen of a Translation of the "Iliad" in Blank Verse [Iliad, viii. 542-561]

So Hector spoke ; the Trojans roared applause,
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his own ;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heaped
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
Rolled the rich vapour far into the heaven.
And these all night upon the bridge of war
Sat glorying ; many a fire before them blazed :
As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every light comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart ;,
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,

A thousand on the plain ; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire ;
And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds
Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn.

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1868.

The Trojan Camp at Night

Thus Hector spoke ; the Trojans shouted loud :
Then from the yoke the sweating steeds they loosed,
And tethered each beside their several cars :
Next from the city speedily they brought
Oxen and sheep , the luscious wine procured ;
Brought bread from out their houses, and good store
Of fuel gathered , wafted from the plain,
The winds to Heaven the savoury odours bore.
Full of proud hopes, upon the pass of war,
All night they camped, and frequent blazed their fires.
As when in Heaven, around the glittering moon
The stars shine bright amid the breathless air ,
And every crag and every jutting peak
Stands boldly forth, and every forest glade ;
Even to the gates of Heaven is opened wide
The boundless sky ; shines each particular star
Distinct ; joy fills the gazing shepherd's heart.
So bright, so thickly scattered o'er the plain,
Before the walls of Troy, between the ships
And Xanthus' stream, the Trojan watchfires blazed.
A thousand fires burnt brightly ; and round each
Sat fifty warriors in the ruddy glare ;
Champing the provender before them laid,
Barley and rye, the tethered horses stood
Beside the cars, and waited for the morn.

EDWARD, EARL OF DERBY, 1864.

The Trojan Camp at Night

The leader spoke. From all his hosts around
Shouts of applause along the shores resound.
Each from the yoke the smoking steeds untied,
And fixed their headstalls to his chariot-side
Fat sheep and oxen from the town are led,
With generous wine, and all-sustaining bread.
Full hecatombs lay burning on the shore ;
The winds to heaven the curling vapours bore.
Ungrateful offering to th' immortal powers !
Whose wrath hung heavy o'er the Trojan towers ;
Nor Priam nor his sons obtained their grace ;
Proud Troy they hated, and her guilty race.

The troops exulting sat in order round,
And beaming fires illumined all the ground
As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene ;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole,
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver every mountain's head ,
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies :
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays :
The long reflections of the distant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires.
A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,

Whose umbered arms, by fits, thick flashes send.
Loud neigh the coursers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the rising morn.

ALEXANDER POPE, 1715.

The Trojan Camp at Night

This speech all Trojans did applaud : who from their
traces losed
Their sweating horse, which sev'rally with headstalls
they reposed,
And fast'ned by their chariots ; when others brought
from town
Fat sheep and oxen, instantly, bread, wine, and hewèd
down
Huge store of wood The winds transferred into the
friendly sky
Their supper's savour ; to the which they sat delight-
fully,
And spent all night in open field , fires round about
them shined.
As when about the silver moon, when air is free from
wind,
And stars shine clear, to whose sweet beams, high
prospects, and the brows
Of all steep hills and pinnacles, thrust up themselves
for shows,
And even the lowly valleys joy to glitter in their sight,
When the unmeasured firmament bursts to disclose
her light,
And all the signs in heaven are seen, that glad the
shepherd's heart ;
So many fires disclosed their beams, made by the
Trojan part,
Before the face of Ilion, and her bright turrets showed.
A thousand courts of guard kept fires, and every
guard allowed

Fifty stout men, by whom their horse eat oats and
 hard white corn,
 And all did wishfully expect the silver-throned morn.

GEORGE CHAPMAN, 1616

It may be noted that though the impulse to surpass or to supersede one translation by another may have counted for something with the translators of Homer, they were, and their successors must always be, bound to keep close to the subject-matter of their original. Those who translate or transform a lyric or epigram may use more freedom—as we have already seen in Campion's example. In tracing the little stream of influence which brought the five following poems into our anthologies we may see this more clearly still. Pope's poem, "Happy the Man," is in the main a translation from Martial; but it would be difficult to believe that the writer of it was unaware of any of the previous English versions. The same is still more true of Wotton's piece. It takes less from the Latin—only the title and the theme of the last stanza, "Quod sis, esse velis nihilque malis,"—and shows no verbal similarity to Dyer or Surrey. Yet it is clearly derived from knowledge of all three: it follows Dyer in his deliberate intention to offer an alternative statement of happiness—in terms of the moral instead of the material life. Greene's little poem is also drawn from Dyer's—this is plain from the last line—and is in an even more earnest moral key; but Greene was a scholar, one of "the University wits," and got his "nights in careless slumber spent" direct from Martial. The "country music" is his, and his only. The "faithful wife" is Surrey's only. But in this as in all his points Surrey is following the Latin. How much more closely he follows them than the others we may see by making a list of Martial's points: inherited livelihood, fruitful ground, hearth always warm, no litigation, little public life, a quiet mind, sound health

and strength, frugality, friends of equal station, good company and a plain table, wine in moderation, a wife but not too much of her, good sleep, content, no thought of death.

II

Happy the Man

Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground ,

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire ;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire.

Blest who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night ; study and ease
Together mixed , sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown ;
Thus unlamented let me die ;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

ALEXANDER POPE.

The Character of a Happy Life

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill !

Whose passions not his masters are ;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath ,

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice ; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise ;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good ;

Who hath his life from rumours freed ,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat ;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great ;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend ;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend ;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall :
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

Crown and Kingdom

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content :
The quiet mind is richer than a crown :
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent :
The poor estate scorns Fortune's angry frown.
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such
 bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.
The homely cottage that affords nor pride, nor care,
The mean that 'grees with country music best,
The sweet consort of mirth's and music's fare,
Obscurèd life sets down a type of bliss ;
A mind content both crown and kingdom is

ROBERT GREENE, 1591.

My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is

My mind to me a kingdom is,
 Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
 That earth affords or grows by kind :
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
 No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
 No shape to feed a loving eye ;
To none of these I yield as thrall :
For why ? my mind doth serve for all.

I see how plenty surfeits oft,
 And hasty climbers soon do fall ;
I see that those which are aloft
 Mishap doth threaten most of all ;

They get with toil, they keep with fear :
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content I live, this is my stay,
I seek no more than may suffice ;
I press to bear no haughty sway ;
Look what I lack my mind supplies :
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave ;
I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor though much they have,
And I am rich with little store ,
They poor, I rich , they beg, I give ,
They lack, I leave ; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss,
I grudge not at another's gain ;
No worldly waves my mind can toss ;
My state at one doth still remain :
I fear no foe, I fawn no friend ,
I loathe not life, nor dread my end

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will ;
Their treasure is their only trust,
A clokèd craft their store of skill.
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
My conscience clear my choice defence ;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence .
Thus do I live, thus will I die ;
Would all did so well as I.

SIR EDWARD DYER, 1550 ?-1607.

The Means to Attain Happy Life

Martial, the things that do attain
The happy life be these, I find :—
The richness left, not got with pain ;
The fruitful ground, the quiet mind ;

The equal friend ; no grudge, no strife ;
No charge of rule, nor governance ;
Without disease, the healthful life ;
The household of continuance ,

The mean diet, no delicate fare ;
True wisdom joined with simpleness ,
The night dischargèd of all care,
Where wine the wit may not oppress.

The faithful wife, without debate ;
Such sleeps as may beguile the night :
Contented with thine own estate
Ne wish for death, ne fear his might.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY.
(*From Tottel's "Miscellany," 1557*)

To his Cousin Julius Martialis

Vitam quæ faciant beatiorem,
Jucundissime Martialis, hæc sunt :
Res non parta labore, sed relictæ ;
Non ingratus ager, focus perennis ;
Lis nunquam, toga rara, mens quieta ;
Vires ingenuæ, salubre corpus ;
Prudens simplicitas, pares amici ;
Convictus facilis, sine arte mensa ;

Nox non ebria, sed soluta curis ;
 Non tristis torus, et tamen pudicus ;
 Somnus, qui faciat breves tenebras ;
 Quod sis, esse velis nihilque malis ;
 Summum nec metuas diem, nec optes.

M Val Martialis, Epigram X. xlvii

The following passage from Dryden's "Fables" is an example of translation from the English of one age into the English of another ; and it proves our first proposition as conclusively as any evidence from versions of Latin or Greek poems—it shows the destruction of poetry at the hands of modern grammar and "propriety" of expression. For Englishmen of the seventeenth century the voyage upstream to the England of Chaucer was a painful adventure among barbarians, and they were glad to be saved from the necessity of making it. They seem never to have suspected that what was brought down to them by Mr. Dryden was not the real thing—that that had perished on the way

Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,
 Now warm in love, now with'ring in the grave !
 Never, O ! never more to see the sun !
 Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone !

This is not three hundred years, but all Eternity away from those three lines on which Silence is the only possible commentator —

What is this world ? What asketh men to have ?
 Now with his love, now in his colde grave
 Alone, withouten any companye

After seeing the stupid and self-satisfied ruin of such beauty, we remember gladly the saying of Milton that Dryden was "a rhymers but no poet"; and his even more scornful phrase when Dryden asked permission to make an opera out of *Paradise Lost*. Milton gave

him "leave to tag his verses " But for more than a century afterwards Dryden had his own way. The downward career of poetical judgment between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth century is the record of his triumph. When his version of *The Knight's Tale* was reissued in 1806, the learned and accomplished editor assured his public that Chaucer's story was "often but rudely sketched or coarsely expressed," while Dryden's versification of it "possesses every excellence for which the writer is so justly famed. The improvements upon the matter of the original are most conspicuous in the sentimental passages, where Dryden has frequently expanded a bare hint into a weighty and dignified sentence." Fortunately by going upstream we may escape these weighty and dignified sentences.

III

The Last Words of Arcite to his Love

How I have loved excuse my faltering tongue,
My spirit's feeble and my pains are strong ;
This I may say, I only grieve to die
Because I lose my charming Emily :
To die, when heav'n had put you in my pow'r,
Fate could not choose a more malicious hour !
What greater curse could envious fortune give,
Than just to die, when I began to live !
Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,
Now warm in love, now with'ring in the grave !
Never, O ! never more to see the sun !
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone !
This fate is common, but I lose my breath
Near bliss, and yet not blessed before my death.

Farewell ! but take me dying in your arms,
 'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms.
 This hand I cannot but in death resign ;
 Ah, could I live ! But while I live 'tis mine.
 I feel my end approach, and thus embraced
 Am pleased to die ; but hear me speak my last.

Fables from Boccaccio and Chaucer,
 by JOHN DRYDEN, 1699

Arcite, Dying, to his Emily

Allas the wo ! Allas, the peynes stronge
 That I for yow have suffred, and so longe !
 Allas, the deeth ! allas, myn Emelye !
 Allas, departing of our companye !
 Allas, myn hertes quene ; allas, my wyf !
 Myn hertes lady, ender of my lyf !
 What is this world ? What asketh men to have ?
 Now with his love, now in his colde grave
 Allone, withouten any companye
 Far-wel, my swete fo ! myn Emelye !
 And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
 For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER, 1385.

TRANSFERENCE OF PHRASE

IN literature, as in everyday life, there are a certain number of phrases, proverbial or picturesque, which pass current for the need of the moment, like old coins which are accepted though too worn to be of full value. Shakespeare hands on one of these in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*: "Are you content," says the Outlaw to Valentine, "to be our general—To make a virtue of necessity, And live as we do in this wilderness?" and in *Richard II* old Gaunt uses the same expression in bidding his exiled son good-bye. It is probable that Shakespeare got it, directly or indirectly, from Chaucer, who in *The Knight's Tale* makes Theseus say in his final speech —

Then is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it well, that we may not eschue.

Chaucer may have got it from Geoffrey de Vinsauf, who in the chronicle of Cœur-de-Lion's Crusade in 1190 writes of a boarding action at sea, "Our men, therefore, making a virtue of necessity" (*de necessitate facientes virtutem*), and there can be no doubt that all Christendom originally acquired it from the vivacious writings of St Jerome, where it occurs twice—before the year 420.

A more puzzling—and more poetical—instance is that of the now familiar refrain, "Where are the snows of yester-year?" D. G. Rossetti's ballade is, of course, a translation from Villon (1431-80?), and it may be traceable in France farther upstream. From the same spring must have come Chaucer's version. When Troilus is trying to persuade himself that Cri-

seyde will come back to him, his friend knows better, but humours him, and keeps his cynical wisdom to himself :—

Pandere answerde, " It may be, well y-nough " ;
 And held with him of al that ever he seyde ;
 But in his herte he thoughte, and softe lough,
 And to himself ful sobrelly he seyde :
 " From hasel-wode ther Joly Robin pleyde,
 Shal come al that that thou abydest here ;
 Ye ! fare-wel al the snow of fernē year ! "

Since " ferne " (former) is an Anglo-Saxon word, it is possible that Chaucer is here adapting a French phrase by inserting an English word, instead of enriching his English by introducing a French word, as both he and his predecessor Mannyng had often done : and " the snow of ferne year " is certainly far more musical to our ears than " les neiges d'antan "

But these phrases are merely, as I have said, a kind of current coin. They are not material to work upon or to work with. Some poets, and one in particular, have an immense range in reading, a great memory, conscious or unconscious, and a perfect tact in using for their own purpose a bit of carving not their own. In the examples I am about to give they are in no way founding on what they borrow, they are merely using it incidentally at the proper moment, they take the advantage of a line or a phrase enriched with fine old work, just as all poets continually gain by the associations of single words, ennobled as it were by long and honoured ancestry. Here is Keats's finest lyric, and two centuries upstream, the forgotten source from which came the wonderful final line of his first and last stanzas—the desolate cadence of the opening question, and of the answer for which we have been waiting all through the poem :— .

I

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering ?
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone ?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew ;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
“ I love thee true ! ”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore ;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah ! woe betide !
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;
Who cried—“ La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall ! ”

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

JOHN KEATS.

Let No Bird Sing

Glide soft, ye floods
And every spring :
Within the shady woods
Let no bird sing,

Nor from the grove a turtle-dove
Be seen to couple with her love ;
But silence on each dale and mountain dwell,
Whilst Willy bids his friend and joy farewell.

WILLIAM BROWNE.

Tennyson went as far as this, and sometimes further, as may be seen from the following triple set of examples. In the first he has received from Donne, a poet of stronger fibre but less poetical mastery, just the six words " Old year, thou shalt not die," and has made of them the refrain of an entirely new poem. It is not a nuptial song, with the appropriate fire in it, but an early and fanciful little piece, whose merit is that its fancy is natural and consistent, not a conceit like Donne's, far-fetched and chaotic. The second is a dramatic lyric from *The Princess* : its poetical logic and its sincerity are admirably fitted to an air made out of Carew's opening phrase. Otherwise the two poems are more than the full two centuries asunder : the Victorian is a good song, but a song ; the other is a sheer incantation, for which Carew has somehow gone back to the eternal summer of the Elizabethans. In the third pair it will be seen that Tennyson has again dared greatly . he has not feared to remind us of one of Sidney's most dramatic poems, and the most original of all. But *In Memoriam*, and especially these stanzas, are original too ; it would be hard to find another poem of simple aspiration, so artfully enforced . it thrills with the reiterated swing and clamour of a peal of bells ; not tolling, as in Sidney's ear, but ringing a message and a summons in a sky wild with change. It will be seen that to apply to any of the poems in this section the common epithet " derivative," or the condemnation implied in it, would be completely inappropriate, and could tend only to confusion of judgment.

II

The Death of the Old Year

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing :
Toll ye the church bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1842.

Nuptial Song

(The time of the marriage, December 26, 1613)

Thou art reprieved, old year, thou shalt not die ;
Though thou upon thy death-bed lie,
And shouldst within five days expire,
Yet thou art rescued by a mightier fire
Than thy old soul, the sun,
When he doth in his largest circle run.
The passage of the west or east would thaw,
And open wide their easy liquid jaw
To all our ships, could a Promethean art
Either unto the northern pole impart
The fire of these inflaming eyes, or of this loving heart.

JOHN DONNE.

III

Ask Me No More

Ask me no more · the moon may draw the sea ;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee ?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more · what answer should I give ?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are sealed ;
I strove against the stream and all in vain ;
Let the great river take me to the main ;
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
Ask me no more.
ALFRED TENNYSON, 1847.

Song

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose ;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day ;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past ;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars 'light
That downwards fall in dead of night ;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phoenix builds her spicy nest ;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

THOMAS CAREW.

IV

Ring Out, Wild Bells

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light :
The year is dying in the night ,
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
The year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

ALFRED TENNYSON.
(From "*In Memoriam*," *cvi.*)

A Dirge

Ring out your bells, let mourning shews be spread ;
For Love is dead .

All Love is dead, infected
With plague of deep disdain .
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,
And Faith fair scorn doth gain.

From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us !

Weep, neighbours, weep ; do you not hear it said
That Love is dead ?

His death-bed, peacock's folly ;
His winding-sheet is shame ;
His will, false-seeming wholly ;
His sole executor, blame.

From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us !

Let dirge be sung, and trentals rightly read,
For Love is dead ;

Sir Wrong his tomb ordaineth,
My mistress' marble heart ;
Which epitaph containeth,
" Her eyes were once his dart."

From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us !

Alas, I lie : rage hath this error bred
Love is not dead ;

Love is not dead, but sleepeth
In her unmatched mind,
Where she his counsel keepeth,
Till due deserts she find.

Therefore from so vile fancy,
To call such wit a frenzy,
Who Love can temper thus,
Good Lord, deliver us !

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

TRANSFERENCE OF PHRASE
AND IDEA

WHEN a poet's mind is haunted by a bare phrase, a cadence retained where all else is forgotten or rejected, it may be known to him for what it is, and, with that knowledge, used (as we have seen) for quite another purpose. But there are many instances among the poets where the process is very different; where the phrase is remembered, or comes to mind, unconsciously, and is used in one or other of several ways. It may either supply a metaphor or image to enrich or illustrate the new work; or it may play a much more subtle and interesting part—leading the mind into an old track, inviting the poet to give his own new view of an old philosophy, or lighting up the sky for both poet and reader with the flickering colours of an aurora, which comes not so much from a source as from certain atmospheric conditions. The poetry of such a predecessor as Keats may be said, I think, to be for any modern poet an atmospheric condition, and the effect upon our generation is well exemplified by a passage in Rupert Brooke's curious poem called "Thoughts on the Shape of the Human Body." This begins by showing certain unmistakable traces of the author's descent from Donne, and then undergoes a subtle irradiation from elsewhere.

Could we but fill to harmony, and dwell
Simple as our thoughts and as perfectible,
Rise disentangled from humanity
Strange, whole, and new into simplicity,
Grow to a radiant round love, and bear
Unfluctuant passion for some perfect sphere,

Love moon to moon, unquestioning, and be
 Like the star Lunisequa, steadfastly
 Following the round clear orb of her delight,
 Patiently ever, through the eternal night

Star, steadfast, night, eternal, patiently—these are the colours that had first shone in the lover's heaven nearly a hundred years before.

Bright star ! would I were steadfast as thou art,
 Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
 And watching with eternal lids apart,
 Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite.

In this example, as in the three which now follow, there is no lack of originality implied. To what has already been said on this point I may add an excellent passage by Mr Massingham speaking of Mr W. H. Davies he says, "The lines of Saphestia's song,

'Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,'

are practically re embodied, sentiment for sentiment, and not very far from word for word, in the modern's

'What makes thee weep so, little child?'

But this modern variant is born, not of imitation but of a kind of intuitive memory—an extraordinary outcrop in an age which has evolved as fundamentally from the Elizabethan habit of mind and method of expression as from the Lombardy-poplar effect of the heroic couplet. . . . What really separates them are their totally different ways of looking at the world."

This needed saying of some of the simpler and more obvious cases ; it is no longer necessary when we come on such delicate alchemy as that of Swinburne in his famous Chorus. The conception of the bestowal of

gifts upon Man at his creation, and even the tell-tale word "glass," so singularly (though so differently) introduced by both poets, might easily pass unnoted as a resemblance, so wide is the angle between the religion, the lyric mood, the metre, of Swinburne and of George Herbert.

I

" Say Not of Me "

Say not of me that weakly I declined
The labours of my sires, and fled the sea,
The towers we founded and the lamps we lit,
To play at home with paper like a child.
But rather say . In the afternoon of time
A strenuous family dusted from its hands
The sand of granite, and beholding far
Along the sounding coast its pyramids
And tall memorials catch the dying sun,
Smiled with content, and to this childish task
Around the fire addressed its evening hours.
R L STEVENSON.

The Old Gentry

That all from Adam first began,
Sure none but W—— doubts :
And that his son, and his son's son
Were ploughmen, clowns, and louts.
Here lies the only difference now :
Some shot off late, some soon ;
Your sires in the morning left their plough,
And ours in the afternoon.
Eighteenth Century.

II

“ O That 'Twere Possible ”

O that 'twere possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again !

* * * * *

A shadow flits before me,
 Not thou, but like to thee ;
 Ah, Christ ! that it were possible
 For one short hour to see
 The souls we loved, that they might tell us
 What and where they be !

TENNYSON, *Maud*.

“ O That 'Twere Possible ”

Duchess. Dost thou think that we shall know one
 another
 In the other world ?

Carola Yes, out of question

Duchess. O that it were possible we might
 But hold some two days' conference with the dead !
 From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure,
 I never shall know here.

THOMAS WEBSTER, *Duchess of Malfi*.

III

Oh, Sweet Content !

Oh, sweet content, that turns the labourer's sweat
To tears of joy, and shines the roughest face ;
How often have I sought you high and low,
And found you still in some lone quiet place ;

Here, in my room, when full of happy dreams,
With no life heard beyond that merry sound
Of moths that on my lighted ceiling kiss
Their shadows as they dance and dance around ;

Or in a garden, on a summer's night,
When I have seen the dark and solemn air
Blink with the blind bats' wings, and heaven's bright
face
Twitch with the stars that shine in thousands there.
W H DAVIES, 1919.

O Sweet Content

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers ?
O sweet content !
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed ?
O punishment !
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers golden numbers ?
O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !
Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;
Honest labour bears a lovely face ;
Then hey, nonny nonny—hey, nonny nonny !

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring ?

O sweet content !

Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears ?

O punishment !

Then he that patiently want's burden bears,

No burden bears, but is a king, a king !

O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey, nonny nonny—hey, nonny nonny !

THOMAS DEKKER.

(From "*The Pleasant Comodie of Patient Grissil*," 1603)

" Ah, Sweet Content "

Ah, sweet Content, where is thy mild abode ?

Is it with shepherds and light-hearted swains,

Which sing upon the downs and pipe abroad,

Tending their flocks and cattle on the plains ?

Ah, sweet Content, where dost thou safely rest ?

In heaven, with angels which the praises sing

Of Him that made and rules at His behest

The minds and hearts of every living thing ?

Ah, sweet Content, where doth thine harbour hold ?

Is it in churches, with religious men

Which please the gods with prayers manifold,

And in their studies meditate it then ?—

Whether thou dost in heaven or earth appear,

Be where thou wilt, thou wilt not harbour here.

BARNABE BARNES.

(From "*Parthenophil and Parthenophe : Sonnettes, Madrigals, Elegies, and Odes*," 1593).

IV

Chorus

Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears ;
Grief, with a glass that ran ;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven ;
Summer, with flowers that fell ;
Remembrance fallen from heaven ;
And madness risen from hell ;
Strength without hands to smite ;
Love that endures for a breath ;
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years ;
And froth and drift of the sea ;
And dust of the labouring earth ;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth ;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after,
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span,
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gathered as unto strife ;

They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life ;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labour and thought,
A time to serve and to sin ;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire ;
With his lips he travaileth ;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death ;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision :
Sows, and he shall not reap ;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE,
Atalanta in Calydon, 1865.

The Pulley

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can ;
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure :
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature :
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness ;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

GEORGE HERBERT, *c.* 1630.

SIMILARITY OF METHOD : METRE

FOR dealing with the structure of verse it seems uncertain whether it is worse to be learned and insensitive, or sensitive and ignorant. The latter class is the larger by far, and those in it have the advantage of loving poetry naturally and not pedantically; but they are dominated and bewildered by the learned, who treat verse as a branch of mathematics, and yet can never agree among themselves. In the general confusion the mystery of the craft disappears in clouds of argument; and this is no wonder, for the disputants constantly misuse even the words metre and rhythm. Either they treat them as the same and fail to come to grips with any one who distinguishes between them, or they divide them so completely as to make metre a thing apart from life and language. This last error has produced a new sect, with the defects of both the others: a sect which maintains that an "iambic" poem or line is the same thing as a "trochaic" one, with the addition of an habitual "anacrusis," or unaccented initial syllable.

The Greeks, from whom came these very terms, felt differently about the verse they described. The iambic they found fit for narrative and dialogue—it was the poetic form of human intercourse in speech. Trochaics changed the nature of the voice: made it challenging, rousing, like the sound of trumpets. This is a true observation, and it reveals a general truth: that metre is not a purely mechanical thing, capable of being treated as an abstraction, but has an intimate connection with the living voice of poetry.

The living voice of poetry is, however, that which is properly called rhythm. What, then, is the exact connection between metre and rhythm? For any

practical purpose we need not go further than to say that metre is a formal and regular pattern, which a poet either instinctively or intentionally lays down for himself, and upon which he makes his poem with a free hand, keeping the essential form and movement he has chosen, but obeying at the same time the even more imperative demands of meaning and beauty. What makes his poem personal, original, recognizable for his own, is the unique way in which he responds to these three simultaneous demands. In Mr. de la Mare's poems the metre is often almost concealed, and even the meaning half veiled, by the very intensity of the longing to express a beauty beyond simple form. In Swinburne, on the contrary (as Mr. Drinkwater has remarked in his *Victorian Poetry*), it is the metre rather than the meaning or the rhythms which intoxicate us. Whitman's is a curious and instructive case: he desired rhythm, and sometimes in a first line, or in a poem like "A Sight in Camp in the Day-break grey and dim," he attained it beautifully; but in general he could not make poetic rhythms, because he refused to make them on metric patterns, which are the natural and fundamental source of them.

The possible examples of metre are, of course, endless and endlessly interesting. Of the few given here the first is a very simple one. When Tennyson wished to recreate Balaclava he chose a pattern either from Drayton or from the older Agincourt ballad song, deliberately or out of old memory, as suitable for a charge of horse. The three poems are clearly different, but as they all depend upon the same motive, and the metre is the chief means of conveying it, they have a very marked similarity. The exact contrary may be said of our other examples. Austin Dobson's ballad and Burns's song show distinct degrees of development from the old and simple forms in which this metre was used by our ancestors, and even the old nursery rhyme—or was it a political song?—has little but metre (and

a certain national whimsicality) in common with "Adam lay ybounden," and no other connection with the ancient Roman memorial inscriptions from which the metre came down to our mediæval ancestors.

Consul Censor Ædilis
Qui fuit apud vos

The verses called *Minora Sidera* were written in a metre intentionally designed to express pride by the introduction into the longer alternate lines of phrases corresponding to the Greek "choriambic foot"—such, for example, as "Whether their fame | centuries long | should ring " These choriambics are placed irregularly among the iambs, just as they occurred to the writer in the act of composition; and he had not yet had the chance of seeing Campion's poem, "Love me or not" In that the choriambic is used with equally deliberate intention, but for a different end, and in quite another manner The song is for music, and follows, or prescribes, the air by the use of the repeated choriambics with which every line begins. The metre, then, may be said to be almost identical, but not quite, and the effect—as suits the different poetic meaning—is entirely unlike.

The last set is the most interesting. Tennyson's stanzas and Clare's have nothing in common but the metre, and if any one fears that our metres may be used too often, or cease to suffice for the infinite variety of poetic feeling, the unlikeness in likeness of these two poems should reassure him. Johnson's poem, on the other hand, may likely enough have been haunting Tennyson when he wrote *The Vision of Sin*: the metre is the same, though Tennyson does not, as Johnson does, give a double ending to his first and third lines. It is the note of bitterness and contempt which seems to have carried the metre from the older to the later poet; and it is notable that the word "scorn" is prominent in the final stanza of each.

I

The Charge of the Light Brigade

I

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.

II

“ Forward, the Light Brigade ! ”
Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd .
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die .
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

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.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
 All the world wonder'd ·
Plung'd in the battery-smoke,
Right through 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.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
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 through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

VI

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

ALFRED TENNYSON.

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 Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth tow'rds 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
Unto him sending ;
Which he neglects the while
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

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

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

“ 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 ;
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 ;
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 aim
To our hid forces !
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly
The English archery
Struck 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.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos 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 broadsword 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
Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood
With his brave brother ;

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.

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
 Fought was this noble fray,
 Which fame did not delay
 To England to carry.
 O when shall English men
 With such acts fill a pen ?
 Or England breed again
 Such a King Harry ?

MICHAEL DRAYTON, 1605

Agincourt, or the English Bowman's Glory

Agincourt, Agincourt !
 Know ye not Agincourt ?
 Where English slue and hurt
 All their French foemen ?
 With our pikes and bills brown,
 How the French were beat downe,
 Shot by our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
 Know ye not Agincourt ?
 Never to be forgot

Or known to no men ?
Where English cloth-yard arrows
Killed the French like tame sparrows,
Slaine by our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt,
Where we won field and fort ?
French fled like women
By land and eke by water ;
Never was seene such slaughter
Made by our bowmen

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
English of every sort,
High men and low men,
Fought that day wondrous well, as
All our old stories tell us,
Thanks to our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Either tale, or report
Quickly will show men
What can be done by courage,
Men without food or forage,
Still lusty bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Where such a fight was fought,
As, when they grow men.
Our boys shall imitate ;
Nor need we long to waite ;
They'll be good bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Where our fifth Harry taught
 Frenchmen to know men :
And when the day was done,
Thousands there fell to one
 Good English bowman.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Huzza for Agincourt !
When that day is forgot
 There will be no men.
It was a day of glory,
And till our heads are hoary
 Praise we our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
When our best hopes were nought,
 Tenfold our foemen,
Harry led his men to battle,
Slue the French like sheep and cattle :
 Huzza ! our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
O, it was noble sport !
 Then did we owe men ,
Men, who a victory won us
'Gainst any odds among us :
 Such were our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt !
Know ye not Agincourt ?
Dear was the victory bought
 By fifty yeomen.

Ask any English wench,
They were worth all the French :
Rare English bowmen !

*Quoted in 1600 by T. HEYWOOD (King Edward IV.).
Printed in black-letter c. 1665.*

II

The Ladies of St. James's

A PROPER NEW BALLAD OF THE COUNTRY AND THE TOWN

" Phyllida amo ante alias "—VIRGIL.

The ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play ;
Their footmen run before them
With a " Stand by ! Clear the way ! "
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs ;
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax :
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's !
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air :
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's !
They're painted to the eyes ;
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies :
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
Her colour comes and goes ;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's !
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand :
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's !
They have their fits and freaks ;
They smile on you—for seconds ;
They frown on you—for weeks :
But Phyllida, my Phyllida !
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida ! my Phyllida !
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep ;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida,—for Phyllida
Is all the world to me !

AUSTIN DOBSON.

John Anderson

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent ;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw ;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither ;
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither :
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go ;
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

ROBERT BURNS.

Sing a Song of Sixpence

Sing a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye,
Four-and-twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie.

When the pie was opened
The birds began to sing,
Was not that a dainty dish
To set before a king !

The king was in his counting-house
Counting out his money,
The queen was in the parlour
Eating bread and honey.

The maid was in the garden
Hanging out the clothes,
By came a little bird
And pecked off her nose.

Adam lay Ybounden

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond ;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden written
In their book.

Nor had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Then never had our Lady
A-been heaven's queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was !
Therefore we may singen
Deo gracias !

Fifteenth Century.

III

Minora Sidera

(The Dictionary of National Biography.)

Sitting at times over a hearth that burns
With dull domestic glow,
My thought, leaving the book, gratefully turns
To you who planned it so.

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.

Such as were those, dogs of an elder day,
Who sacked the golden ports,
And those later who dared grapple their prey
Beneath the harbour forts.

Some with flag at the fore, sweeping the world
To find an equal fight,
And some who joined war to their trade, and hurled
Ships of the line in flight.

Whether their fame centuries long should ring
They cared not over-much,
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.

HENRY NEWBOLT, 1897.

“ Love Me or Not ”

Love me or not, love her I must or die ;
 Leave me or not, follow her needs must I.
 O that her grace would my wished comforts give !
 How rich in her, how happy I should live !

All my desire, all my delight should be
 Her to enjoy, her to unite with me ;
 Envy should cease, her would I love alone :
 Who loves by looks is seldom true to one.

Could I enchant, and that it lawful were,
 Her would I charm softly that none should hear ;
 But love enforced rarely yields firm content :
 So would I love that neither should repent

*From THOMAS CAMPION'S "Fourth Book
 of Airs," c 1617.*

IV

Stanzas from “ The Vision of Sin ”

Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
 Here is custom come your way ;
 Take my brute, and lead him in,
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay

Bitter barmaid, waning fast !
 See that sheets are on my bed ;
 What ! the flower of life is past :
 It is long before you wed.

Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,
 At the Dragon on the heath !
 Let us have a quiet hour,
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

I am old, but let me drink ;
Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

Wine is good for shrivelled lips
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamped in clay.

Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :
What care I for any name ?
What for order or degree ?

Let me screw thee up a peg ;
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
Callest thou that thing a leg ?
Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

Thou shalt not be saved by works :
Thou hast been a sinner too .
Ruined trunks on withered forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you !

* * * * *

Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :
What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curled ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1842.

The Wood-cutter's Night Song

Welcome, red and roundy sun,
Dropping lowly in the west ;
Now my hard day's work is done,
I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,
Now I'm ready for my chair,
So, till morrow-morning's come,
Bill and mittens, lie ye there !

Though to leave your pretty song,
Little birds, it gives me pain,
Yet to-morrow is not long,
Then I'm with you all again.

If I stop, and stand about,
Well I know how things will be,
Judy will be looking out
Every now-and-then for me.

So fare ye well ! and hold your tongues,
Sing no more until I come ;
They're not worthy of your songs
That never care to drop a crumb.

All day long I love the oaks,
But, at nights, yon little cot,
Where I see the chimney smokes,
Is by far the prettiest spot.

Wife and children all are there,
To revive with pleasant looks,
Table ready set, and chair,
Supper hanging on the hooks.

Soon as ever I get in,
Where my faggot down I fling,
Little prattlers they begin
Teasing me to talk and sing.

Welcome, red and roundy sun,
Dropping lowly in the west ;
Now my hard day's work is done,
I'm as happy as the best.

Joyful are the thoughts of home,
Now I'm ready for my chair,
So, till morrow-morning's come,
Bill and mittens, lie ye there !

JOHN CLARE, 1824-36

One-and-Twenty

Long-expected One-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown :
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great *** ****, are now your own.

Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care ;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly :
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.

*** ****, ? Sir John.

THE TIDE OF TIME

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will ;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.

When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres ? What are houses ?
Only dirt, or wet or dry.

Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste,
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother—
You can hang or drown at last !

SAMUEL JOHNSON, 1709–84.

SIMILARITY OF METHOD : STANZA-FORM

FOR achieving his expression the poet has in many cases a further resource available—the stanza : that is to say, that besides the rhythms which he makes by the free use of his metre he may also give to his emotion and thought a form more defined than the single line, an order or complex design which will produce cadences peculiar to itself. In reading poetry we are frequently aware that every stanza-form has a mood-creating or thought-compelling power of its own, and helps very materially, if it is well chosen, to convey the sound of the meaning. The advantage is a double one—the reader's sympathetic expectation is aroused, while the poet's effort is both limited and set free by the ceremonial allegiance which he has accepted. There seldom is, and need never be, any loss of originality involved in the use even of rare and well-known stanza-forms. The resemblance of form is often dimmed or entirely concealed by the differences of content—for where the thought-form is new the stanza-form will give, in combination with it, a new variety of its own cadences.

In the first of the following poems Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch gave us long ago an interesting example of this. He borrowed a rare stanza-form from Shirley, and used it for a new purpose with new effect. Shirley preaches the vanity of earthly glories, and especially of the glories of sword and state. His successor, too, counts as vanities all pomps and pleasures, but only to contrast with them the high-hearted glory of youth and contest. Each makes steel a chief part of his text ; but the exhortations are opposed in sense, and a form designed for one meaning is proved equally good for the other.

Mr. de la Mare, in his *Tartary*, has used a stanza of which there are several other known instances, but by a simple change in the rhymes (produced by adding an extra syllable to the first, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh lines in each stanza) he has made a new thing out of the old. The movement of it and the cadence are, indeed, so entirely different from those of the poems which follow, that it only exemplifies a part of my argument. The other four are, however, sufficient to complete this. The best known is Swinburne's *Garden of Proserpine*.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings ;
And all dead years draw hither,
And all disastrous things ,
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

The other three are of the same metre and stanza-form ; but no poems could well be more distinct. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that in each of them there are lines charged with some degree of regret, and when these occur the likeness of the mood instantly unites with the likeness of form to produce a sudden recognition of the kinship. In Swinburne's stanzas the mood is continuous throughout ; in the others it is only perceived in such lines as—

But she that once has tried it
Will never love again .

and

To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbèd sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme :

and, lastly, in the brief sad epitome of naval life—

To live and die sea-ruling,
And home at last to sleep.

I have not been able to trace this stanza-form farther upstream than Dryden.

The two passages which follow will, it is hoped, be welcome to those who have lately been discussing the origin of Byron's "*ottava rima* style" in *Beppo* and *Don Juan*. Prince Mirsky, in an admirable article in the *London Mercury*, has gone so far as to say that "Though the initial impulse came to him from Italy, Byron in these poems created a style as essentially new and as profoundly original as anything in this poor universe of ours can be said to be new or original. Byronic (not Bernesque) ought to be the name of this style." It is very true that *Don Juan* is essentially new and original, because it is essentially Byron ; and the name Byronic will be the most easily recognizable label for the style. But it is also true that Drayton in an ample poem, written two centuries earlier, showed with what effect this style, this stanza and method, could be used for easy flowing narrative and for elaborate scene-painting. None of the eighteenth century masters, as Prince Mirsky says, have anything like the natural and easy fluency, the absolute *laissez-aller*, of Byron's octaves. No ; but Drayton has something very like it ; and he could end his stanza with such a couplet as this—

And when the pen fails, pencils cannot show it,
Only the soul can be supposed to know it.

The final set of five seems to me a most convincing and significant one ; but where the resemblances are so subtle as they are here, and the poems (I fear) no longer familiar to many readers, they may not have the same effect on others. I see in *In Memoriam* a

poem, or series of poems, of triple origin. The stanza-form is that used by Ben Jonson and by Lord Herbert of Cherbury; Tennyson was evidently familiar with it in the poems of both, as here given, for in parts his work is strongly reminiscent of theirs. It is equally evident that he could on occasion use their stanza in a mood which was not theirs, and with entirely fresh effect. The consummate verses—No. II. in the long series—addressed to the Old Yew could not possibly have been sounded by any voice but one; in the other two Tennyson is still himself, but his tones recall his ancestry as well. The cause is in each case the pressure of his thought rather than his emotion. In the stanzas from No. LXXXV. the train is an elaborately argumentative one, and, as in Jonson's *Elegy*, it is linked up by argumentative phrases, as follows.—

Jonson: "Though . . . yet . . ."; "Wherein"; "Because"; "So much . . . as"; "Which if . . . yet . . ."

Tennyson: "Yet"; "Whatever", "And so . . ."; "Likewise"; "Therefore";
and in the other pair—

Herbert: "Else . . . in vain . . .", "Why should they . . ."; "Each both, yet both in one."

Tennyson: "Else . . . what then were", "hardly worth"; "mixed with God and Nature."

If these clues are followed out it will be seen that they reveal no mere verbal resemblances, but a similarity of style which answers to a deeply interesting similarity in the process of thought.

I

The Splendid Spur

Not on the neck of prince or hound,
Nor on a woman's finger twined,
May gold from the deriding ground
Keep sacred that we sacred bind :
 Only the heel
 Of splendid steel
Shall stand secure on sliding fate,
When golden navies weep their freight.

The scarlet hat, the laurelled stave
Are measures, not the springs, of worth ;
In a wife's lap, as in a grave,
Man's airy notions mix with earth.
 Seek other spur
 Bravely to stir
The dust in this loud world, and tread
Alp-high among the whisp'ring dead.

Trust in thyself—then spur amain :
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,
Grim Ætna laugh, the Libyan plain
Take roses to her shrivelled face.
 This orb, this round
 Of sight and sound—
Count it the lists that God hath built
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

A T. QUILLER-COUCH.

Death the Leveller

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against Fate ;
Death lays his icy hand on kings :
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crookèd scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill :
But their strong nerves at last must yield ;
They tame but one another still :
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow ;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds !
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds.
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb :
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

JAMES SHIRLEY, 1596-1666.

II

Tartary

If I were Lord of Tartary,
Myself and me alone,
My bed should be of ivory,
Of beaten gold my throne ;

And in my court should peacocks flaunt,
And in my forests tigers haunt,
And in my pools great fishes slant
 Their fins athwart the sun.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
 Trumpeters every day
To every meal should summon me,
 And in my courtyard bray ;
And in the evening lamps would shine,
Yellow as honey, red as wine,
While harp, and flute, and mandoline,
 Made music sweet and gay.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
 I'd wear a robe of beads,
White, and gold, and green they'd be—
 And clustered thick as seeds :
And ere should wane the morning star,
I'd don my robe and scimitar,
And zebras seven should draw my car
 Through Tartary's dark glades.

Lord of the fruits of Tartary,
 Her rivers silver-pale !
Lord of the hills of Tartary,
 Glen, thicket, wood, and dale !
Her flashing stars, her scented breeze,
Her trembling lakes, like foamless seas,
Her bird-delighting citron-trees
 In every purple vale !

WALTER J. DE LA MARE.

The Hundredth 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—
“ On God be our reliance,
Our hope the Spaniard’s 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 :
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,
 And theirs who fain would bend her
 The night of Trafalgar ! "

HENRY NEWBOLT,
January 1, 1905

“ In a Drear-Nighted December ”

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy tree,
 Thy branches ne'er remember
 Their green felicity :
 The north cannot undo them
 With a sleety whistle through them ;
 Nor frozen thawings glue them
 From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy brook,
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember
 Apollo's summer look ;
 But with a sweet forgetting,
 They stay their crystal fretting,
 Never, never petting
 About the frozen time.

Ah ! would 'twere so with many
 A gentle girl and boy ;
 But were there ever any
 Writhed not at passèd joy ?
 To know the change and feel it,
 When there is none to heal it,
 Nor numbèd sense to steal it,
 Was never said in rhyme.

JOHN KEATS, 1795-1821

Song in "The Spanish Friar"

Farewell, ungrateful traitor !
 Farewell, my perjured swain !
 Let never injured creature
 Believe a man again.
 The pleasure of possessing
 Surpasses all expressing,
 But 'tis too short a blessing
 And love too long a pain.

'Tis easy to deceive us,
 In pity of your pain ;
 But when you love, you leave us,
 To rail at you in vain.
 Before we have descried it,
 There is no bliss beside it ;
 But she that once has tried it
 Will never love again

The passion you pretended,
 Was only to obtain
 But when the charm is ended,
 The charmer you disdain
 Your love by ours we measure,
 Till we have lost our treasure :
 But dying is a pleasure
 When living is a pain.

JOHN DRYDEN, 1681.

III

In Haidée's Apartment

Haidée and Juan carpeted their feet
 On crimson satin, border'd with pale blue ;
 Their sofa occupied three parts complete
 Of the apartment—and appear'd quite new ;

The velvet cushions (for a throne more meet)

Were scarlet, from whose glowing centre grew
A Sun emboss'd in gold, whose rays of tissue,
Meridian-like, were seen all light to issue.

Crystal and marble, plate and porcelain,

Had done their work of splendour ; Indian mats
And Persian carpets, which the heart bled to stain,

Over the floors were spread ; gazelles and cats
And dwarfs and blacks, and such like things that gain

Their bread as ministers and favourites (that's
To say, by degradation) mingled there
As plentiful as in a court, or fair.

There was no want of lofty mirrors, and

The tables, most of ebony inlaid,
With mother-of-pearl or ivory, stood at hand,
Or were of tortoise-shell or rare woods made,
Fretted with gold or silver—by command,

The greater part of these were ready spread
With viands and sherbets in ice, and wine—
Kept for all comers, at all hours to dine.

Of all the dresses I select Haidée's .

She wore two jelicks—one was of pale yellow ;
Of azure, pink, and white was her chemise,
'Neath which her breast heaved like a little billow ;
With buttons form'd of pearls as large as peas,
All gold and crimson shone her jelick's fellow,
And the striped white gauze baracan that bound her,
Like fleecy clouds about the moon, flow'd round her.

Her hair's long auburn waves down to her heel

Flow'd like an Alpine torrent which the sun
Dyes with his morning light—and would conceal

Her person if allow'd at large to run,
And still they seem resentfully to feel

The silken fillet's curb, and sought to shun

Their bonds whene'er some zephyr caught began
To offer his young pinion at her fan.

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies,
And pure as Psyche ere she grew a wife—
Too pure even for the purest human ties ;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel.

And now they were diverted by their suite,
Dwarfs, dancing girls, black eunuchs and a poet,
Which made their new establishment complete ,
The last was of great fame, and liked to show it :
His verses rarely wanted their due feet,
And for his theme—he seldom sung below it,
He being paid to satirize or flatter,
As the psalm says, " inditing a good matter "

LORD BYRON, 1819-24.
("*Don Juan*," Canto III)

In the Queen's Chamber

The night waxed old (not dreaming of these things),
And to her chamber is the Queen withdrawn,
To whom a choice musician plays and sings
Whilst she sat under an estate of lawn,
In night attire more godlike glittering
Than any eye had seen the cheerful dawn,
Leaning upon her most loved Mortimer,
Whose voice, more than the music, pleased her ear.

Her loose hair looked like gold (O word too base !
Nay, more than sin but so to name her hair)
Declining, as to kiss her fairer face,
No word is fair enough for thing so fair,

Nor ever was there epithet could grace

That by much praising which we much impair ;
And where the pen fails, pencils cannot show it,
Only the soul may be supposed to know it.

She laid her fingers on his manly cheek,

The god's pure sceptres and the darts of love,
That with their touch might make a tiger meek,
Or might great Atlas from his seat remove ;
So white, so soft, so delicate, so sleek,
As she had worn a lily for a glove,
As might beget life where was never none,
And put a spirit into the hardest stone.

The fire of precious wood, the light perfume,

Which left a sweetness on each thing it shone,
As everything did to itself assume

The scent from them, and made the same their own :
So that her painted flowers within the room

Were sweet, as if they naturally had grown ;
The light gave colours which upon them fell,
And to the colours the perfume gave smell

When on those sundry pictures they devise,

And from one piece they to another run,
Commend that face, that arm, that hand, those eyes,
Show how that bird, how well that flower was done,
How this part shadowed, and how that did rise,
This top was clouded, how that trail was spun,
The landscape, mixture, and delineatings,
And in that art a thousand curious things.

Looking upon proud Phaeton wrapped in fire,

The gentle Queen did much bewail his fall ;
But Mortimer commended his desire
To lose one poor life or to govern all :

“ What though,” quoth he, “ he madly did aspire,
And his great mind made him proud Fortune’s
thrall ?

Yet in despite, when she her worst had done,
He perished in the chariot of the sun.”

MICHAEL DRAYTON, 1603.

IV

Stanzas from “ In Memoriam ”

II

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock ;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom :

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

LXXXV

O friendship, equal-poised control,
 O heart, with kindest motion warm,
 O sacred essence, other form,
O solemn ghost, O crownèd soul !

Yet none could better know than I,
 How much of act at human hands
 The sense of human will demands
By which we dare to live or die

Whatever way my days decline,
 I felt and feel, though left alone,
 His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine ,

A life that all the muses decked
 With gifts of grace, that might express
 All-comprehensive tenderness,
All subtilizing intellect :

And so my passion hath not swerved
 To works of weakness, but I find
 An image comforting the mind,
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
 That loved to handle spiritual strife,
 Diffused the shock through all my life,
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
 For other friends that once I met ;
 Nor can it suit me to forget
The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
To mourn for any overmuch ;
I, the divided half of such
A friendship as had mastered Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
Eternal, separate from fears :
The all-assuming months and years
Can take no part away from this.

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1850

An Elegy

Though beauty be the mark of praise,
And yours of whom I sing be such
As not the world can praise too much,
Yet 'tis your Virtue now I raise

A virtue, like allay so gone
Throughout your form as, though that move
And draw and conquer all men's love,
This subjects you to love of one

Wherein you triumph yet—because
'Tis of your flesh, and that you use
The noblest freedom, not to choose
Against or faith or honour's laws.

But who should less expect from you ?
In whom alone Love lives again .
By whom he is restored to men,
And kept and bred and brought up true.

His falling temples you have reared,
The withered garlands ta'en away ;
His altars kept from that decay
That envy wished, and nature feared :

Allay, Alloy.

And on them burn so chaste a flame,
With so much loyalty's expense,
As Love to acquit such excellence
Is gone himself into your name.

And you are he—the deity
To whom all lovers are designed
That would their better objects find ;
Among which faithful troop am I—

Who as an off'ring at your shrine
Have sung this hymn, and here entreat
One spark of your diviner heat
To light upon a love of mine.

Which if it kindle not, but scant
Appear, and that to shortest view ;
Yet give me leave to adore in you
What I in her am grieved to want !

BEN JONSON.

Immortality and Love

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is. . . .

What then were God to such as I ?
'Twere hardly worth my while to choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die. . . .

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
Loved deeper, darklier understood ;
Behold I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee. . . .

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
 But though I seem in star and flower
 To feel thee some diffusive power,
 I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
 My love is vaster passion now ;
 Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
 I seem to love thee more and more.

ALFRED TENNYSON

(*From "In Memoriam," xxxiv, cxxviii, cxxix*).

Immortality and Love

O no, Beloved : I am most sure
 These virtuous habits we acquire
 As being with the soul entire
 Must with it evermore endure.

Else should our souls in vain elect ;
 And vainer yet were Heaven's laws,
 When to an everlasting cause
 They give a perishing effect.

These eyes again thine eyes shall see,
 These hands again thine hand enfold,
 And all chaste blessings can be told
 Shall with us everlasting be

For if no use of sense remain
 When bodies once this life forsake,
 Or they could no delight partake,
 Why should they ever rise again ?

And if ev'ry imperfect mind
 Make love the end of knowledge here,
 How perfect will our love be where
 All imperfection is refined !

So when from hence we shall be gone,
And be no more nor you nor I ;
As one another's mystery
Each shall be both, yet both but one.

EDWARD, LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY,
1583-1633.

SIMILARITY OF METHOD : METRE AND
IDEA

FROM the process of thought to the thought itself is but a step. We come now to groups of poems where the later are linked to the earlier by the use of the same metre or stanza to deal with the same idea. Here, as always, the point of interest is to note what use the poet has made of that which was handed down to him. If both subject and method of expression have been given to him and he has made nothing new of them, his poem is not so much a poem as a record of failure. There must be many such instances, but they naturally escape notice : it is only by some chance that they are read or remembered. William Whitehead, though now forgotten, was fashionable in his day, and wrote elegies which deserve, in a particular sense, to be compared with Gray's. The one here given affords the reader all the pleasures of parody—the incredible resemblance, the humorous slight perversion, the proof of the original's greatness and the delicate criticism of its manner or mannerism.

A totally different example is that of Meredith's *Love in the Valley*. A very short voyage upstream, and we come on the tiny spring of beauty which is its authentic and only source. Darley's poem is a piece of perfection but a miniature ; a moment but not a history ; like the few bars of a simple air, it comes too soon to its end and leaves a haunted silence. Meredith marked the possibilities of the subject, and the beauty and metrical ingenuity of the treatment ; gave visible form, movement, and colour of life to the shadowy beloved, and placed her in a Surrey woodland ; at the same time unrolling the whole story of love and girlish loveliness in a long series of variations on Darley's

undeveloped musical theme. Then we find Herrick engaged on a slighter but very similar enterprise. He must obviously have known Porter's exquisite little song, and felt impelled for some reason, or unreason, to sing it over again. He was certainly justified by the result: but he had to borrow much (including "Old Time") from his predecessor, and though a far greater master of verse he could not beat the sudden beauty of Porter's line, "Thou as heaven art fair and young." The perishing of roses and of human youth and beauty is of course a commonplace with the poets, and a very ancient one: the remarkable thing is that they have so seldom made it commonplace. Daniel on this theme is at his best, and Ronsard, Prince of Poets, not only grafted on to his finest sonnet a spray from the same old rose-bush, but also called his Cassandra out to see it in his famous song of the early morning garden, and in yet another sonnet practically translated the Latin of Ausonius. We also find Marcus Argentarius singing the same song in Greek; and Ausonius ends his meditation in a Roman rose-garden with the couplet, which is perhaps the *sons et origo* of all the rest, "Gather, O Virgin, roses, while their flower and thine are fresh remember that thy time, like theirs, is flying."

I

On the Mausoleum of Augustus

Amid these mould'ring wastes, this marble round
Where slept the heroes of the Julian name,
Say, shall we linger still in thought profound,
And meditate the mournful paths to fame?

What though no cypress shades, in funeral rows,
No sculptured urns, the last records of fate,
O'er the shrunk terrace wave their baleful boughs,
Or breathe in storied emblems of the great;

Yet not with heedless eye will we survey
The same, though changed, nor negligently tread ;
These variegated walks, however gay,
Were once the silent mansions of the dead.

In every shrub, in every flow'ret's bloom
That paints with different hues yon smiling plain,
Some hero's ashes issue from the tomb,
And live a vegetative life again.

Perhaps, my Villiers, for I sing to thee,
Perhaps, unknowing of the bloom it gives,
In yon fair scion of Apollo's tree
The sacred dust of young Marcellus lives.
WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, P L., 1774.

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard

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

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds ;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield ;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour :
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

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

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

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

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

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

Their lot forbade ' nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

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

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

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply ;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
" Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

" There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

" Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

" One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he :

"The next with dirges due in sad array
 Slow through the church-way path we saw him
 borne.
 Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
 Graved on the stone beneath you aged thorn."

The Epitaph

*Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
 A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown :
 Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
 And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere ;
 Heav'n did a recompense as largely send :
 He gave to Mankind all he had, a tear,
 He gained from Heav'n ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No further seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
 The bosom of his Father and his God.*

THOMAS GRAY, 1751.

II

Love in the Valley

Under yonder beech-tree single on the greensward
 Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
 Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
 Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
 Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
 Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,
 Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me :
 Then would she hold me and never let me go ?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's light,
Circling the surface to meet his mirrored winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won !
GEORGE MEREDITH, 1828-1909.

Song

Sweet in her green dell the flower of beauty slumbers,
Lulled by the faint breezes sighing through her hair ;
Sleeps she and hears not the melancholy numbers
Breathed to my sad lute 'mid the lonely air.

Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming
To wind round the willow banks that lure him from
above
O that in tears, from my rocky prison streaming,
I too could glide to the bower of my love !

Ah ! where the woodbines with sleepy arms have
wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening, like the dove, while the fountains echo
round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forests far away.

Come then, my bird ! For the peace thou ever bearest
Still Heaven's messenger of comfort to me—
Come—this fond bosom, O faithfullest and fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound, its wound of love for
thee !
GEORGE DARLEY, 1795-1846.

III

To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying ·
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer ;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry :
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry

ROBERT HERRICK.
(*Published 1648*)

“ Love in thy Youth, Fair Maid ”

Love in thy youth, fair maid ; be wise,
Old Time will make thee colder,
And though each morning new arise
Yet we each day grow older.

Thou as heaven art fair and young,
Thine eyes like twin stars shining :
But ere another day be sprung,
All these will be declining.

Then winter comes with all his fears
And all thy sweets shall borrow ;
Too late then wilt thou shower thy tears,
And I too late shall sorrow.

From WALTER PORTER'S "*Madrigals and Airs*," 1632.

To Delia

Beauty, sweet love, is like the morning dew,
Whose short refresh upon the tender green
Cheers for a time, but till the sun doth show,
And straight 'tis gone as it had never been.
Soon doth it fade that makes the fairest flourish ;
Short is the glory of the blushing rose :
The hue which thou so carefully dost nourish,
Yet which at last thou must be forced to lose.
When thou, surcharged with burden of thy years,
Shalt bend thy wrinkles homeward to the earth,
And that in beauty's lease expired appears
The rate of age, the calends of our death ;—
But ah ! no more , this must not be foretold :
For women grieve to think they must be old.

SAMUEL DANIEL, 1592.

Quand vous serez bien Vieille

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle,
Assise auprès du feu, dévidant et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers en vous émerveillant :
" Ronsard me célébrait, du temps que j'étais belle."

Lors, vous n'aurez servante oyant telle nouvelle,
Déjà sous le labeur à demi sommeillant,
Qui au bruit de mon nom ne s'aïlle réveillant,
Bénissant votre nom de louange immortelle.

Je serai sous la terre et, fantôme sans os,
Par les ombres myrteux je prendrai mon repos ;
Vous serez au foyer une vieille accroupie,
Regrettant mon amour et votre fier dédain.
Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain :
Cueillez dès aujourd'hui les roses de la vie.

PIERRE DE RONSARD.

A Cassandre

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose
Qui ce matin avait déclose
Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,
A point perdu, cette vesprée,
Les plis de sa robe pourprée
Et son teint au vôtre pareil

Las ! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
Mignonne, elle a dessus la place,
Las ! las ! ses beautés laissé choir !
O vraiment marâtre Nature !
Puisqu'une telle fleur ne dure
Que du matin jusques au soir !

Donc, si vous me croyez, mignonne,
Tandis que notre âge fleuronne
En sa plus verte nouveauté,
Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse :
Comme à cette fleur la vieillesse
Fera ternir votre beauté.

PIERRE DE RONSARD.

Je vous envoie un Bouquet

Je vous envoie un bouquet que ma main
 Vient de trier de ces fleurs épanies,
 Qui ne les eût a ce vespre cueillies,
 Cheutes à terre elles fussent demain.

Cela vous soit un exemple certain
 Que vos beautés, bien qu'elles soient fleuries,
 En peu de temps cherront toutes flétries,
 Et comme fleurs, periront tout soudain

Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va, ma Dame,
 Las ! le temps non, mais nous nous en allons,
 Et tôt serons estendus sous la lame :

Et des amours desquelles nous parlons,
 Quand serons morts, n'en sera plus nouvelle :
 Pour-ce aimez moy, ce-pendant qu'êtes belle.

PIERRE DE RONSARD.
 (Before 1552)

To Isias

Ἰσιὰς ἡδύπνευστε, καὶ εἰ δεκάκις μύρον εὐδεις,
 ἔγρεο καὶ δέξαι χερσὶ φίλαις στέφανον,
 ὃν νῦν μὲν θάλλοντα, μαραινόμενον δὲ πρὸς ἡῶ
 ὄψαι, ὑμετέρης σίμβολον ἡλικίης

MARCUS ARGENTARIUS.

Though sweet thy breathing, though thy dream
 Make all the world a fragrance seem,
 Yet, my belovèd, hear and wake,
 In thy dear hand my roses take.

To-night they glow, to-morrow morn
 Thou must see them hang forlorn :
 Symbol of youth—for even as they
 So shall thy beauty fade away.

Idyllium XIV. Rosæ

Mirabar celerem fugitiva ætate rapinam,
Et dum nascuntur, consenuisse rosas.
Ecce et defluxit rutili coma punica floris,
Dum loquor, et tellus tecta rubore micat.
Tot species, tantosque ortus, variosque novatus
Una dies aperit, conficit una dies.
Conquerimur, Natura, brevis quod gratia florum est :
Ostentata oculis illico dona rapis.
Quam longa una dies, ætas tam longa rosarum,
Quas pubescentes juncta senecta premit.
Quam modo nascentem rutilus conspexit Eous,
Hanc rediens sero vespere vidit anum.
Sed bene quod paucis licet interitura diebus,
Succedens ævum prorogat ipsa suum.
Collige, virgo, rosas, dum flos novus, et nova pubes ;
Et memor esto ævum sic properare tuum.

DECIUS MAGNUS AUSONIUS, A D. 320-400.

INHERITED MOOD, FORM, AND
PHRASING : PASTORAL ELEGY

IN the world where critics and readers appraise poetry, values are apt to fall or rise violently according to the general outlook at the moment. In quiet and prosperous times men like to dwell among familiar things, to count up their possessions, to enjoy again and again what they have inherited. In times of disturbance and disappointment they look, on the contrary, for deliverance by change; they distrust and dismiss all old ideas, and especially old forms, which they take to be bonds infringing natural freedom.

Poets, if they are sincerely poets, stand outside this world of old and new, they have something to express, and their business is to express it. One, not knowing the ways of his predecessors, may strike out a rough path for himself with great and unnecessary pains; another may sing to a tune already too well known, and so lose part of his effect. But if the outlook is fresh, and the impulse strong enough, success may be achieved either way. The only fatal mistake is the belief that form and freedom, tradition and originality, are incompatible. In reality it is Art and Chaos that are the irreconcilables; "without form and void" is the description of that which has not yet been created. Love of freedom is a prime human instinct; but so is love of order, of service, of obedience to accepted rule. Beauty and strength are found by the submission of energy to form, whose service is perfect freedom, and not only that, but the only freedom possible for any artist in any art.

To speak of "free verse," then, is to say nothing: the phrase is either a fallacy or a tautology. At the most, it could but be a term for verse written according to some rule or plan not known to the reader. The

poet himself cannot escape from the necessity of form : no human being can speak the language of Chaos. Walt Whitman himself did not attempt it ; what he did was to use in his poems a mixture of verse rhythms and prose rhythms. The result was that he is sometimes poetic in verse, often poetic in prose, sometimes prosaic in prose. He remains a name and an influence, but rather as a great traveller in the realms of gold than as a worker in the art ; he discovered a whole reef of quartz, but not how to crush or smelt it. Others, like Heine and Matthew Arnold, have tried to find a method which would extend the range of verse by bringing its rhythm nearer to that of ordinary speech ; and they have succeeded, but by reducing the number of their rules, not by lowering their standard of self-discipline.

The best experimental work of the three poets just named is concerned not with the rhythms or the metrical forms of poetry, but with its modes or outward forms of presentation. Lyric, narrative, dramatic—the most original of poets cannot add to these, he can only combine them in fresh ways ; and even then he will probably find that the new instrument he makes is powerful just in proportion as it keeps to the traditional lines. Heine, Arnold, Whitman, each in his own way developed that longer form of lyric which is suited to soliloquy, philosophical, satirical, elegiac, romantic, but always lyric because always a direct self-expression, charged with a purely personal emotion. A poem of this kind might easily become tiresome or incoherent, if its emotion were not vertebrated and sustained by a predetermined form. By the choice of an old form nothing need be sacrificed, and much may be gained, in addition to the desired framework. The Pastoral form is a very old one, and it is a good example to take, because it is in England, even more than it was in ancient Greece, a thoroughly conventional mode, and unless used with real imagina-

tion and real mastery of poetic expression, it would soon hurl the poet from the sublime to the ridiculous. Milton, at the age of thirty, was fearless of this danger, and he achieved in *Lycidas* a success so complete and lasting as to puzzle many even among the admirers of the poem. The risks he faced were indeed great; he deliberately wove into one rich fabric ancient and modern figures together—two young Cambridge men and their tutor, rough Satyrs and Fauns with cloven heel, Nymphs, Druids, Bacchanals, Furies, all-judging Jove, the Herald of the Sea, Camus, reverend sire, the Pilot of the Galilean lake, the great vision of the guarded Mount, Alphæus and the Sicilian Muse, the British Parliament, and the clergy of the Established Church. Moreover, in so doing, and in following the traditional method which he had adopted, he defied the national preference for common sense. Of himself and his friend he dared to write:—

Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night.

Dr Johnson could not "pass" this. "We know," he said, "that they never drove afield, and that they had no flocks to batten." And we may admit that if the Pastoral machinery and the Pastoral diction had been used with less imagination and less mastery of sound and rhythm, common sense might have crushed the poet with general consent.

But if this danger be once avoided, the advantages of the Pastoral form appear. A position is established; a dialect is agreed upon; an opportunity is given for high-sounding names, words with ancient and rich associations, splendid figures in allegorical groups; and, above all, for the expression of poignant

and recent grief, not in crude realistic tones, but with the pathos of a more impersonal music, the calmer beauty and deeper significance which belong only to the eternal.

Let us see what it is that Milton took from the spirits which inhabit the ages. from his fellow-pilgrims of Eternity, Theocritus and Virgil. A friend is dead; he is given the name of Lycidas, from the old shepherd world; his fate is mourned as the hopeless love of Gallus and the love and death of Daphnis were mourned. An attendant crowd, or procession, is seen; in *Lycidas* the figures are those of Phœbus Apollo, the Herald of the Sea, Camus the river god, and the Pilot with the keys, in *Virgil* there are shepherds, Apollo, Silvanus, Pan; in *Theocritus*, Hermes, herdsmen and animals, Priapus, Aphrodite, Pan. In all three not only these groups but some of the words of passionate address are the same—"Where were ye, Nymphs?" is in all of them the *motif* of a regret that is uttered as a reproach. "For neither were ye . . ." is in the Latin as well as the English; and in the Greek it is the sound of "Great Lycæum's crags" and "mightier Mænalus" which echoes in "Bellerus" and "Namancos and Bayona's hold." Enough has been said the resemblances, the gifts bestowed, are easily seen; but it is the mode, or method, of presentation which is the cause of them and gives them their value. This is also in a sense the "material cause" of Milton's poem. into the old form he breathed the breath of life, yet even that life could not have lived by breath alone. Poetry cannot be disembodied. But on the other hand its body is never a material or inanimate thing. Epic, lyric, pastoral or other—these are spiritual forms, and the poet, when he uses them, is seeking the aid of that which is greater than himself—the aid of the Spirit of Man, which at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto our fathers by the poets.

Lycidas

[In this Monody the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637, and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height]

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due.
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose, at evening, bright,

Toward heav'n's descent had sloped his west'ring wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return !
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.

The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flow'rs, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows ;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me ! I fondly dream !

Had ye been there, for what could that have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair ?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days ;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. " But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears ;
" Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glist'ning foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies ;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ,
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heav'n expect thy meed "
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood :
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea ;
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain ?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory :
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed.
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th' eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

Like to that sanguine flow'r inscribed with woe.

" Ah ? Who hath reft " (quoth he) " my dearest pledge ? "

Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake.

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)

He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake,
" How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold !

Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest ;
Blind mouths ! that scarce themselves know how to
hold

A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs !
What recks it them ? What need they ? They are
sped ;

And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread ,
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said ;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams , return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks :
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears.
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise
Ay me ! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold,
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth ;
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky ,
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the
waves,
Where other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.

There entertain him all the saints above,
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
 Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
 While the still morn went out with sandals grey,
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay :
 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
 And now was dropped into the western bay,
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue :
 To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

JOHN MILTON.

Gallus

(*Virgil, Eclogue X*)

Oh Arethuse, let this last task be mine !
 One song—a song Lycoris' self may read—
 My Gallus asks : who'd grudge one song to him ?
 So, when thou slid'st beneath Sicilian seas,
 May ne'er salt Doris mix her stream with thine :
 Begin : and sing—while yon blunt muzzles search
 The underwood—of Gallus torn by love.
 We lack not audience : woods take up the notes.

Where were ye, Naiad nymphs, in grove or glen,
 When Gallus died of unrequited love ?
 Not heights of Pindus or Parnassus, no
 Aonian Aganippe kept ye then.
 Him e'en the laurels wept and myrtle groves.
 Stretched 'neath the lone cliff, piny Mænalus
 And chill Lycæum's stones all wept for him.
 The sheep stood round : they think not scorn of us ;

And think not scorn, O priest of song, of them.
 Sheep fair Adonis fed beside the brooks.
 The shepherds came. The lazy herdsmen came.
 Came, from the winter acorns dripping wet,
 Menalcas. "Whence," all ask, "this love of thine?"
 Apollo came, and "Art thou mad?" he saith,
 "Gallus? Thy love, through bristling camps and
 snows
 Tracks now another's steps." Silvanus came,
 Crowned with his woodland glories: to and fro
 Rocked the great lilies and the fennel bloom.
 Pan came, Arcadia's Pan (I have seen him, red
 With elderberries and with cinnabar):
 "Is there no end?" quoth he. "Love heeds not this:
 Tears sate not cruel Love: nor rills the leas,
 Nor the bees clover, nor green boughs the goat."

Translated by C. S. CALVERLEY.

The Death of Daphnis

Theocritus, Idyll I

Thyrsis Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.
 'Tis Thyrsis asks, I, Thyrsis of the Hill.
 Where were ye, Nymphs, oh where, while Daphnis
 pined?
 In fair Peneus' or in Pindus' glens?
 For great Anapus' stream was not your haunt,
 Nor Ætna's cliff, nor Acis' sacred rill
Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.
 O'er him the wolves, the jackals howled o'er him;
 The lion in the oak-copse mourned his death.
Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.
 The kine and oxen stood around his feet,
 The heifers and the calves wailed all for him.
Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.
 First from the mountain Hermes came, and said,

" Daphnis, who frets thee ? Lad, whom lov'st thou
so ? "

Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.

Came herdsmen, shepherds came, and goatherds came ;

All asked what ailed the lad. Priapus came

And said, " Why pine, poor Daphnis, while the maid
Foots it round every pool and every grove."

(Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song) . . .

Came Aphrodite, smiles on her sweet face,

(Sly smiles) yet heavy-hearted, and she spake :

" Lo, Daphnis, thou must try a fall with Love !

But sturdy Love hath won the fall of thee."

Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song.

Then " Ruthless Aphrodite," Daphnis said,

" Accursèd Aphrodite, foe to man !

Say'st thou mine hour is come, my sun hath set ?

Dead, as alive, shall Daphnis work Love woe."

Begin, sweet maids, begin the woodland song . . .

" Pan, Pan, oh whether great Lycæum's crags

Thou haunt'st to-day, or mightier Mænalus,

Come to the Sicel isle ! Abandon now

Rhium and Helice, and the mountain grave

(That e'en gods cherish) of Lycaon's son !

Forget, sweet maids, forget your woodland song.

Come, Monarch, hither bring thy waxen pipe,

That windeth sweet as honey round thy lips,

For surely I am torn from life by Love.

Forget, sweet maids, forget your woodland song. . . .

Translated by C S CALVERLEY.

INHERITED MOOD, FORM, AND PHRASING: EPIGRAM AND EPITAPH

EPIGRAM and epitaph are the same in origin : both were inscriptions, to be carved in a small space and on hard material. Their method, therefore, is not like that of the Pastoral—a means of extension or even of amplification—it is a method of economy, of compression ; and its subjects, too, must be simplified till they are capable of being rendered in outline only. The compensating advantages are great : a good epigram is both finished and memorable, intense and significant. These are the most characteristic qualities of the Greek genius, and in more florid and voluble ages there could be no better antidote to vulgarity.

The power and the imperishable nature of this kind of verse hardly need illustration : the fame of Simonides and the thousand failures to translate him are evidence enough. But it is interesting to compare the work of different nations in this kind, and to note how even in four lines, or in two, the character of a race may be seen not only at its finest, but with its own distinction. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the English mood was more often classical than in the twentieth ; but under the deep and stern emotion of a great war it drew nearer to the Greek than it had ever done before. An unknown Englishman wrote this for a memorial .—

True love by life, true life by death, is tried
Live thou for England we for England died.

and with this and with Simonides we cannot but remember two other couplets by Mr. J. Maxwell Edmonds .—

These in the glorious morning of their days
For England's sake lost all but England's praise.

and this "On Some that died early in the Day of Battle":—

Went the day well ? We died and never knew :
But well or ill, England, we died for you.

Mr. Binyon's famous quatrain, the lines which were the daily consolation of a whole people, and are now carved on the face of our great National Museum, are, in fact, a stanza from a poem of some length, and not an epigram ; but they have the quality of one.

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old ;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn ,
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them

Whether the French poets have done anything in this fashion to commemorate their heroes I do not know ; but in another mood they can be equally Greek —

Comment ai-je pu penser
Que la rosée
Était chose éphémère,
Quand moi-même sur l'héroïne
Je resterai si peu de temps ?

How could I think the time
Upon the grass
Was but a thing of time
And born to pass,
When I myself on the green earth shall stay
So brief a day ?

And in Japan even the despised verses of the "common people" and guitar girls are made upon the classic Japanese models with their strictly limited number of syllables. To us, who cannot detect the colloquial diction which offends the well-bred in their own country, they seem to have beyond question the outline, the significance, and the charm which mark the true

epigram. The two which follow are translated by Mr Osman Edwards in his *Japanese Plays and Play-fellows* :—

Andou kakitate
Negao mozoki
Yoso no onna no
Horeru-hazu.

I, with trimmed lantern,
Scan thy face, sleeping :
By a strange woman
Thou art beloved

Here (I believe) the metre is exactly preserved ; in the next some amplification has been necessary .—

Heart of our Island,
Heart of Yamato,—
If one should ask you
What it may be ,
Fragrance is wafted
Through morning sunlight
Over the mountain,
Cherry-trees bloom.

Among the examples from the English poets which I am now about to give, there is no need to trace descent . there may be resemblances, but they are for the most part due to common origin—the writers all had the Greek in their hearts. Some of them had it in their hands as well—Prior was amplifying a couplet ascribed to Plato, and Cory was practically translating Callimachus . He has been criticized for not achieving the pure naked sincerity of the Greek ; but he was a poet, bent on making an English poem. If any other thinks he can do this, and at the same time keep closer to his original, he will be welcomed as a competitor, especially as he cannot take from us what we have got.

Heraclitus

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears
to shed.

I wept as I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking, and sent him down the
sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake ;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot
take.

WILLIAM (JOHNSON) CORY.

To his Departed Friend Heraclitus

Ἐἰπέ τις Ἡράκλειτε τεὸν μόρον, ἐς δέ με δάκρυ
ἤγαγεν, ἐμνήσθην δ' ὁσάκις ἀμφοτέροι
ἠέλιον λέσχη κατεδύσαμεν. ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν πον
ξεῖν' Ἀλικαρνασσεῦ τέφρα πάλαι σποδίῃ.
αἱ δὲ τεαὶ ζῶουσιν ἀηδόνες, ἦσιν ὁ πάντων
ἄρπακτὴρ Ἀΐδης οὐκ ἔπι χεῖρα βαλεῖ

CALLIMACHUS, B C 256.

Immortality

Past ruined Ilion Helen lives,
Alcestis rises from the shades ;
Verse calls them forth ; 'tis verse that gives
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil
Hide all the peopled hills you see,
The gay, the proud, while lovers hail
These many summers you and me.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, 1775-1864.

Rose Aylmer

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
 Ah, what the form divine !
 What every virtue, every grace !
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
 Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
 May weep, but never see,
 A night of memories and of sighs
 I consecrate to thee.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Ianthe

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

The Dying Fire

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

The Lady and her Looking-Glass

Venus, take my votive glass ;
 Since I am not what I was,
 What from this day I shall be,
 Venus, let me never see.
 MATTHEW PRIOR.

τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον · ἐπεὶ τοίῃ μὲν ὀράσθαι
 Οὔκ ἐθέλω · οἷα δ' ἦν πάρος οὐ δύναμαι
 ? PLATO.

Epitaph

UPON A CHILD THAT DIED

Here she lies, a pretty bud
 Lately made of flesh and blood :
 Who as soon fell fast asleep
 As her little eyes did peep.
 Give her strewings, but not stir
 The earth that lightly covers her.

ROBERT HERRICK.

On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke

Underneath this sable herse
 Lies the subject of all verse :
 Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother :
 Death, ere thou hast slain another
 Fair and learned and good as she,
 Time shall throw a dart at thee

WILLIAM BROWNE OF TAVISTOCK.

Epitaph

ON ELIZABETH L. H

Wouldst thou hear what Man can say
 In a little ? Reader, stay
 Underneath this stone doth lie
 As much Beauty as could die :
 Which in life did harbour give
 To more Virtue than doth live.
 If at all she had a fault,
 Leave it buried in this vault.
 One name was *Elizabeth*,
 The other, let it sleep with death :
 Fitter, where it died, to tell
 Than that it lived at all. Farewell.

BEN JONSON.

INHERITED MOOD, FORM, AND
PHRASING : LITANIES

CHILDREN who love poetry without thinking about it, and poets who love it with knowledge, agree in setting a high value upon returns, repetitions, or refrains. The effect of these is not easily described, because it is worked upon the more instinctive and less conscious part of our nature. The best examples are those found in devotional poetry ; but the secret is of wider efficacy.

Litany to the Holy Spirit

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the passing bell doth toll,
And the Furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what is said,
'Cause my speech is now decayed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When, God knows, I'm tossed about
Either with despair or doubt ;
Yet before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

When the Judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to Thee I have appealed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me !

ROBERT HERRICK.

A Litany

From being anxious, or secure,
Dead clods of sadness, or light squibs of mirth,
From thinking that great courts immure
All, or no happiness, or that this earth

Is only for our prison framed,
Or that Thou 'rt covetous
To them whom Thou lovest, or that they are maimed
From reaching this world's sweet who seek Thee thus,
With all their might, good Lord, deliver us.

From needing danger, to be good,
From owing Thee yesterday's tears to-day,
From trusting so much to Thy blood
That in that hope we wound our soul away,
From bribing Thee with alms, to excuse
Some sin more burdenous,
From light affecting, in religion, news,
From thinking us all soul, neglecting thus
Our mutual duties, Lord, deliver us.

* * * * *

Through Thy submitting all, to blows
Thy face, Thy robes to spoil, Thy fame to scorn,
All ways, which rage, or justice knows,
And by which Thou couldst show that Thou wast
born ;
And through Thy gallant humbleness
Which Thou in death didst show,
Dying before Thy soul they could express ;
Deliver us from death, by dying so
To this world, ere this world do bid us go.

When senses, which Thy soldiers are,
We arm against Thee, and they fight for sin ;
When want, sent but to tame, doth war,
And work despair a breach to enter in ,
When plenty, God's image, and seal,
Makes us idolatrous,
And love it, not Him, whom it should reveal ;
When we are moved to seem religious
Only to vent wit ; Lord, deliver us.

In churches, when th' infirmity
 Of him which speaks, diminishes the word ;
 When magistrates do misapply
 To us, as we judge, lay or ghostly sword :
 When plague, which is Thine angel, reigns,
 Or wars, Thy champions, sway ;
 When heresy, Thy second deluge, gains ;
 In th' hour of death, th' eve of last Judgment day ;
 Deliver us from the sinister way.

Hear us, O hear us, Lord ; to Thee
 A sinner is more music, when he prays,
 Than spheres' or angels' praises be,
 In panegyric alleluas ,
 Hear us, for till Thou hear us, Lord,
 We know not what to say ;
 Thine ear to our sighs, tears, thoughts, gives voice
 and word ,
 O Thou, who Satan heard'st in Job's sick day,
 Hear Thyself now, for Thou in us dost pray.
JOHN DONNE.

In Time of Plague

Adieu, farewell earth's bliss,
 This world uncertain is :
 Fond are life's lustful joys,
 Death proves them all but toys,
 None from his darts can fly :
 I am sick, I must die—
 Lord have mercy on us !

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
 Gold cannot buy you health ;
 Physic himself must fade ;
 All things to end are made ;
 The plague full swift goes by ;
 I am sick, I must die—
 Lord have mercy on us !

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour :
Brightness falls from the air ;
Queens have died young and fair ;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye :
I am sick, I must die—

Lord have mercy on us !

Strength stoops unto the grave,
Worms feed on Hector brave :
Swords may not fight with fate :
Earth still holds ope her gate.
Come, come ! the bells do cry :
I am sick, I must die—

Lord have mercy on us !

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness :
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply ;
I am sick, I must die—

Lord have mercy on us !

Haste therefore each degree
To welcome destiny :
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage.
Mount we unto the sky .
I am sick, I must die—

Lord have mercy on us !

THOMAS NASHE.

Quia Amore Languet

In a valley of this restless mind
I sought in mountain and in mead,
Trusting a true love for to find.
Upon an hill then took I heed ;

A voice I heard (and near I yede)
In great dolour complaining tho' :
See, dear soul, how my sides bleed
Quia amore langueo.

Upon this hill I found a tree,
Under a tree a man sitting ;
From head to foot wounded was he ;
His hearte blood I saw bleeding :
A seemly man to be a king,
A gracious face to look unto.
I asked why he had paining ;
[He said,] *Quia amore langueo.*

I am true love that false was never ;
My sister, man's soul, I loved her thus.
Because we would in no wise dissever
I left my kingdom glorious
I purveyed her a palace full precious.
She fled, I followed, I loved her so
That I suffered this pain piteous
Quia amore langueo.

My fair love and my spouse bright '
I saved her from beating, and she hath me bet ;
I clothed her in grace and heavenly light ,
This bloody shirt she hath on me set ,
For longing of love yet would I not let ;
Sweete strokes are these : lo !
I have loved her ever as I her het
Quia amore langueo.

I crowned her with bliss and she me with thorn ;
I led her to chamber and she me to die ;
I brought her to worship and she me to scorn ;
I did her reverence and she me villany.
To love that loveth is no maistry ;

Her hate made never my love her foe :
Ask me then no question why—

Quia amore langueo.

Look unto mine handes, man !
These gloves were given me when I her sought ;
They be not white, but red and wan ;
Embroidered with blood my spouse them brought.
They will not off ; I loose hem nought ;
I woo her with hem wherever she go.
These hands for her so friendly fought

Quia amore langueo.

Marvel not, man, though I sit still.
See, love hath shod me wonder strait :
Buckled my feet, as was her will,
With sharpe nails (well thou may'st wait !).
In my love was never desait ,
All my membres I have opened her to ;
My body I made her herte's bait

Quia amore langueo

In my side I have made her nest ;
Look in, how weet a wound is here !
This is her chamber, here shall she rest,
That she and I may sleep in fere
Here may she wash, if any filth were ;
Here is seat for all her woe ,
Come when she will, she shall have cheer

Quia amore langueo

I will abide till she be ready,
I will her sue if she say nay ,
If she be retchless I will be greedy,
If she be dangerous I will her pray ;
If she weep, then bide I ne may :
Mine arms ben spread to clip her me to.
Cry once, I come : now, soul, assay

Quia amore langueo.

Fair love, let us go play :
 Apples ben ripe in my gardayne.
 I shall thee clothe in a new array,
 Thy meat shall be milk, honey and wine.
 Fair love, let us go dine :
 Thy sustenance is in my crippe, lo !
 Tarry thou not, my fair spouse mine,
Quia amore langueo.

If thou be foul, I shall thee make clean ;
 If thou be sick, I shall thee heal ,
 If thou mourn ought, I shall thee mene ;
 Why wilt thou not, fair love, with me deal ?
 Foundest thou ever love so leal ?
 What wilt thou, soul, that I shall do ?
 I mav not unkindly thee appeal
Quia amore langueo

What shall I do now with my spouse
 But abide her of my gentleness,
 Till that she look out of her house
 Of fleshly affection ? love mine she is ;
 Her bed is made, her bolster is bliss,
 Her chamber is chosen , is there none mo
 Look out on me at the window of kindness
Quia amore langueo.

My love is in her chamber · hold your peace !
 Make ye no noise, but let her sleep
 My babe I would not were in disease,
 I may not hear my dear child weep.
 With my pap I shall her keep
 Ne marvel ye not though I tend her to :
 This wound in my side had ne'er be so deep
 But *Quia amore langueo.*

Long thou for love never so high,
 My love is more than thine may be.

Thou weepest, thou gladdest, I sit thee by :
 Yet wouldst thou once, love, look unto me !
 Should I always feede thee
 With children meat ? Nay, love, not so !
 I will prove thy love with adversitè
Quia amore langueo.

Wax not weary, mine own wife !
 What mede is aye to live in comfort ?
 In tribulation I reign more rife
 Ofter times than in disport.
 In weal and in woe I am aye to support :
 Mine own wife, go not me fro !
 Thy mede is marked, when thou art mort .
Quia amore langueo.
 ANONYMOUS (fifteenth century).

Lament for the Makers

I that in heill was and gladnèss
 Am trublit now with great sickness
 And feblit with infirmitie —
Timor Mortis conturbat me

Our plesance here is all vain glory,
 This fals world is but transitory,
 The flesh is bruckle, the Feynd is slee :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me

The state of man does change and vary,
 Now sound, now sick, now blith, now sary,
 Now dansand mirry, now like to die .—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

No state in Erd here standis sicker ;
 As with the wynd wavis the wicker
 So wannis this world's vanitie :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Unto the Death gois all Estatis,
Princis, Prelattis, and Potestatis,
Baith rich and poor of all degree :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He takis the knichtis in to the field
Enarmit under helm and scheild ;
Victor he is at all mellie .—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That strong unmerciful tyrand
Takis, on the motheris breast sowkand,
The babe full of benignitie .—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He takis the campion in the stour,
The captain closit in the tour,
The lady in bour full of bewtie .—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He spairis no lord for his piscence,
Na clerk for his intelligence ;
His awful straik may no man flee .—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Art-magicians and astrologis,
Rethoris, logicianis, and theologis,
Them helpis no conclusionis slee :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In medecine the most practicianis,
Leechis, surrigianis and physicianis,
Themself from Death may nocht supplee :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

I see that makaris amang the lave
Playis here their padyanis, syne gois to grave ;
Sparis is nocht their facultie :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He has done petuously devour
The noble Chaucer, of makaris flour,
The Monk of Bury, and Gower, all three :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

The good Sir Hew of Eglintoun,
Ettrick, Heriot, and Wintoun,
He has tane out of this cuntrie :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That scorpion fell has done infeck
Maister John Clerk, and James Afflek,
Fra ballat-making and tragedie :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Holland and Barbour he has berevit ;
Alas ! that he not with us levit
Sir Mungo Lockart of the Lee —
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Clerk of Tranent eke he has tane,
That made the aventeris of Gawaine ;
Sir Gilbert Hay endit has he :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He has Blind Harry and Sandy Traill
Slain with his schour of mortal hail,
Quhilk Patrick Johnstoun might nocht flee :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me

He has reft Mersar his endite
That did in luvie so lively write,
So short, so quick, of sentence hie .—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

He has tane Rowll of Aberdene,
And gentill Rowll of Corstorphine ;
Two better fallowis did no man see :—
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In Dunfermline he has tane Broun
With Maister Robert Henrysoun ;
Sir John the Ross enbrasit has he :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

And he has now tane, last of a',
Good gentil Stobo and Quintin Shaw,
Of quhom all wichtis hes pitie :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Good Maister Walter Kennedy
In point of Death lies verily ;
Great ruth it were that so suld be :—

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen he has all my brothers tane,
He will nocht let me live alane ,
Of force I mon his next prey be —

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Since for the Death remeid is none,
Best is that we for Death dispone
After our death that live may we —

Timor Mortis conturbat me.

WILLIAM DUNBAR, 1508.

INHERITED MOOD, FORM, AND
PHRASING : BALLADS

OUR old Ballads are so fine and so famous that they are by some placed reverently apart, as glories of the past, things impossible to produce in our world of to-day. We could only hold this for certain if we were able to define the nature of a ballad, and no one has ever done that. The late Professor Ker, however, went some way towards it when he said, "The truth is that the Ballad is an Idea, a Poetical Form, which can take up any matter, and does not leave that matter as it was before." That is sufficient to warrant a belief that the Ballad did not become extinct at the end of the fifteenth or sixteenth or seventeenth century, but is still a live form of poetry. and if so, a powerful one. Certainly poets, even in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, have been impelled to write what they thought were ballads, and if the Ballad form "can take up any matter," it is possible that they have not deceived themselves. Whether they have aimed at, or achieved, the exact effects of the old ballads is another matter—they have been criticized for doing so, and also for not doing so.

There was, perhaps, some reason twenty years ago for thinking—or fearing—that modern life had made men incapable of feeling or responding to the stark, unflinching mood of the Ballads, born of a true marriage of realism and romance. But the War, when it made a great nation live for four years with Death, taught both men and women to put Death in his right place, and that is the main secret of the Ballads. Their vision is not only high-hearted enough to be clear-sighted, but clear-sighted enough to be deeply penetrating—they see in life the significances which make it epic. Among their other peculiar qualities are a

choice and telling observation, a sense of the unseen, and a perfectly poised humour. So long as a narrative poem in ballad metre retains these in a certain degree, it may use or reject any of the old phrases or devices, and still be considered to be in the right line of succession.

The examples which follow have been chosen on this principle, and not because they resemble their ancestors or each other in any more superficial manner. What they are to illustrate is the power conferred on the poet by the form chosen : and I believe it will be found on consideration that in no case could the story be imagined as told in any other way.

The Englishman

I met a sailor in the woods,
A silver ring wore he,
His hair hung black, his eyes shone blue,
And thus he said to me :—

“ What country, say, of this round earth,
What shore of what salt sea,
Be this, my son, I wander in,
And looks so strange to me ? ”

Says I, “ O foreign sailorman,
In England now you be,
This is her wood, and there her sky,
And that her roaring sea.”

He lifts his voice yet louder,
“ What smell be this,” says he,
“ My nose on the sharp morning air
Snuffs up so greedily ? ”

Says I, " It is wild roses
Do smell so winsomely,
And winy briar too," says I,
" That in these thickets be."

" And oh ! " says he, " what leetle bird
Is singing in yon high tree,
So every shrill and long-drawn note
Like bubbles breaks in me ? "

Says I, " It is the mavis
That perches in the tree,
And sings so shrill, and sings so sweet,
When dawn comes up the sea."

At which he fell a-musing,
And fixed his eye on me,
As one alone 'twixt light and dark
A spirit thinks to see.

" England ! " he whispers soft and harsh,
" England ! " repeated he,
" And briar, and rose, and mavis,
A-singing in yon high tree.

" Ye speak me true, my leetle son,
So—so, it came to me,
A-drifting landwards on a spar,
And grey dawn on the sea.

" Ay, ay, I could not be mistook ;
I knew them leafy trees,
I knew that land so witcherie sweet,
And that old noise of seas.

" Though here I've sailed a score of years,
And heard 'em, dream or wake,
Lap small and hollow 'gainst my cheek,
On land and coral break :

“ ‘ Yet now,’ my leetle son, says I,
 A-drifting on the wave,
 ‘ That land I see so safe and green
 Is England, I believe.

“ ‘ And that there wood is English wood,
 And this here cruel sea,
 The self-same old blue ocean
 Years gone remembers me,

“ ‘ A-sitting with my bread and butter
 Down ahind yon chittern’ mill ;
 And this same Marinere ’—(that’s me),
 ‘ Is that same leetle Will !—

“ ‘ That very same wee leetle Will
 Eating his bread and butter there,
 A-looking on the broad blue sea
 Betwixt his yaller hair ! ’

“ And here be I, my son, throwed up
 Like corpses from the sea,
 Ships, stars, winds, tempests, pirates past,
 Yet leetle Will I be ! ”

He said no more, that sailorman,
 But in a reverie
 Stared like the figure of a ship
 With painful eyes to sea

WALTER J DE LA MARE.

A Ballad of John Nicholson

It fell in the year of Mutiny,
 At darkest of the night,
 John Nicholson by Jalándhar came,
 On his way to Delhi fight.

And as he by Jalándhar came
He thought what he must do,
And he sent to the Rajah fair greeting,
To try if he were true.

“ God grant your Highness length of days,
And friends when need shall be ;
And I pray you send your Captains hither,
That they may speak with me ”

On the morrow through Jalándhar town
The Captains rode in state ;
They came to the house of John Nicholson,
And stood before the gate

The chief of them was Mehtab Singh,
He was both proud and sly ,
His turban gleamed with rubies red,
He held his chin full high.

He marked his fellows how they put
Their shoes from off their feet ,
“ Now wherefore make ye such ado
These fallen lords to greet ?

“ They have ruled us for a hundred years.
In truth I know not how,
But though they be fain of mastery,
They dare not claim it now.”

Right haughtily before them all
The durbar hall he trod,
With rubies red his turban gleamed,
His feet with pride were shod.

They had not been an hour together,
A scanty hour or so,
When Mehtab Singh rose in his place
And turned about to go.

Then swiftly came John Nicholson
Between the door and him,
With anger smouldering in his eyes
That made the rubies dim.

“ You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,”
Oh, but his voice was low !
He held his wrath with a curb of iron,
That furrowed cheek and brow.

“ You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,
When that the rest are gone,
I have a word that may not wait
To speak with you alone.”

The Captains passed in silence forth
And stood the door behind ;
To go before the game was played
Be sure they had no mind.

But there within John Nicholson
Turned him on Mehtab Singh,
“ So long as the soul is in my body
You shall not do this thing.

“ Have ye served us for a hundred years
And yet ye know not why ?
We brook no doubt of our mastery,
We rule until we die

“ Were I the one last Englishman
Drawing the breath of life,
And you the master-rebel of all
That stir this land to strife—

“ Were I,” he said, “ but a Corporal,
And you a Rajput King,
So long as the soul was in my body
You should not do this thing.

“ Take off, take off those shoes of pride,
Carry them whence they came ;
Your Captains saw your insolence,
And they shall see your shame.”

When Mehtab Singh came to the door
His shoes they burned his hand,
For there in long and silent lines
He saw the Captains stand.

When Mehtab Singh rode from the gate
His chin was on his breast
The Captains said, “ When the strong command
Obedience is best.”

HENRY NEWBOLT, 1898.

Keith of Ravelston

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine ;
“ Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line ! ”

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And through the silver meads ;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she !

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode through the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine !
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine ;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold,
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told

Yet, stranger ! here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Step out three steps where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear ?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

SYDNEY DOBELL, 1856.

The Burial of Sir John Moore

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart 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 lanthorn dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him ;
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 that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed 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 !

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him—
But little he'll reck, 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 ;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

CHARLES WOLFE, 1791-1823.

Proud Maisie

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

“ Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me ? ”
—“ When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“ Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ? ”
—“ The grey-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“ The glow-worm o’er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady ! ”

SIR WALTER SCOTT, 1771-1832.

The Wife of Usher’s Well

There lived a wife at Usher’s well,
And a wealthy wife was she ;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o’er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carline wife
That her sons she'd never see.

" I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood ! "

It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh ;
But at the gates o' Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.

" Blow up the fire, my maidens !
Bring water from the well !
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well. "

And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide ;
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bedside.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the grey ;
The eldest to the youngest said,
" 'Tis time we were away. "

The cock he hadna crawed but once,
And clapped his wings at a',
When the youngest to the eldest said,
" Brother, we must awa'.

" The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,
The channerin' worm doth chide ;
Gin we be missed out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide."

" Lie still, he still but a little wee while,
Lie still but if we may ;
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,
She'll go mad ere it be day."

" Fare ye weel, my mother dear !
Fareweel to barn and byre !
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire ! "

ANONYMOUS (*fifteenth century*).

INHERITED MOOD, FORM, AND
PHRASING : CONFLUENCE OF
INHERITANCES

IN the four preceding sections we have seen examples of the effect produced by the inheritance of an old form or mode of presentation, with its train of phrases and associations. In each of these cases the form was a definite and powerful one . to a certain degree the poet was mastered by it, though he was at the same time freed and strengthened. This section is to show how a poet may be still more richly endowed by a confluence of inheritances, a more general and diffused set of impressions, gained from one or more predecessors, but entirely grasped and administered with a dominant hand

The first instance given is the bequest of Keats to Matthew Arnold. It can hardly be described in words of any precision , but any one who knows *The Scholar-Gipsy*, or reads here the fourteen stanzas with which that poem begins, has only then to look at the second stanza of the ode *To Autumn*, and he will see that the mood, the diction, and even the imaginative form of the two poems show a very marked though subtle likeness. What has happened is what may be expected to happen to a poet who comes in a late day to the work of creation. His universe is already a splendid one, its firmament sown thick with stars , for his own new orb he receives much radiance, and gives out more.

The second example is a remarkable one. Two poems can seldom have been so much alike in so many ways as these by two far-apart writers who never saw each other's work. John Clare died in 1864 ; but the bulk of his poems, including the one here given, were

only published in 1921, fourteen years after the death of Mary Coleridge, to whom they were certainly unknown, in the ordinary way of knowledge. Yet the resemblance is too strong to be easily set down to coincidence (a word which, moreover, is only a cover for our ignorance of causes), for the two poems share not only the same thought but the same movement and tone of speech. Possibly both inherit from a common ancestor; possibly the younger spirit in time was one of those who do not see with eyes or hear with ears only.

The third and last example is a clear and convincing one. Tennyson, of all our poets, had the greatest nebula of star dust at hand for his own creative use. In the lines originally called *Morte D'Arthur*, which are by common acceptance among his very best work, he has shown with what effect materials supplied by a number of great and greatly different writers may be completely fused in the crucible of genius. In the passage where we are told how Sir Bedivere carried King Arthur from the field of battle down the frozen hills, where his harness clashed in the icy caves, and the bare black cliff clanged round him, and the slippery crag rang sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels, Tennyson is transmuting Wordsworth's picture of his own lake, where as a boy all shod with steel he hissed along the polished ice, and with the din smitten the precipices rang aloud, and every icy crag tinkled like iron; and in the west

The orange sky of evening died away

—to reappear as the verge of dawn against which
Arthur's barge looked one black dot,

And on the mere the wailing died away

Then in the description of the island valley of Avilion he incorporates a still more famous picture

from an older world: the picture which Lucretius himself received from Homer, and Homer, no doubt, from an antiquity beyond our reach. Finally, the whole story of Arthur's death and departing is taken from Malory's book, with something added and something laid aside, in a manner well worth studying. And of Malory, in his turn, two things may be noted: first, that in the short passage here given he uses three phrases from the Bible—"and do my commandment," "thy long tarrying," and "now hast thou betrayed me twice"; and, second, that the chapter is full of phrases which make lines of blank verse—such as .

And thou art named a noble knight, and would
Betray me for the richness of the sword .
For thou wouldst for my rich sword see me dead.

There is, of course, no question here of metre or of reminiscence; no blank verse, and no ten-syllable verse at all like this, had yet been written in English; only Malory's ear was already attuned to some of the rhythms which were discovered by others more than a century later. Tennyson probably marked these phrases, and avoided them, in order to ensure his own mastery; but once, when he made Arthur murmur, "I fear it is too late, and I shall die," he came very near to Malory's "I dread me I have tarried over long."

I

The Scholar-Gipsy

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head.

But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and re-cross the strips of moon-blanch'd
green,
Come, Shepherd, and again begin the quest !

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruise,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use ;
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
And here till sundown, Shepherd, will I be
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade ;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at Preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and 'went to learn the Gipsy lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquired.
Whereat he answered that the Gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains ;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will :
" And I," he said, " the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart :
But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this skill ! "

This said, he left them, and returned no more,
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the Gipsies wore
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring ;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frocked boors
Had found him seated at their entering.

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly :
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, Wanderer, on thy trace ;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place ;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground.
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the slow punt swings round :

And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood
bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream :

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee
roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leaved, white anemone,
Dark bluebells drenched with dew of summer
eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
Have often passed thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown ;
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air ;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert
gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumnor hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine ;
And marked thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of grey,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all ;
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill,
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge ?
And thou hast climbed the hill,
And gained the white brow of the Cumnor range ;
Turned once to watch, while thick the snowflakes
fall,
The line of festal light in Christ Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what—I dream ! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join the Gipsy tribe :
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid ;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1853.

To Autumn

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run ;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel , to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers :
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozyngs hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;
Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

JOHN KEATS.

II

Egypt's Might is Tumbled Down

Egypt's might is tumbled down,
Down a-down the deeps of thought ;
Greece is fallen and Troy town,
Glorious Rome hath lost her crown,
Venice' pride is nought

But the dreams their children dreamed,
Fleeting, unsubstantial, vain,
Shadowy as the shadows seemed,
Airy nothing, as they deemed,
These remain

MARY E COLERIDGE, 1861-1907.

Song's Eternity

What is song's eternity ?
Come and see.
Can it noise and bustle be ?
Come and see.
Praises sung or praises said,
Can it be ?
Wait awhile and these are dead—
Sigh, sigh ;
Be they high or lowly bred,
They die.

What is song's eternity ?
Come and see.
Melodies of earth and sky,
Here they be.
Song once sung in Adam's ears,
Can it be ?

Ballads of six thousand years,
Thrive, thrive ;
Songs awaken with the spheres
Alive.

Mighty songs that miss decay,
What are they ?
Crowds and cities pass away
Like a day.
Books are out and books are read ;
What are they ?
Years will lay them with the dead—
Sigh, sigh ;
Trifles unto nothing wed,
They die.

Dreamers mark the honey bee ;
Mark the tree
Where the bluecap "*tootle tee* "
Sings a glee
Sung to Adam and to Eve—
Here they be.
When floods covered every bough,
Noah's ark
Heard that ballad singing now ;
Hark, hark,

" *Tootle tootle tootle tee* "—
Can it be
Pride and fame must shadows be ?
Come and see—
Every season own her own ;
Bird and bee
Sing creation's music on ;
Nature's glee
Is in every mood and tone
Eternity.

JOHN CLARE, 1812-24.

III

Morte D'Arthur

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the wintry sea ;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur then, because his wound was deep
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
" The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Though Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten through the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride . for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king :

And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :
But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
" It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten through the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy best will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chull, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seemed
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
" Hast thou performed my mission which I gave ?
What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ? "

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
" I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :
" Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy name.
Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud.

" And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done ?
What harm, undone ? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The king is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt ? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, ' King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time.
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

“ What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ? ”

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

“ I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds ”

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

“ Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands ”

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutched the sword,
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
" Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ? "

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
" Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not though I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
" My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded through his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising, bore him through the place of tombs.

But, as he walked, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, " Quick, quick !
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking as he walked
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.

Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world

Then murmured Arthur, " Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three

Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood · for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parched with dust ;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the King ,
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere :
" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world ,
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge :
" The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself what comfort is in me ?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure ! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion ;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1832.

The Skating Scene

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,
I heeded not their summons · happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting, like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle ; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron ; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars

Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short, yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

WORDSWORTH,
The Prelude, Book I., 1799.

The Realm of the Gods

Apparet Divûm numen, sedesque quietæ;
Quas neque concutiunt venti, nec nubila nimbis
Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat; semperque innubilis æther
Integit, et large diffuso iumine ridet:
Omnia suppeditat porro Natura, neque ulla
Res animi pacem delibat tempore in ullo.

LUCRETIVS (iii. 18).

We see the realm of the gods, their restful abode:
winds shake it not, clouds rain no showers upon it, nor
does the snow, compact of sharply frozen dew, fall
hoar to trouble it: but ever the bright heaven roofs

it without a cloud, and smiles broad upon it with outpoured light : Nature besides gives all things needful, nor does anything break their peace of mind in any length of time.

Ἡ μὲν ἄρ' ὥς εἰποῖσ' ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
 Οὐλυμπόνδ', ὅθι φασὶ θεῶν ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
 Ἑμμεναι · οὔτ' ἀνέμοισι τινάσσεται, οὔτε ποτ' ὄμβρῳ
 Δείνεται, οὔτε χιῶν ἐπιπίλναται · ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἶθρη
 Πέπταται ἀννέφελος, λευκὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν αἴγλη ·
 Τῷ ἐνὶ τέρπονται μακάρες θεοὶ ἥματα πάντα

HOMER (*Odyssey* vi 41-6).

So spake the grey-eyed Athene, and departed to Olympus, where, as they say, is the seat of the gods that standeth fast for ever. Not by winds is it shaken, nor ever wet with rain, nor doth the snow come nigh thereto, but most clear air is spread about it cloudless, and the white light floats over it. Therein the blessed gods are glad for all their days

The Odyssey of Homer, done into English prose by
 S H BUTCHER and A. LANG (vi 41-6).

Morte Darthur

(Book XXI, Chapter iv) And so weakly they led him betwixt them both, to a little chapel not far from the seaside. And when the king was there, he thought him well eased. . . .

(Chapter v.) Then Sir Lucan took up the king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the other part, and in the lifting the king swooned, and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lift, that the part of his guts fell out of his body, and therewith the noble knight's heart brast. Alas, said the king, this is to me a full heavy sight, to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me, that had more need of help than I. Alas, he would not complain him, his heart was so set

to help me: now Jesu have mercy upon his soul. Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me, for wit thou well an I might live myself, the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur unto Sir Bedivere, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again.

So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and the haft was all of precious stones; and then he said to himself, If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And so, as soon as he might, he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword in the water. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king, therefore go thou lightly again, and do my commandment; as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand, and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wappe and waves wanne. Ah, traitor untrue, said King Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have weened that thou that hast been to me so lief and dear—and thou art named a noble knight,

and would betray me for the richness of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands; for thou wouldst for my rich sword see me dead.

Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the water side; and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might; and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long.

Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king. And so he did softly; and there received him three queens with great mourning; and so they set them down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head. And then that queen said, Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? alas, this wound on your head hath caught over much cold. And so then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him.

Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me, now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies? Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in

If, Unless

me is no trust for to trust in ; for I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound : and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest ; and so he went all that night, and in the morning he was ware, betwixt two holts hoar, of a chapel and an hermitage.

SIR THOMAS MALORY, 1469.

INHERITED IDEA : INCIDENTAL

AMONG ideas there are some which are not themselves the subjects of poetry so often as they are the incidental ornament or illumination of it. The stock of these may be renewed by additions, for poets are constantly inventing fresh images or metaphors for their own purposes. But unless the new ones are both perfectly apt and taken from no distant source their power will be small and transitory : the images which are most effective are those which are already a national possession, inherited from the past.

One instance will be sufficient here. Throughout our poetry the idea of pilgrimage has played a great part, though it has been almost always incidental. The reason of this is, no doubt, that it is many generations since pilgrimage ceased to be a fact, and took the higher place of an aspect of human life. Its natural attraction, whether as an activity or an image, has been so great among our people that it has enriched an immense number of poems, and custom has never staled its variety.

Ten of the poems chosen to exemplify this use during the last five and a half centuries are not only beautiful in other ways, but in this particularly, that whatever they may be treating of—love, sorrow, salvation, faith, death on the scaffold or a friend's conduct—they all have at least one moment of clear and irresistible appeal ; the more irresistible in some instances because wholly unpressed. Raleigh and Bunyan are the only two here who make a main point of pilgrimage, and even they are using it only as a picture of our passage from life to death : the rest bring it in with so unpremeditated a gesture that the surprise almost takes the breath. At the end of

Rossetti's long and lovely poem it comes more suddenly still and with overwhelming effect.

The last passage, from the *Canterbury Tales*, takes us right up to the national fact of which all these images and associations are the spiritual form. In April men like to take a holiday and travel—that is the prosaic basis of Chaucer's Prologue. But even so the holiday is no mere holiday—it is the spiritualized form of travel—there is still about it the heroic memory of the Crusader, and the sacred memory of the Sepulchre. The Wife of Bath—who had twice been to Jerusalem—was making this Canterbury journey, we must suppose, because it was a thing to do: she wanted to feel “that I have had my world, as in my time.” But in her company there went the Knight, a very perfect gentle knight, to whom pilgrimage was the way of a pilgrim, “the holy blissful martyr for to seek.” Having been long in the wars he had some quiet understanding of life, and some respect for martyrs and healers.

The Growth of Love

All earthly beauty hath one cause and proof,
To lead the pilgrim soul to beauty above :
Yet lieth the greater bliss so far aloof,
That few there be are weaned from earthly love.
Joy's ladder it is, reaching from home to home,
The best of all the work that all was good ;
Whereof 'twas writ the angels aye upclomb,
Down sped, and at the top the Lord God stood.

But I my time abuse, my eyes by day
Centred on thee, by night my heart on fire—
Letting my numbered moments run away—
Nor e'en 'twixt night and day to heaven aspire :
So true it is that what the eye seeth not
But slow is loved, and loved is soon forgot.

ROBERT BRIDGES

The Portrait

This is her picture as she was :

It seems a thing to wonder on,
As though mine image in the glass
Should tarry when myself am gone.

I gaze until she seems to stir,—
Until mine eyes almost avert

That now, even now, the sweet lips part
To breathe the words of the sweet heart :—
And yet the earth is over her.

Alas ! even such the thin-drawn ray

That makes the prison-depths more rude,—
The drip of water night and day
Giving a tongue to solitude.

Yet this, of all love's perfect prize,
Remains ; save what in mournful guise
Takes counsel with my soul alone,—
Save what is secret and unknown,
Below the earth, above the skies.

In painting her I shrined her face

Mid mystic trees, where light falls in
Hardly at all ; a covert place

Where you might think to find a dim
Of doubtful talk, and a live flame
Wandering, and many a shape whose name
Not itself knoweth, and old dew,
And your own footsteps meeting you,
And all things going as they came.

A deep dim wood ; and there she stands

As in that wood that day : for so
Was the still movement of her hands
And such the pure line's gracious flow,

And passing fair the type must seem,
Unknown the presence and the dream.
 'Tis she : though of herself, alas !
 Less than the shadow on the grass
Or than her image in the stream.

That day we met there, I and she,
 One with the other all alone ;
And we were blithe ; yet memory
 Saddens those hours, as when the moon
Looks upon daylight. And with her
I stooped to drink the spring-water,
 Athirst where other waters sprang ;
 And where the echo is, she sang,—
My soul another echo there.

But when that hour my soul won strength
 For words whose silence wastes and kills,
Dull raindrops smote us, and at length
 Thundered the heat within the hills.
That eve I spoke those words again
Beside the pelted window-pane ;
 And there she hearkened what I said,
 With under-glances that surveyed
The empty pastures blind with rain.

Next day the memories of these things,
 Like leaves through which a bird has flown,
Still vibrated with Love's warm wings ,
 Till I must make them all my own
And paint this picture. So, 'twixt ease
Of talk and sweet long silences,
 She stood among the plants in bloom
 At windows of a summer room,
To feign the shadow of the trees.

And as I wrought, while all above
 And all around was fragrant air,

In the sick burthen of my love
It seemed each sun-thrilled blossom there
Beat like a heart among the leaves.
O heart that never beats nor heaves,
In that one darkness lying still,
What now to thee my love's great will
Or the fine web the sunshine weaves ?

For now doth daylight disavow
Those days,—nought left to see or hear.
Only in solemn whispers now
At night-time these things reach mine ear,
When the leaf-shadows at a breath
Shrink in the road, and all the heath,
Forest and water, far and wide,
In limpid starlight glorified,
Lie like the mystery of death.

Last night at last I could have slept,
And yet delayed my sleep till dawn,
Still wandering Then it was I wept .
For unawares I came upon
Those glades where once she walked with me :
And as I stood there suddenly,
All wan with traversing the night,
Upon the desolate verge of light
Yearned loud the iron-bosomed sea

Even so, where Heaven holds breath and hears
The beating heart of Love's own breast,—
Where round the secret of all spheres
All angels lay their wings to rest,—
How shall my soul stand rapt and awed,
When, by the new birth borne abroad
Throughout the music of the suns,
It enters in her soul at once
And knows the silence there for God !

Here with her face doth memory sit
 Meanwhile, and wait the day's decline,
Till other eyes shall look from it,
 Eyes of the spirit's Palestine,
Even than the old gaze tenderer :
While hopes and aims long lost with her
 Stand round her image side by side,
 Like tombs of pilgrims that have died
About the Holy Sepulchre.

D G ROSSETTI.

Song of the Shepherd Boy in the Valley of Humiliation

He that is down needs fear no fall ;
 He that is low, no pride ;
He that is humble, ever shall
 Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
 Little be it or much
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
 Because Thou savest such

Fullness to such a burden is,
 That go on pilgrimage ,
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
 Is best from age to age.

JOHN BUNYAN, c. 1670.

Valiant's Song

Who would true valour see,
 Let him come hither ;
One here will constant be,
 Come wind, come weather.

There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound—
His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright,
He'll with a giant fight ;
But he will have a right
To be a pilgrim.

Hobgoblin nor foul fiend
Can daunt his spirit ,
He knows he at the end
Life shall inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
He'll fear not what men say
He'll labour night and day
To be a pilgrim.

JOHN BUNYAN, *c.* 1670.

A Stranger Here

A stranger here, as all my fathers were
That went before, I wander to and fro ;
From earth to heaven is my pilgrimage,
A tedious way for flesh and blood to go :
O Thou that art the way, pity the blind
And teach me how I may Thy dwelling find.

JOHN AMNER, 1615.

His Pilgrimage

Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage ;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer ;
No other balm will there be given ;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of heaven ;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains :
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss ;
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.
My soul will be a-dry before ;
But, after, it will thirst no more.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Ophelia's Song

How should I your true love know
From another one ?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone ;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
 Larded with sweet flowers,
 Which bewept to the grave did go
 With true-love showers.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Astrophel and Stella

It is most true that eyes are formed to serve
 The inward light, and that the heavenly part
 Ought to be king, from whose rules who do swerve,
 Rebels to nature, strive for their own smart.
 It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart
 An image is, which for ourselves we carve,
 And, fools, adore in temple of our heart,
 Till that good god make church and churchmen
 starve :

True, that true beauty virtue is indeed,
 Whereof this beauty can be but a shade,
 Which elements with mortal mixture breed :
 True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
 And should in soul up to our country move .
 True, and yet true—that I must Stella love.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Vox Ultima Crucis

Tary no longer ; toward thyn heritage
 Haste on thy way, and be of right good chere.
 Go ech day onward on thy pilgrimage,
 Thynk how short time thou shalt abyde here.

Thy place is built above the starres clere,
 None erthly palace wrought in so statly wyse.
 Come on, my friend, my brother most entere—
 For thee I offred my blood in sacryfice.

JOHN LYDGATE.

Truth

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,
The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.
Her nis non hoom, her nis but wildernesse ;
Forth, pilgrim, forth ! Forth, beste, out of thy stal !
Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al ;
Hold the hye way, and lat thy gost thee lede :
And trouthe shal delivere, it is no drede.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER
(*From the " Balade de Bon Conseil."*)

The Canterbury Tales

(*The Prologue*)

Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour ;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open eye,
(So priketh hem Nature in hir corages) :
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmers for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes ,
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

INHERITED IDEA : AS SUBJECT

WHAT is the modern Englishman's idea of England ? How far is it traditional, inherited from past generations, and how far have the men and women of to-day enlarged or altered it ? To ask this is to ask ourselves what is the country we live in, and who made it—no unimportant inquiry to us, and one which will be quite as important to our posterity. History cannot give us the answer to it without examining the evidence of literature, and especially of poetry, which keeps the record of our emotions in the most authentic form. There may be other records, of a prosaic or scientific kind, but they can hardly be, to the same extent as poetry, the evidence of a general idea or feeling : even an Act of Parliament is but a distant, vague, or partial representation of the mind of the nation, whereas an Act of Poetry, such as the famous speech in *Richard II*, or Wordsworth's Sonnets of 1804, has actually received the popular assent of many generations, and practically by a unanimous vote.

The idea of war is at the present moment an even more interesting one for the upstream voyager to explore. In comparison with it, the national patriotism seems (though it is not so in reality) to have been in its upper reaches much the same river which lately bore us up. During the periods of conflict between 1862 and 1918—or, to be honest, 1924—the nature of war has greatly changed, and the idea of it even more greatly. National war, which now means also world-war, is a very different affair from the limited struggles in which picked teams contended on distant fields, and left inspiring memories to their friends and successors at home. In the old wars civilization was violated, but for a possible advantage : its ruin was never in sight. Humanity suffered ; but the glory

and even the nobility of life were increased. So, till within the last seven years, there were always two possible views, two moods, two ideas of war: there is now only one, not because the glory of endurance and the nobility of self-sacrifice have vanished, but because war must in the future be the end of all ideals and ideas together. The space here available will not allow full illustration of great subjects; and in this set of poems I have chosen to exemplify modern rather than ancient ideas of war. The one really old piece—Skelton's—shows, of course, an extremely immature mood, the mood of an unrestrained boy after a disputed victory at football. But it is the complement to the staid and half-humorous chivalry of the *Fair Brass*. The remainder are in the modern mood,—Mr Hardy's *Men who March Away* will show to all time the Englishmen of 1914, willing but unaggressive, clear-eyed but unflinching.

I have added a smaller set upon the subject of the Sea. The familiar Ode by Campbell is traced to its original—a finer poem with a stormier movement, and more true to naval life because it makes war only a part of it. Then there is Barnaby Googe's beautiful little piece—seeing how few good poems we have on the subject, I wonder that this is not more often chosen—and that song of the Sea Voyage, which is not only our oldest known sea-song but illustrates the unchangeable nature of ships, sailors, travellers, seasickness, and the English sense of humour.

London, too, might well demand more space; but poems on London, as distinguished from the personal feelings of Londoners, are few. The subject has grown vastly since Dunbar's splendid eulogy was chanted, and is now perhaps beyond the grasp even of poetry; but Mr. Shillito has seized one memorable moment.

The little set on Sleep represents an idea, or two contradictory ideas, which may seem insignificant by comparison with the rest; but there is this answer

ready, that sleep is no less fundamental than familiar in the life of man the animal, and that what has interested poets in all ages cannot be a completely insignificant subject for poetic thought.

I

The Trust

("These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off"—HEBREWS XI 13)

They trusted God—Unslumbering and unsleeping,
He sees and sorrows for a world at war,
His ancient covenant securely keeping,
And these had seen His promise from afar,
That through the pain, the sorrow, and the sinning,
That righteous Judge the issue should decide
Who ruleth over all from the beginning—
And in that faith they died

They trusted England—Scarce the prayer was spoken
Ere they beheld what they had hungered for,
A mighty country with its ranks unbroken,
A city built in unity once more ;
Freedom's best champion, girt for yet another
And mightier enterprise for Right defied,
A land whose children live to serve their Mother—
And in that faith they died.

And us they trusted, we the task inherit,
The unfinished task for which their lives were spent ;
But leaving us a portion of their spirit
They gave their witness and they died content.
Full well they knew they could not build without us
That better country, faint and far descried,
God's own true England ; but they did not doubt us—
And in that faith they died.

C. A. ALINGTON.

Happy is England Now

There is not anything more wonderful
Than a great people moving towards the deep
Of an unguessed and unfear'd future ; nor
Is aught so dear of all held dear before
As the new passion stirring in their veins
When the destroying Dragon wakes from sleep

Happy is England now, as never yet !
And though the sorrows of the slow days fret
Her faithfulest children grief itself is proud
Ev'n the warm beauty of this spring and summer
That turns to bitterness turns then to gladness,
Since for this England the beloved ones died.

Happy is England in the brave that die
For wrongs not hers and wrongs so sternly hers ;
Happy in those that give, give, and endure
The pain that never the new years may cure ;
Happy in all her dark woods, green fields, towns,
Her hills and rivers and her chafing sea.

Whate'er was dear before is dearer now.
There's not a bird singing upon his bough
But sings the sweeter in our English ears :
There's not a nobleness of heart, hand, brain
But shines the purer , happiest is England now
In those that fight, and watch with pride and tears.
JOHN FREEMAN.

At the Wars

Now that I am ta'en away,
And may not see another day,
What is it to my eye appears ?
What sound rings in my stricken ears ?
Not even the voice of any friend
Or eyes beloved-world-without-end,
But scenes and sounds of the country-side

In far England across the tide :
An upland field when Spring's begun,
Mellow beneath the evening sun . . .
A circle of loose and lichen'd wall
Over which seven red pines fall . . .
An orchard of wizen blossoming trees
Wherein the nesting chaffinches
Begin again the self-same song
All the late April day-time long . . .
Paths that lead a shelving course
Between the chalk scarp and the gorse
By English downs ; and, O ! too well
I hear the hidden, clanking bell
Of wandering sheep. . . . I see the brown
Twilight of the huge empty down. . . .
Soon blotted out ! for now a lane
Glitters with warmth of May-time rain,
And on a shooting briar I see
A yellow bird who sings to me.
A yellow-hammer, once I heard
Thy brief song when no other bird
Could to my sunk heart comfort bring ;
But now I would not have thee sing,
So sharp thy note is with the pain
Of England I may not see again !
Yet sing thy song : there answereth
Deep in me a voice which saith :
" The gorse upon the twilit down,
The English loam so sunset brown,
The bowed pines and the sheep-bells' clamour,
The wet, lit lane and the yellow-hammer,
The orchard and the chaffinch song,
Only to the Brave belong.
And he shall lose their joy for aye
If their price he cannot pay,
Who shall find them dearer far
Enriched by blood after long War."

ROBERT NICHOLS.

Home Thoughts in Laventie

Green gardens in Laventie !
Soldiers only know the street
Where the mud is churned and splashed about
By battle-wending feet ;
And yet beside one stricken house there is a glimpse of
grass,
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the church whose pitted spire
Seems balanced on a strand
Of swaying stone and tottering brick
Two roofless ruins stand,
And here behind the wreckage where the back wall
should have been
We found a garden green.

The grass was never trodden on,
The little path of gravel
Was overgrown with celandine,
No other folk did travel
Along its weedy surface, but the nimble-footed mouse
Running from house to house.

So all among the vivid blades
Of soft and tender grass
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels
That pass and ever pass,
In noisy continuity until their stony rattle
Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from this ease
Of tranquil happy mind,
And searched the garden's little length
A fresh pleasaunce to find ;
And there, some yellow daffodils and jasmine hanging
high
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant
Of the many sweets we found,
Was a little bush of Daphne flower
Upon a grassy mound,
And so thick were the blossoms set, and so divine the
scent
That we were well content

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing
In that little lovely place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked and
shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

I saw green banks of daffodil,
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-courting on the leas ;
And meadows with their glittering streams, and silver
scurrying dace,
Home—what a perfect place !

EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT.

England

No lovelier hills than thine have laid
My tired thoughts to rest ;
No peace of lovelier valleys made
Like peace within my breast.

Thine are the woods whereto my soul,
Out of the noontide beam,
Flees for a refuge green and cool
And tranquil as a dream.

Thy breaking seas like trumpets peal ;
Thy clouds—how oft have I
Watched their bright towers of silence steal
Into infinity !

My heart within me faints to roam,
In thought ev'n, far from thee .
Thine be the grave whereto I come,
And thine my darkness be.

WALTER J. DE LA MARE.

From " Milton "

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic Mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear ! O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

W. BLAKE, 1804.

England, 1802

IV

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 :
 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.

V

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 I had, my Country—am I to be blamed ?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed
 For dearly must we prize thee ; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men ;
 And I by my affection was beguiled :
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1802.

From "Fears in Solitude," 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 shouldst 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,
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
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me !

S T COLERIDGE.

Richard II

ACT II

Scene I.—An Apartment

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK,
etc.*

Gaunt. Will the king come, that I may breathe my
last

In wholesome counsel to his unstaid youth ?

York. Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your
breath ;

For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

Gaunt. O ! but they say the tongues of dying men

Enforce attention like deep harmony :

Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.

He that no more must say is listened more
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;
More are men's ends marked than their lives before :

The setting sun, and music at the close,
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,
Writ in remembrance more than things long past :
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

York. No ; it is stopped with other flattering sounds,
As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound
The open ear of youth doth always listen :
Report of fashions in proud Italy,
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation
Limps after in base imitation
Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity—
So be it new there's no respect how vile—
That is not quickly buzzed into his ears ?
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,
Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard
Direct not him whose way himself will choose
'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose.

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,
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,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Feared 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 leased out—I die pronouncing it—
Like to a tenement, or pelting farm :
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.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1594

Edward I

Act I., Scene I

Illustrious England, ancient seat of kings,
Whose chivalry hath royalized thy fame,
That sounding bravely through terrestrial vales
Proclaiming conquests, spoils, and victories,

Rings glorious echoes through the farthest world ;
 What warlike nation, trained in feats of arms,
 What barbarous people, stubborn or untamed,
 What climate under the meridian signs,
 Or frozen zone under his brumal plage,
 Erst have not quaked and trembled at the name
 Of Britain and her mighty conquerors ?
 Her neighbour-nations, as Scotland, Denmark, France,
 Awed with their deeds and jealous of her arms,
 Have begged defensive and offensive leagues.
 Thus Europe, rich and mighty in her kings,
 Hath feared brave England, dreadful in her kings,
 And now, to eternize Albion's champions,
 Equivalent with Trojans' ancient fame,
 Comes lovely Edward from Jerusalem,
 Veering before the wind, ploughing the sea,
 His stretchèd sails filled with the breath of men,
 That through the world admire his manliness.

GEORGE PEELE, 1591. ~

II

Men who March Away

(Song of the Soldiers)

What of the faith and fire within us,
 Men who march away
 Ere the barn-cocks say
 Night is growing grey,
 Leaving all that here can win us ;
 What of the faith and fire within us,
 Men who march away ?

Is it a purblind* prank, O think you,
 Friend with the musing eye,
 Who watch us stepping by
 With doubt and dolorous sigh ?

Can much pondering so hoodwink you !
Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye ?

Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
Dalliers as they be—
England's need are we ;
Her distress would leave us rueing :
Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see !

In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
Press we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us,
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing grey,
Leaving all that here can win us ,
Hence the faith and fire within us,
Men who march away.

THOMAS HARDY, *September 5, 1914.*

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
(2,519)

A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

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

RUPERT BROOKE, 1914.

The Volunteer

Here lies a clerk who half his life had spent
Toiling at ledgers in a city grey,
Thinking that so his days would drift away
With no lance broken in life's tournament .
Yet ever 'twixt the books and his bright eyes
The gleaming eagles of the legions came,
And horsemen, charging under phantom skies,
Went thundering past beneath the oriflamme.

And now those waiting dreams are satisfied ;
From twilight to the halls of dawn he went ;
His lance is broken ; but he lies content
With that high hour, in which he lived and died.
And falling thus, he wants no recompense,
Who found his battle in the last resort ;
Nor needs he any hearse to bear him hence,
Who goes to join the men of Agincourt.

HERBERT ASQUITH.

Before Action

By all the glories of the day
And the cool evening's benison,
By that last sunset touch that lay
Upon the hills when day was done,
By beauty lavishly outpoured
And blessings carelessly received,
By all the days that I have lived
Make me a soldier, Lord.

By all of all man's hopes and fears,
And all the wonders poets sing,
The laughter of unclouded years,
And every sad and lovely thing ;
By the romantic ages stored
With high endeavour that was his,
By all his mad catastrophes,
Make me a man, O Lord.

I, that on my familiar hill
Saw with uncomprehending eyes
A hundred of Thy sunsets spill
Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword
Must say good-bye to all of this ;
By all delights that I shall miss,
Help me to die, O Lord

WILLIAM NOEL HODGSON.

St. George's Day—Ypres, 1915

To fill the gap, to bear the brunt
With bayonet and with spade,
Four hundred to a four-mile front,
Unbacked and undismayed—

What men are these, of what great race,
 From what old shire or town,
 That run with such goodwill to face
 Death on a Flemish down ?

*Let be ! they bind a broken line :
 As men die, so die they.
 Land of the free ! their life was thine,
 It is St. George's Day.*

Yet say whose ardour bids them stand
 At bay by yonder bank,
 Where a boy's voice and a boy's hand
 Close up the quivering rank.
 Who under those all-shattering skies
 Plays out his captain's part
 With the last darkness in his eyes,
 And *Domum* in his heart ?

*Let be, let be ! in yonder line
 All names are burned away.
 Land of his love ! the same be thine,
 It is St. George's Day.*

HENRY NEWBOLT.

A Harrow Grave in Flanders

Here in the marshland, past the battered bridge,
 One of a hundred grains untimely sown,
 Here, with his comrades of the hard-won ridge,
 He rests, unknown.

His horoscope had seemed so plainly drawn—
 School triumphs, earned apace in work and play ;
 Friendships at will ; then love's delightful dawn,
 And mellowing day.

Home fostering hope ; some service to the State ;

Benignant age ; then the long tryst to keep
Where in the yew-tree shadow congregate
His fathers sleep.

Was here the one thing needful to distil

From life's alembic, through this holier fate,
The man's essential soul, the hero will ?

We ask—and wait.

MARQUESS OF CREWE.

Casualty

They are bringing him down ;

He looks at me wanly.

The bandages are brown,

Brown with mud, red only—

But how deep a red ! in the breast of the shirt,

Deepening red too, as each whistling breath

Is drawn with the suck of a slow-filling squirt,

While waxen cheeks waste to the pallor of death.

O my comrade !

My comrade that you could rest

Your tired body on mine, that your head might be laid

Fallen and heavy—upon this my breast,

That I might take your hands in my hands

To chafe ! That abandoned your body might sink

Upon mine, which here helplessly, grievously stands ;

That your body might drink

Warmth from my body, strength from my veins,

Life from my heart that monstrously beats,

Beats, beats and strains

After you vainly !

The trench curves. They are gone.

The steep rain teems down.

O, my companion !
Who were you ? How did you come,
Looking so wanly upon me ? I know—
And O, how immensely long I have known—
Those aching eyes, numb face, gradual gloom,
That depth without groan !

Take now my love—this love which alone
I can give you—and shed without pain—
That life if I could I would succour,
Even as it were
This, this, my poor own !

ROBERT NICHOLS.

The Fair Brass

An effigy of brass
Trodden by careless feet
Of worshippers that pass,
Beautiful and complete,

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

It shows a warrior armed :
Across his iron breast
His hands by death are charmed
To leave his sword at rest.

Wherewith he led his men
O'ersea, and smote to hell
The astonished Saracen,
Nor doubted he did well.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROBERT BRIDGES.

A Sight in Camp

A sight in camp in the daybreak grey and dim,
As from my tent I emerge so early sleepless,
As slow I walk in the cool fresh air the path near by the
hospital tent,

Three forms I see on stretchers lying, brought out there
 untended lying,
 Over each the blanket spread, ample brownish woollen
 blanket,
 Grey and heavy blanket, folding, covering all.

Curious I halt and silent stand,
 Then with light fingers I from the face of the nearest,
 the first, just lift the blanket :
 Who are you, elderly man so gaunt and grim, with well-
 grey'd hair, and flesh all sunken about the eyes ?
 Who are you, my dear comrade ?

Then to the second I step—and who are you, my child
 and darling ?
 Who are you, sweet boy with cheeks yet blooming ?

Then to the third—a face nor child nor old, very calm,
 as of beautiful yellow-white ivory :
 Young man, I think I know you—I think this face is
 the face of the Christ Himself,
 Dead and divine and brother of all, and here again He
 lies.

WALT WHITMAN.

As Toilsome I wandered Virginia's Woods

As toilsome I wandered Virginia's woods,
 To the music of rustling leaves kicked by my feet (for
 'twas autumn),
 I marked at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier ;
 Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat (easily
 all could I understand),
 The halt of a mid-day hour, when up ! no time to lose—
 yet this sign left,
 On a tablet scrawled and nailed on the tree by the
 grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene
of life,
Yet at times through changeful season and scene,
abrupt, alone, or in the crowded street,
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes
the inscription rude in Virginia's woods,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

WALT WHITMAN.

Hohenlinden

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay th' untrodden snow ;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry

Then shook the hills with thunder riven ;
Then rushed the steed to battle driven ;
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow ;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn ; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulph'rous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave !
Wave, Munich ! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry !

Few, few, shall part where many meet !
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

Skelton, Laureate, against the Scottes

Agaynst the proude Scottes clatter yng,
That never wyl leave theyr tratlyng,
Wan they the felde, and lost their Kynge—
They may well say—Fye on that winning !

Lo, these fond sottes,
And tratlynge Scottes,
How they are blinde
In theyr own minde,
And will not knowe
Thevr overthrow
At Branxton More !
They are so stowre,
So frantike mad,
They say they had,
And wan the felde
With speare and shield.
That is as trew
As blacke is blew,

And grene is grey.
Whatever they say,
Jemmy is dead
And closed in leade
That was theyr own Kynge :
Fye on that winninge !
At Floddon-hilles
Our bowes, our billes
Slewe all the flowre
Of theyre honoure.
Are not these Scottes
Foles and sottes
Such hoste to make,
To prate and crake,
To face, to brace,
All voyd of grace ?
So proud of heart,
So overthwart,
So out of frame,
So voyd of shame,
As it is enrolld,
Written and told
Within this quaire ?
Who list to repair,
And therein reed,
Shall find indeed
A mad rekening,
Considering all thing
That the Scottes may sing :
Fye on that winning !

JOHN SKELTON.
(*From edition of 1583.*)

III •

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.

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.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
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.

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,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

Saylors for my Money

*(A new Ditty composed in the praise of Saylors and Sea
Affaires, briefly showing the nature of so worthy a calling,
and effects of their industry)*

To the Tune of *The Iovial Cobbler*

Countrie men of England, who live at home with ease,
And little thinke what dangers are incident o' th' seas,
Give eare unto the saylor who unto you will shew
His case, his case : *how ere the winde doth blow.*

He that is a saylor must have a valiant heart,
For, when he is upon the sea, he is not like to start ;
But must with noble courage all dangers undergoe :
Resolve, resolve : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

Our calling is laborious, and subject to much (care) ;
But we must still contented be with what falls to our
share.

We must not be faint-hearted, come tempest, raine or
snow,
Nor shrink : nor shrink : *how ere the winde doth
blow.*

Sometimes on Neptune's bosome our ship is tost with
waves,
And every minute we expect the sea must be our
graves.
Sometime on high she mounteth, then falls againe as
low :
With waves : with waves : *when stormie winds do
blow.*

Then with unfained prayers, as Christian duty binds,
Wee turne unto the Lord of hosts, with all our hearts
and minds ;

To Him we flie for succour, for He, we surely know,
Can save : can save : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

Then he who (brake) the rage (of) the rough and
blustrous seas,

When His disciples were afraid, will straight the
stormes apease ;

And give us cause to thanke, on bended knees full low :
Who saves : who saves : *how ere the wind doth
blow.*

Our enemies approaching, when wee on seá espie,
Wee must resolve incontinent to fight, although we die ;
With noble resolution we must oppose our foe
In fight, in fight : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

And when, by God's assistance, our foes are put to th'
foile,

To animate our courages wee all have share o' th'
spoile.

Our foes into the ocean we back to back do throw,
To sinke, or swimme : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

Thus wee gallant sea-men, in midst of greatest dangers,
Doe alwaies prove our valour, wee never are no
changers ;

But what soe ere betide us, wee stoutly undergoe,
Resolved, resolved : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

If fortune doe befriend us, in what we take in hand,
Wee prove our selves still generous wherere we come
to land ;

Ther's few that shall out brave us, though neere so
great in show

We spend, and lend : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

We travell to the Indies, from them we bring some
spice ;

There we buy rich merchandise at very little price ;

And many wealthy prizes we conquer from the foe

In fight, in fight : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

Into our native country with wealth we doe returne,
And cheere our wives and children, who for our
absence mourne ;

Then doe we bravely flourish, and where soe ere we goe

We roare : we roare : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

For when we have received our wages for our paynes

The vintners and the tapsters by us have golden gaines.

We call for liquor roundly, and pay before we goe :

And sing : and drink . *how ere the wind doth blow.*

We bravely are respected when we walke up and
downe,

For if wee meete good company wee care not for a
crowne ;

Ther's none more free than saylors, where ere he
come or goe,

They'll roare o' th' shore : *how ere the winde doth
blow*

Then who would live in England and nourish vice with
ease,

When hee that is in povertie may riches get o' th' seas ?

Let's saile unto the Indies, where golden grass doth
grow :

To sea, to sea : *how ere the wind doth blow.*

MARTIN PARKER, c. 1635.

Coming Homeward out of Spain

O Raging Seas,
and mighty Neptune's fane,
In monstrous hills
that knowest thyself so high,
that with thy floods
Dost beat the shores of Spain :
And break the Cliffs
that dare thy force annoy :

Cease now thy rage,
and lay thine ire aside,
And thou that hast
the governance of all,
O mighty God,
Grant weather, wind, and tide,
till on my Country Coast
our anchor fall.

BARNABE GOOGE, 1563.

The Pilgrims' Sea Voyage

Men may leve alle gamys,
That saylen to seynt Jamys !
Ffor many a men it gramys,
When they begyn to sayle.
Ffor when they have take the see,
At Sandwyche, or at Wynchylsee,
At Brystow, or where that it bee,
Theyr hertes begyn to fayle.

Anone the mastyr commaundeth fast
To hys shyp-men in alle the hast,
To dresse hem sone about the mast,
Theyr takelyng to make.

With "howe ! hissa ! " then they cry,
 " What, howe, mate ! thow stondyst to ny,
 Thy felow may nat hale the by ; "
 Thus they begyn to crake.

A boy or tweyn anone up styen,
 And overthwart the sayle-yerde lyen ;—
 " Y how ! taylia ! " the remenaunt cryen,
 And pulle with alle theyr myght.
 " Bestowe the boote, bote-swayne, anon,
 That our pylgryms may pley theron ;
 For som ar lyke to cowgh and grone
 Or it be full mydnyght.

" Hale the bowelyne ! now, vere the shete !—
 Cooke, make redy anoon our mete,
 Our pylgryms have no lust to ete,
 I pray God yeve hem rest ! "
 " Go to the helm ! what, howe ! no nere !
 Steward, felow ! A pot of bere ! "
 " Ye shall have, sir, with good chere,
 Anon alle of the best."

" Y howe ! trussa ! hale in the brayles !
 Thou halyst nat, be god, thow fayles !
 O se howe wellle owre good shyp sayles ! "
 And thus they say among.
 " Hale in the wartake ! " " It shall be done."
 " Steward ! cover the boorde anone,
 And set bred and salt therone,
 And tary nat to long."

Then cometh oone and seyth, " Be mery ,
 Ye shall have a storme or a pery."
 " Holde thow thy pese ! thow canst no whery
 Thow medlyst wondyr sore."

Thys mene whyle the pylgryms ly,
And have theyr bowlys fast theym by,
And cry aftyr hote malvesy,
“ Thow helpe for to restore.”

And som wold have a saltyd tost,
Ffor they myght ete neyther sode ne rost ;
A man myght sone pay for theyr cost,
As for oo day or twayne.
Som layde theyr bookys on theyre kne,
And rad so long they myght nat se ,
“ Allas ! myne hede wolle cleve on thre ! ”
Thus seyth another certayne.

Then commeth owre owner lyke a lorde
And speketh many a Royall worde,
And dresseth hym to the hygh borde,
To see alle thyng be welle.
Anone he calleth a carpentere,
And byddyth hym bryng with hym hys gere
To make the cabans here and there,
With many a febylle celle.

A sak of strawe were there ryght good,
For som must lyg theym in theyr hood ;
I had as lefe be in the wood,
Without mete or drynk ;
For when that we shall go to bedde,
The pumpe was nygh oure beddes hede,
A man were as good to be dede
As smell therof the styнк !

ANONYMOUS (*fifteenth century*).

IV

A Thanksgiving

Before the winter's haunted nights are o'er,
I thankfully rejoice that stars look down
Above the darkened streets, and I adore
The Heavens in London Town.

The Heavens, beneath which Alfred stood, when he
Built ramparts by the tide against his foes,
The skies men loved, when in eternity
The dreamlike Abbey rose ,

The Heavens, whose glory has not known increase
Since Raleigh swaggered home by lantern-light,
And Shakespeare, looking upwards, knew the peace,
The cool deep peace of night.

Under these Heavens brave Wesley rose betimes
To preach ere daybreak to the tender soul,
And in the heart of Keats, the starry rhymes
Rolled, and for ever roll.

I, too, have walked with them the heavenly ways—
Tracing the sweet embroideries of the sky,
And I shall not forget, when arcs shall blaze,
And all the lights are high.

EDWARD SHILLITO.

Sea-Magic

My heart faints in me for the distant sea,
The roar of London is the roar of ire
The lion utters in his old desire
For Libya out of dim captivity :

The long bright silver of Cheapside I see,
 Her gilded weathercocks on roof and spire,
 Exulting eastward in the western fire ;
 All things recall one heart-sick memory :
 Ever the rustle of the advancing foam,
 The surges' desolate thunder, and the cry
 As of some lone babe in the whispering sky ;
 Ever I peer into the restless gloom
 To where a ship clad dim and loftily
 Looms steadfast in the wonder of her home.

WALTER J. DE LA MARE

Upon Westminster Bridge

September 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair :
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This City now doth like a garment wear
 The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will .
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey

Mortality, 'behold and fear !
 What a change of flesh is here !
 Think how many royal bones
 Sleep within this heap of stones :

Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands :
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach " In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royall'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin :
Here the bones of birth have cried—
" Though gods they were, as men they died."
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings ;
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT, 1586–1616.

In Honour of the City of London

London, thou art of townes *A per se*,
Soveraign of cities, seemliest in sight,
Of high renoun, riches and royaltie ,
Of lordis, barons, and many a goodly knyght ;
Of most delectable lusty ladies bright ;
Of famous prelatis, in habitis clericall ;
Of merchauntis full of substaunce and of myght
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Gladdith anon, thou lusty Troy novaunt,
Citie that some tyme cleped was New Troy ;
In all the erth, imperiall as thou stant,
Pryncesse of townes, of pleasure and of joy,
A richer restith under no Christen roy ;
For manly power, with craftis naturall,
Fourmeth none fairer sith the flode of Noy :
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Gemme of all joy, jaspre of jocunditie,
Most myghty carbuncle of vertue and valour ;
Strong Troy in vigour and in strenuytie ;
Of royall cities rose and geraflour ;
Empress of townes, exalt in honour ;
In beawtie beryng the crone imperiall ;
Swete paradise precelling in pleasure ;
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Above all ryvers thy Ryver hath renowne,
Whose beryall stremys, pleasaunt and preclare,
Under thy lusty wallys renneth down,
Where many a swan doth swymme with wyngis fair ;
Where many a barge doth saile and row with are ;
Where many a ship doth rest with top-royall.
O, towne of townes ! patrone and not compare,
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Upon thy lusty Brigge of pylers white
Been merchauntis full royall to behold ;
Upon thy stretis go'th many a semely knyght
In velvet gownes and in cheynes of gold.
By Julyus Cesar thy Tour founded of old
May be the hous of Mars victoryall,
Whose artillary with tonge may not be told :
London, thou art the flour of Cities all

Strong be thy wallis that about the standis ;
Wise be the people that within the dwellis ;
Fresh is thy ryver with his lusty strandis ,
Blith be thy churches, wele sownyng be thy bellis ;
Rich be thy merchauntis in substaunce that excellis ;
Fair be their wives, right lovesom, white and small ,
Clere be thy virgyns, lusty under kellis :
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

Thy famous Maire, by pryncely governaunce,
With sword of justice thee ruleth prudently

No Lord of Parys, Venyce, or Floraunce
In dignitie or honour go'th to hym nigh.
He is exemplar, loode-ster, and guye ;
Principall patrone and rose orygnalle,
Above all Maires as maister most worthy :
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

WILLIAM DUNBAR, 1465 ?-1530 ?

V

Sleep

Others may praise thee, Sleep ; so will not I.
I loathe thee from the bottom of my heart.
Thou art a dull and ill-conceivèd lie
To turn quick nature into cunning art.

" The sleeping and the dead are pictures " Yea,
I love not pictures eyeless, soulless, still,
Mere portraits of the perishable clay,
Bereft of reason, passion, strength, and will.

Others may woo thee, Sleep ; so will not I.
Dear is each minute of my conscious breath.
Hard fate, that ere the time he come to die,
Myself, to live, must nightly mimic death.

MARY COLERIDGE

The Image of my Death

Sleep, Silence' child, sweet father of soft rest,
Prince, whose approach peace to all mortals brings,
Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,
Sole comforter of minds which are oppressed ;
Lo, by thy charming-rod, all breathing things
Lie slumb'ring, with forgetfulness possessed,
And yet o'er me to spread thy drowsy wings
Thou spar'st, alas ! who cannot be my guest.

Since I am thine, O come, but with that face
 To inward light which thou art wont to shed,
 With feignèd solace ease a true-felt woe ;
 Or if, deaf god, thou do deny that grace,
 Come as thou wilt, and what thou wilt bequeath,
 I long to kiss *the image of my death*.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN, 1661.

“ Come, Cheerful Day ”

Come, cheerful day, part of my life to me ;
 For while thou view'st me with thy fading light,
 Part of my life doth still depart with thee,
 And I still onward haste to my last night :
 Time's fatal wings do ever forward fly,
 So every day we live a day we die.

But, O ye nights, ordained for barren rest,
 How are my days deprived of life in you,
 When heavy sleep my soul hath dispossessed,
 By feigned death life sweetly to renew !
 Part of my life in that, you life deny :
 So every day we live a day we die.

THOMAS CAMPION, 1601-17.

Care-charming Sleep

Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
 Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
 On this afflicted prince ; fall like a cloud
 In gentle showers, give nothing that is loud
 Or painful to his slumbers ; easy, light,
 And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,

The . . . death, Somnus est mortis imago —CICERO.

Pass by his troubled senses ; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind or silver rain ;
Into this prince gently, O gently, slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride.

JOHN FLETCHER, 1579-1625.

“ Come, heavy Sleep ”

Come, heavy Sleep, the image of true Death,
And close up these my weary weeping eyes,
Whose spring of tears doth stop my vital breath,
And tears my heart with Sorrow's sigh-swoll'n cries.
Come and possess my tired thought-worn soul,
That living dies, till thou on me be stole.

Come, shadow of my end, and shape of rest ;
Allied to Death, child to the black-fast Night ;
Come thou and charm these rebels in my breast,
Whose waking fancies doth my mind affright.
O come, sweet Sleep, come or I die for ever ;
Come ere my last sleep comes, or come thou never.

JOHN DOWLAND,
First Book of Songs, 1597.

Care-charmer Sleep

Care-charmer Sleep ! Son of the sable Night !
Brother to Death ! In silent darkness, born !
Relieve my anguish, and restore the light !
With dark forgetting of my cares, return !
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth !
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth !

Cease, Dreams ! th' imag'ry of our day desires,
 To model forth the passions of the morrow !
 Never let rising sun approve you liars !
 To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
 Still let me sleep ! embracing clouds in vain ;
 And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

SAMUEL DANIEL, 1592.

Sleep and Death

(THE BEARERS OF THE SLAIN)

Ὡς ἔφατ' · οὐδ' ἄρα πατρὸς ἀνηκοίστησεν Ἀπολλών ·
 Βῆ δὲ κατ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἐς φύλοπιν αἰνὴν ·
 Ἀντίκα δ' ἐκ βελέων Σαρπηδόνα δῖον αἶρας,
 Πολλὸν ἄπο προφέρων, λοῖσεν ποταμοῖο ῥοῇσι,
 Χρῶσέν τ' ἄμβροσίῃ, περὶ δ' ἄμβροτα εἴματα ἔσσε ·
 Περπε δέ μιν πομποῖσιν ἅμα κραιπνῶσι φέρεσθαι
 Ὑπνῷ καὶ Θανάτῳ διδυμάοσιν, οἳ ῥά μιν ὤκα
 Κάτθεσαν ἐν Λυκίῃς εὐρείῃς πτόνι δῆμψι.

HOMER (*Iliad*, xvi.).

So spake he, nor was Apollo disobedient to his father. He went down the hills of Ida to the dread battle-din, and straightway bore goodly Sarpedon out of the darts, and carried him far away, and bathed him in the streams of the river, and anointed him with ambrosia, and clad him in garments that wax not old, and sent him to be wafted by fleet convoy, by Sleep and Death, twin brethren, who swiftly set him down in the rich land of wide Lycia.

From LANG, LEAF, and MYERS'S *Iliad*, xvi.

INHERITED IDEA : AS PHILOSOPHY

FEW poets have attempted to put into poetical form anything like a system of philosophy, and Lucretius is perhaps the only example of a success in this kind. But there is a great body of poetry in English (as well as in other languages) in which the ostensible subject may be what it will, but the real power and value of each poem is in the philosophy which it contains. To exemplify this a whole volume might well be given, with a second volume of essays as commentary; even the five or six sets which I have been able to provide have caused this section to equal any other two in bulk.

They vary considerably, though in beauty they are all, I think, unsurpassable. Among modern masterpieces Mrs Meynell's *Renouncement* and Mr. Hardy's *Thoroughfares of Stones* have long been famous, and lose nothing by leading us back to Shakespeare's *Great Gift* and Robert Jones's *Weeping-Cross*. The first seven pieces are perhaps a set of moods rather than of ideas, and of the eight which follow the same may be said. But they represent two philosophies of Renunciation—the noble, and the humorous or petulantly stoical.

The third set represent but scantily the great ideal of Chivalry, which is another word for the Englishman's philosophy of arms, while arms were still a defence and a symbol. Even in a world of gas and torpedoes this philosophy will survive, for it is a view of man's duty to causes, comrades, women, the suffering and the weak. The seven pieces were chosen for their variety rather than for their resemblance to each other.

The little set which follows can hardly need a word of comment; these four poems are contributions to a philosophy of personal religion. In the fifth set I have gathered together twelve poems, in each of which Eternity is imagined. It is in all of them a timeless existence, though it is not in all of them con-

ceived apart from space or outside this world of ours. But this is perhaps inevitable : poetry fades under the white light of the abstract, and is only creative when she has at any rate some clay " ta'en from the common earth " to work with. The problem of an existence without senses, or sense perception, is raised by Donne in *Vision*, as it has been raised in our own time by his disciple, Rupert Brooke, in *Tiare Tahiti*. Rossetti's poem seems to be in a faint degree reminiscent of Vaughan's, and Herrick and Drummond, too, attempt to visualize the infinity of Space as a step towards conceiving the infinity of the timeless. Chaucer's account of the vision of the soul after death is unlike anything in the others, for he represents Troilus as not only looking down upon " this litel erthe," but seeing there the scene of his own death, and contrasting the mortal view of it with the immortal. His faithful follower, William Morris, may have had this in mind when he told how Psyche drank the cup of immortality—

And therewithal most strange new thoughts did think,
And unknown feelings seized her, and there came
Sudden remembrance, vivid as a flame,
Of everything that she had done on earth,
Although it all seemed changed in weight and worth
Small things becoming great, and great things small

The sixth and last set contains five pieces, and with these should be remembered Rupert Brooke's sonnet, "The Soldier," on page 209. They do not actually resemble one another, but they all belong to that philosophy of the one indwelling and sustaining Spirit by whom all things were and are created ; the philosophy which comes to us from Virgil, and was no doubt uttered by him, in the poetry of an ardent and lofty sincerity, as a counterblast to the Epicurean atheism of Lucretius. I have placed these poems here as the sum and substance of my entire argument in this

book : which is to exemplify, and especially in the realm of poetry, the interdependence of human spirits, their common origin and destiny, and the still unexplored possibilities of their communion. The present time seems an opportune one for such a reminder, because of the widespread feeling that recent discoveries and recent destruction have lowered the value of tradition and raised that of novelty. Originality is a different thing from novelty, and, in particular, originality of thought and feeling is widely different from novelty of sensation. Freshness of vision, sincerity, and fearlessness of expression, these make the originality which has always been valued in the realm of poetry and poetic criticism, to imagine these qualities to be synonymous with the results of aerial flight and trench warfare is a mere passing illusion. To be in the tradition is not to be obsolete, either in civilization or in poetry ; to be " derivative " is not necessarily to be inferior, even in the aeroplane factory. The truth on the other side is that the human spirit grows not by singularity but by admiration and assimilation, that the deepest waters of human life come from no private well, but from an underlying pool, vast and immemorial, and that poetry, as Shelley knew, is not an unrelated collection of separate inventions, but a vision of the eternal " which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world."

I

Renouncement

I must not think of thee ; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the thought that lurks in all delight—
The thought of thee—and in the blue Heaven's
height,
And in the sweetest passage of a song.

Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
This breast, the thought of thee waits, hidden yet
bright ;
But it must never, never come in sight ;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.

But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

ALICE MEYNELL

The End of the Episode

Indulge no more may we
In this sweet-bitter pastime :
The love-light shines the last time
Between you, Sweet, and me.

There shall remain no trace
Of what so closely tied us,
And blank as ere love eyed us
Will be our meeting-place.

The flowers and thymy air,
Will they now miss our coming ?
The dumbles thin their humming
To find we haunt not there ?

Though fervent was our vow,
Though ruddily ran our pleasure,
Bliss has fulfilled its measure,
And sees its sentence now.

Ache deep ; but make no moans :
Smile out ; but stilly suffer :
The paths of love are rougher
Than thoroughfares of stones

THOMAS HARDY.

When We Two Parted

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss ;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame :
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear ;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear ?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well :
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee ?
With silence and tears.

LORD BYRON, 1788-1824.

Ae Fond Kiss

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae fareweel, and then for ever ;
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him ?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy ,
But to see her was to love her ;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted—
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest !
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest !
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure !

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

ROBERT BURNS.

The Surrender

My once dear love, hapless that I no more
Must call thee so, the rich affection's store
That fed our hopes lies now exhaust and spent,
Like sums of treasure unto bankrupts lent.

We that did nothing study but the way
To love each other, with which thoughts the day
Rose with delight to us and with them set,
Must learn the hateful art how to forget.

We that did nothing wish that Heav'n could give
Beyond our selves, nor did desire to live
Beyond that wish, all these now cancel must
As if not writ in faith but words and dust.

Yet witness those clear vows which Lovers make,
Witness the chaste desires that never break
Into unruly heats ; witness that breast
Which in thy bosom anchored his whole rest,
'Tis no default in us, I dare acquite
Thy maiden faith, thy purpose fair and white
As thy pure self Cross planets did envie
Us to each other and Heaven did untie
Faster than vows could bind. O that the stars
When Lovers meet should stand opposed in wars !

Since then some higher destinies command,
Let us not strive nor labour to withstand
What is past help. The longest date of grief
Can never yield a hope of our relief :

And though we waste ourselves in moist laments
Tears may drown us but not our discontents.

Fold back our arms, take home our fruitless loves
That must new fortunes try, like turtle doves
Dislodged from their haunts. We must in tears
Unwind a love knit up in many years.
In this last kiss I here surrender thee
Back to thyself. So thou again art free.
Thou, in another sad as that, re-send
The truest heart that lover ere did lend.

Now turn from each. So fare our severed hearts
As the divorced soul from her body parts.

HENRY KING (Bishop of Chichester), 1664.

The Parting

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me ;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him
over, •
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

MICHAEL DRAYTON, 1619.

Once did I Love

Once did I love and yet I live,
Though love and truth be now forgotten ;
Then did I joy, now do I grieve
That holy vows must now be broken.

Hers be the blame that caused it so,
Mine be the grief though it be mickle ;
She shall have shame, I cause to know
What 'tis to love a dame so fickle.

Love her that list, I am content
For that chameleon-like she changeth,
Yielding such mists as may prevent
My sight to view her when she rangeth.

Let him not vaunt that gains my loss,
For when that he and time hath proved her,
She may him bring to Weeping-Cross .
I say no more, because I loved her.

*From ROBERT JONES'S
"First Book of Songs and Aurs," 1601.*

Farewell

Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate .
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing ;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.

For how do I hold thee but by thy granting ?
And for that riches where is my deserving ?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.

Thyself thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking ;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgment making.

Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep, a king ; but waking, no such matter.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *c.* 1594.

II

To his Coy Mistress

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find : I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow ;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest ,
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near ;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.

Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song : then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust :
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

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

ANDREW MARVELL, 1621-78.

Why so Pale and Wan ?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover ?
Prithee, why so pale ?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail ?
Prithee, why so pale ?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner ?
Prithee, why so mute ?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do 't ?
Prithee, why so mute ?

Quit, quit for shame ! This will not move ;
 This cannot take her.
 If of herself she will not love,
 Nothing can make her :
 The devil take her !

SIR JOHN SUCKLING, 1609-42.

The Lover's Resolution

Shall I, wasting in despair,
 Die because a woman's fair ?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care
 Cause another's rosy are ?
 Be she fairer than the day,
 Or the flow'ry meads in May,
 If she think not well of me,
 What care I how fair she be ?

Shall my silly heart be pined
 'Cause I see a woman kind ?
 Or a well disposed nature
 Joinèd with a lovely feature ?
 Be she meeker, kinder, than
 Turtle-dove or pelican,
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be ?

Shall a woman's virtues move
 Me to perish for her love ?
 Or her well-deservings known
 Make me quite forget my own ?
 Be she with that goodness blest
 Which may merit name of Best,
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be ?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
 Shall I play the fool and die ?

She that bears a noble mind,
If not outward helps she find,
Thinks what with them he would do
That without them dares her woo ;
And unless that mind I see,
What care I how great she be ?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair ;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve ;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go ;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be ?

GEORGE WITHER, 1588-1667.

“ You Gentle Nymphs ”

You gentle nymphs that on these meadows play,
And oft relate the loves of shepherds young,
Come sit you down, for, if you please to stay,
Now may you hear an uncouth passion sung :
A lad there is, and I am that poor groom,
That's fall'n in love and can not tell with whom.

From FRANCIS PILKINGTON'S
“ *Second Set of Madrigals.* ”

“ So Quick, So Hot, So Mad ”

So quick, so hot, so mad is thy fond suit,
So rude, so tedious grown in urging me,
That fain I would with loss make thy tongue mute,
And yield some little grace to quiet thee :
An hour with thee I care not to converse,
For I would not be counted too perverse.

Uncouth, Strange, unaccustomed.

But roofs too hot would prove for me all fire,
And hills too high for my unused pace ;
The grove is charged with thorns and the bold briar,
Grey snakes the meadows shroud in every place :
A yellow frog, alas ! will fright me so
As I should start and tremble as I go.

Since then I can on earth no fit room find,
In heaven I am resolved with you to meet :
Till then, for hope's sweet sake, rest your tired mind,
And not so much as see me in the street :
A heavenly meeting one day we shall have,
But never, as you dream, in bed or grave.

*From THOMAS CAMPION'S
"Third Book of Airs," c. 1617.*

"Once did my Thoughts both Ebb and Flow "

Once did my thoughts both ebb and flow,
As passion did them move ;
Once did I hope, straight fear again,—
And then I was in love.

Once did I waking spend the night,
And tell how many minutes move ;
Once did I wishing waste the day,—
And then I was in love.

Once, by my carving true love's knot,
The weeping trees did prove
That wounds and tears were both our lot,—
And then I was in love.

Once did I breathe another's breath
And in my mistress move,

Once was I not mine own at all,—
And then I was in love.

Once wore I bracelets made of hair,
And collars did approve,
Once wore my clothes made out of wax,—
And then I was in love.

Once did I sonnet to my saint,
My soul in numbers move,
Once did I tell a thousand lies,—
And then I was in love.

Once in my ear did dangling hang
A little turtle-dove,
Once, in a word, I was a fool,—
And then I was in love.

From ROBERT JONES'S
"*The Muses' Garden of Delights*," 1610.

A Renouncing of Love

Farewell, Love, and all thy laws for ever :
Thy bairted hooks shall tangle me no more.
Senec, and Plato call me from thy lore :
To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavour.
In blind error when I did persevere :
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore
Taught me in trifles that I set no store,
But scape forth thence : since liberty is lever.
Therefore, farewell : go trouble younger hearts :
And in me claim no more authority.
With idle youth go use thy property :
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts.
For hitherto though I have lost my time :
Me list no longer rotten boughs to climb.

SIR THOMAS WYATT.
(From "*Tottel's Miscellany*," 1557.)

Robin and Makyne

Robin sat on gude green hill,
 Kepand a flock of fe :
 Mirry Makyn said him till
 " Robin, thou rew on me :
 I haif thee luvit, loud and still,
 Thir yeiris twa or thre ;
 My dule in dern bot gif thou dill,
 Doutless but dreid I de."

Robin answerit " By the Rude
 Na thing of luvē I knaw,
 But keipis my scheip undir yon wud :
 Lo, quhair they raik on raw.
 Quhat has marrit thee in thy mude,
 Makyn, to me thou shaw ;
 Or quhat is luvē, or to be lude ?
 Fain wad I leir that law."

" At luvis lair gif thou will leir
 Tak thair ane A B C ;
 Be heynd, courtass, and fair of feir,
 Wyse, hardy, and free :
 So that no danger do thee deir
 Quhat dule in dern thou dre ;
 Preiss thee with pain at all poweir
 Be patient and previe."

Robin answerit hir agane,
 " I wat nocht quhat is lufe ;
 But I haif mervel in certaine
 Quhat makis thee this wanruse :

<i>Fe</i> , Sheep.	<i>Rew</i> , Have pity	<i>Dule</i> , Sorrow	<i>Dern</i> , Secret.
<i>Bot gif thou dill</i> , Unless thou assuage.	<i>But dreid</i> , Without doubt.		
<i>Raik</i> , Rank.	<i>On raw</i> , In a row.	<i>Lude</i> , Loved.	<i>Leir</i> , Learn.
<i>Lair</i> , Lore.	<i>Heynd</i> , Kindly.	<i>Feir</i> , Manner	<i>Dew</i> , Vex.
<i>Dre</i> , Endure.		<i>Wanruse</i> , Disquiet.	

The weddir is fair, and I am fain ;
 My scheip gois haill aboif ;
 An we wald pley us in this plane,
 They wald us baith reproif."

" Robin, tak tent unto my tale,
 And wirk all as I reid,
 And thou sall haif my heart all haill,
 Eik and my maiden-heid :
 Sen God sendis bute for baill,
 And for murnyng remeid,
 In dern with thee bot gif I dale
 Dowltes I am bot deid."

" Makyn, to-morn this ilka tyde
 An ye will meit me heir,
 Peraventure my scheip may gang besyde
 Quhyle we haif liggit full neir ,
 But mawgre haif I, an I byde,
 Fra they begin to steir ;
 Quhat lvis on heart I will nocht hyd ;
 Makyn, then mak gude cheir."

" Robin, thou reivis me roiff and rest ;
 I lve bot thee allane."
 " Makyn, adieu ! the sone gois west,
 The day is neir-hand gane "
 " Robin, in dule I am so drest
 That lve will be my bane "
 " Gae lve, Makyne, quhair-evir thow list,
 For lemman I lve nane."

" Robin, I stand in sic a styll,
 I sicht and that full sair."

<i>Haill</i> , Hearty.	<i>Abouf</i> , Above	<i>An</i> , If	<i>Tent</i> , Heed.
<i>Bute</i> , Remedy.	<i>Baill</i> , Pain	<i>Dern</i> , Secret	<i>Dale</i> , Deal.
<i>Mawgre</i> , Rebuke.		<i>Steir</i> , Stir.	<i>Reivis</i> , Robbest.
<i>Roiff</i> , Peace.			<i>Sicht</i> , Sigh.

“ Makyn, I haif been here this quhyle ;
 At hame God gif I wair.”
 “ My huny, Robin, talk ane quhyll
 Gif thow will do na mair.”
 “ Makyn, sum uthir man begyle,
 For hamewart I will fair.”

Robin on his wayis went
 As light as leif of tre ;
 Makyn murnit in hir intent,
 And trowd him nevir to se.
 Robin brayd attour the bent :
 Then Makyn cryit on hie,
 “ Now may thow sing, for I am schent !
 Quhat alis lufe at me ? ”

Makyn went hame withowttin fail,
 Full wery eftir cowth weip ,
 Then Robin in a ful fair daill
 Assemblit all his scheip
 Be that sum part of Makynis aill
 Out-throw his hairt coud creip ;
 He fallowit hir fast thair till assaill,
 And till her tuke gude kep.

“ Abyd, abyd, thow fair Makyne,
 A word for ony thing ;
 For all my lufe, it sall be thyne,
 Withowttin departing
 All haill thy hairt for till haif myne
 Is all my cuvating ;
 My scheip to-morn, quhyle houris nyne,
 Will neid of no keping.”

Quhyle, While.
Bent, Stiff grass.
Till, To.

Brayd, Shouted.
Alis, Ails.
Tuke, Took.
Till haif, To have.

Attour, Out over.
Be that, By then.
Haill, Whole.

“ Robin, thow hes hard soun and say,
 In gestis and storeis auld,
 The man that will nocht quhen he may
 Sall haif nocht quhen he wald.
 I pray to Jesu every day,
 Mot eik thair cairis cauld
 That first preissis with thee to play
 Be firth, forrest, or fauld.’

“ Makyn, the nicht is soft and dry,
 The weddir is warme and fair,
 And the grene woid rycht neir us by
 To walk attour all quhair
 Thair ma na janglour us espy,
 That is to lufe contrair,
 Thairin, Makyne, baith ye and I,
 Unsene we ma repair ”

“ Robin, that warld is all away,
 And quyt brocht till ane end :
 And nevir agane thereto, perfay,
 Sall it be as thow wend ,
 For of my pane thow maid it play ;
 And all in vane I spend
 As thow hes done, sa sall I say,
 ‘ Murne on , I think to mend.’ ”

“ Makyn, the howp of all my heill,
 My hairt on thee is sett ;
 And evirmair to thee be leill
 Quhill I may leif but lett ;
 Never to faill as uthers feill,
 Quhat grace that evir I gett ”
 “ Robin, with thee I will nocht deill ;
 Adieu ! for thus we mett.”

Hard, Heard
Woid, Wood.
Wend, Weened.

All quhair, Everywhere
Spend, Spent.

Mot eik, That he may increase.
Janglour, Gossip.
But lett, Without fail.

Makyn went hame blyth anneuche
 Attour the holttis hair ;
 Robin murnit, and Makyn leuche ;
 Scho sang, he sichit sair :
 And so left him baith wo and wreuch,
 In dolour and in cair,
 Kepand his hird under a huche
 Amangis the holttis hair.

ROBERT HENRYSON.

III

Keep Innocency

Like an old battle, youth is wild
 With bugle and spear, and counter-cry
 Fanfare and drummery, yet a child
 Dreaming of that sweet chivalry
 The piercing terror cannot see.

He, with a mild and serious eye
 Along the azure of the years,
 Sees his sweet pomp sweep hurtling by ;
 But he sees not death's blood and tears,
 Sees not the plunging of the spears.

And all the strident horror of
 Horse and rider in red defeat,
 Is only music fine enough
 To lull him into slumber sweet
 In fields where ewe and lambkin bleat.

O, if with such simplicity
 Himself take arms and suffer war ;
 With beams 'his targe shall gilded be,

Anneuche, Enough *Holttis hair*, Copses grey *Leuche*, laughed.
Wo and wreuch, Sad and wretched. *Huche*, Hillside.

Though in the thickening gloom be far
The steadfast light of any star !

Though hoarse war's eagle on him perch,
Quickened with guilty lightnings—there
It shall in vain for terror search
Where a child's eyes 'neath bloody hair
Gaze purely through the dingy air.

And when the wheeling rout is spent,
Though in the heaps of slain he lie ;
Or lonely in his last content ;
Quenchless shall burn in secrecy
The flame Death knows his victors by.

WALTER J. DE LA MARE.

The Knight's Tomb

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn ?
Where may the grave of that good man be ?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree !
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone, and the birch in its stead is grown.
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust, —
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, 1772-1834.

How Sleep the Brave

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 hallowed 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 grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there !

WILLIAM COLLINS, 1746.

To Lucasta, going to the Wars

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field ;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore ,
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.

SIR RICHARD LOVELACE, 1618-58.

A Farewell to Arms

(To Queen Elizabeth)

His golden locks Time hath to silver turned ;
O Time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing !
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain ; youth waneth by increasing :
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen ;
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees ;
 And, lovers' sonnets turned to holy psalms,
 A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
 And feed on prayers, which are Age his alms :
 But though from court to cottage he depart,
 His Saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
 He'll teach his swains this carol for a song—
 "Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
 Curst be the souls that think her any wrong."
 Goddess, allow this agèd man his right
 To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

GEORGE PEELE, 1590.

" O Mortal Folke "

O mortal folke you may beholde and see
 Howe I lye here, sometime a mighty knight,
 The end of joye and all prosperite
 Is death at last, thorough his course and mighte,
 After the daye there cometh the darke nighte,
 For though the daye be never so long,
 At last the belle ringeth to evensong.

STEPHEN HAWES, *before* 1523.

Knight and Squire

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
 Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
 To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
 At night was come in-to that hostelrye
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compānye,
 Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
 In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
 (2, 519)

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde ;
 The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
 And wel we weren esed attē beste.
 And shortly, whan the sonnē was to reste,
 So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
 That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
 And made forward erly for to ryse,
 To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But natheless, whyl I have tyme and space,
 Er that I ferther in this talē pace,
 Me thinketh it accordaunt to resoun,
 To tellē yow al the condicioun
 Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
 And whiche they weren, and of what degree ;
 And eek in what array that they were inne :
 And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
 That fro the tymē that he first bigan
 To ryden out, he loved chivalrye,
 Trouthe and honouʀ, fredom and curteisye.
 Ful worthy was he in his lordēs werrē,
 And therto hadde he riden (no man ferrē)
 As wel in Cristendom as hethenesse,
 And ever honoured for his worthinesse

At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne ;
 Ful oftē tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
 Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.
 In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
 No Cristen man so oftē of his degree.
 In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
 Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye
 At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
 Whan they were wonne ; and in the Grete See
 At many a noble áryve hadde he be.
 At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
 And foughten for our feith at Tramissene
 In listes thryés, and ay slayn his fo.
 This ilkē worthy knight had been also

Somtyme with the lord of Palatye,
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye :
And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were gode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gipoun
Al bismotered with his habergeoun ;
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyere, and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and greet of strengthe.
And he had been somtyme in chivachye,
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,
And born him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe flourès, whyte and rede.
Singing he was, or floytinge, al the day ;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleeves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He coude songes make and wel endyte,
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and wryte.
So hote he lovede, that by nightertale
He sleep namore than dooth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

IV

Ev'n in the Grave

I laid my inventory at the hand
 Of Death, who in his gloomy harbour sate ;
 And while he conned it, sweet and desolate
 I heard Love singing in that quiet land.
 He read the record even to the end—
 The heedless, livelong injuries of Fate,
 The burden of foe, the burden of love and hate ;
 The wounds of foe, the bitter wounds of friend :

 All, all, he read—ay, ev'n the indifference,
 The vain talk, vainer silence, hope and dream.
 He questioned me : " What seek'st thou then in-
 stead ? "
 I bowed my face in the pale evening gleam,
 Then gazed he on me with strange innocence :
 " Ev'n in the grave thou'lt have thyself," he said.

WALTER J. DE LA MARE.

To Forget

Ah, I have striven, I have striven
 That it might vanish as the smoke ;
 Angels remember it in heaven.
 In vain I have striven, I have striven
 To forget the word that I spoke.

See, I am fighting, I am fighting
 That I may bring it to nought.
 It is written in fiery writing,
 In vain I am fighting, I am fighting
 To forget the thought that I thought.

MARY COLERIDGE.

“ That Secret Book ”

When I sit reading all alone that secret book
Wherein I sigh to look,
How many spots there be
I wish I could not see,
Or from myself might flee !

Mine eyes for refuge then with zeal befie the skies,
My tears do cloud those eyes,
My sighs do blow them dry ;
And yet I live to die,
Myself I cannot fly.

Heaven, I implore, that knows my fault, what shall I
do ?
To Hell I dare not go ;
The world first made me rue,
My self my griefs renew :
To whom then shall I sue ?

Alas, my soul doth faint to draw this doubtful breath :
Is there no hope in death ?
O yes, death ends my woes,
Death me from me will loose ;
My self am all my foes.

From ROBERT JONES'S "Musical Dream," 1609.

“ If I Could Shut the Gate ”

If I could shut the gate against my thoughts
And keep out sorrow from this room within,
Or memory could cancel all the notes
Of my misdeeds, and I unthink my sin ;
How free, how clear, how clean my soul should lie,
Discharged of such a loathsome company !

Or were there other rooms without my heart
 That did not to my conscience join so near,
 Where I might lodge the thoughts of sin apart
 That I might not their clam'rous crying hear ;
 What peace, what joy, what ease should I possess,
 Freed from their horrors that my soul oppress !

But, O my Saviour, who my refuge art,
 Let thy dear mercies stand 'twixt them and me,
 And be the wall to separate my heart
 So that I may at length repose me free ;
 That peace, and joy, and rest may be within,
 And I remain divided from my sin.

From JOHN DANYEL'S
" Songs for the Lute, Viol, and Voice," 1606.

V

This is Eternal Life

I travel to thee with the sun's first rays,
 That lift the dark west and unwrap the night ;
 I dwell beside thee when he walks the height,
 And fondly toward thee at his setting gaze.
 I wait upon thy coming, but always—
 Dancing to meet my thoughts if they invite—
 Thou hast outrun their longings with delight,
 And in my solitude dost mock my praise.

Now doth my drop of time transcend the whole :
 I see no fame in Khufu's pyramid,
 No history where loveless Nile doth roll.
 —This is eternal life, which doth forbid
 Mortal detraction to the exalted soul,
 And from her inward eye all fate hath hid.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

The Blessèd Damozel

The blessèd Damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven :
Her blue grave eyes were deeper much
Than a deep water, even.
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift
On the neck meetly worn ;
And her hair, lying down her back,
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers ;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers ;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To *one* it is ten years of years :
... Yet now, here in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me,—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing : the Autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the terrace of God's house
That she was standing on,—
By God built over the sheer depth
In which Space is begun ;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies from Heaven across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

But in those tracts, with her, it was
The peace of utter light
And silence. For no breeze may stir
Along the steady flight
Of seraphim ; no echo there,
Beyond all depth or height.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends,
Playing at holy games,
Spake, gentle-mouthed, among themselves,
Their virginal chaste names ;
And the souls, mounting up to God,
Went by her like thin flames

And still she bowed herself, and stooped
Into the vast waste calm ;
Till her bosom's pressure must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixt lull of Heaven, she saw
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove,
In that steep gulf, to pierce
The swarm ; and then she spoke, as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

" I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
" Have I not prayed in solemn Heaven?
On earth, has he not prayed?

Are not two prayers a perfect strength ?
And shall I feel afraid ?

“ When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand, and go with him
To the deep wells of light,
And we will step down as to a stream
And bathe there in God's sight.

“ We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps tremble continually
With prayer sent up to God ;
And where each need, revealed, expects
Its patient period.

“ We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Sometimes is felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

“ And I myself will teach to him,—
I myself, lying so,—
The songs I sing here ; which his mouth
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
Finding some knowledge at each pause,
And some new thing to know.”

(Alas ! to *her* wise simple mind
These things were all but known
Before : they trembled on *her* sense,—
Her voice had caught their tone.
Alas for lonely Heaven ! Alas
For life wrung out alone !

Alas, and though the end were reached ? . . .

Was *thy* part understood
Or borne in trust ? And for her sake
Shall this too be found good ?—
May the close lips that knew not prayer
Praise ever, though they would ?)

“ We two,” she said, “ will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies :—
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

“ Circle-wise sit they, with bound locks
And bosoms covered ;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame,
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“ He shall fear, haply, and be dumb.
Then I will lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak :
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

“ Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel—the unnumbered solemn heads
Bowed with their aureoles :
And Angels, meeting us, shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for Him and me :—
To have more blessing than on earth
In nowise ; but to be

As then we were,—being as then
At peace. Yea, verily.

“ Yea, verily ; when he is come
We will do thus and thus :
Till this my vigil seem quite strange
And almost fabulous ;
We two will live at once, one life ;
And peace shall be with us.”

She gazed, and listened, and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
“ All this is when he comes.” She ceased :
The light thrilled past her, filled
With Angels, in strong level lapse.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their flight
Was vague 'mid the poised spheres.
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, 1828–82.

November

Are thine eyes weary? is thy heart too sick
To struggle any more with doubt and thought,
Whose formless veil draws darkening now and thick
Across thee, e'en as smoke-tinged mist-wreaths
brought
Down a fair dale to make it blind and nought?
Art thou so weary that no world there seems
Beyond these four walls, hung with pain and dreams?

Look out upon the real world, where the moon,
Half-way 'twixt root and crown of these high trees,
Turns the dead midnight into dreamy noon,
Silent and full of wonders, for the breeze
Died at the sunset, and no images,
No hopes of day, are left in sky or earth—
Is it not fair, and of most wondrous worth ?

Yea, I have looked and seen November there ;
The changeless seal of change it seemed to be,
Fair death of things that, living once, were fair ;
Bright sign of loneliness too great for me,
Strange image of the dread eternity,
In whose void patience how can these have part,
These outstretched feverish hands, this restless heart ?

WILLIAM MORRIS, 1868-9.

The Shepherd's Tree

Huge elm, with rifted trunk all notched and scarred,
Like to a warrior's destiny ! I love
To stretch me often on thy shadowed sward,
And hear the laugh of summer leaves above ;
Or on thy buttressed roots to sit, and lean
In careless attitude, and there reflect
On times, and deeds, and darings that have been—
Old castaways, now swallowed in neglect ;
While thou art towering in thy strength of heart,
Stirring the soul to vain imaginings,
In which life's sordid being hath no part,
The wind of that eternal ditty sings,
Humming of future things, that burn the mind
To leave some fragment of itself behind.

JOHN CLARE, 1824-36.

“ Our Birth is but a Sleep ”

*(From the “ Ode on Intimations of Immortality from
Recollections of Early Childhood.”)*

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ,
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size !
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,

With light upon him from his father's eyes !
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part ;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity ;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty prophet ! Seer Blest !
 On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by ;
 To whom the grave
Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
 Of day or the warm light,
A place of thought where we in waiting lie ;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest plains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest—
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—

Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;

But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Falling from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never:

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

The World

I saw Eternity the other night,
 Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
 All calm, as it was bright :
 And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
 Driv'n by the spheres,
 Like a vast shadow moved ; in which the world
 And all her train were hurled.

* * * * * *

HENRY VAUGHAN, 1621-95.

The Retreat

Happy those early days, when I
 Shined in my angel infancy !
 Before I understood this place
 Appointed for my second race,
 Or taught my soul to fancy ought
 But a white, celestial thought ,
 When yet I had not walked above
 A mile or two, from my first love,
 And looking back, at that short space,
 Could see a glimpse of his bright face ;
 When on some gilded cloud or flower
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour,

And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity ;
 Before I taught my tongue to wound
 My conscience with a sinful sound,
 Or had the black art to dispense
 A several sin to every sense,
 But felt through all this fleshly dress
 Bright shoots of everlastingness.
 O how I long to travel back,
 And tread again that ancient track !
 That I might once more reach that plain,
 Where first I left my glorious train ;
 From whence the enlightened spirit sees
 That shady city of palm trees.
 But ah ! my soul with too much stay
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
 Some men a forward motion love,
 And I by backward steps would move ;
 And when this dust falls to the urn,
 In that state I came, return.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

Eternity

O Years ! and age ! farewell :
 Behold I go,
 Where I do know
 Infinty to dwell.
 And these mine eyes shall see
 All times, how they
 Are lost i' the sea
 Of vast Eternity.
 Where never moon shall sway
 The stars ; but she
 And night shall be
 Drowned in one endless day.

ROBERT HERRICK, 1648.

Vision

We see in authors, too stiff to recant,
A hundred controversies of an ant ;
And yet one watches, starves, freezes, and sweats,
To know but catechisms and alphabets
Of unconcerning things, matters of fact,
How others on our stage their parts did act,
What Cæsar did, yea, and what Cicero said.
Why grass is green, or why our blood is red,
Are mysteries which none have reached unto.
In this low form, poor soul, what wilt thou do ?
When wilt thou shake off this pedantry,
Of being taught by sense and fantasy ?
Thou look'st through spectacles ; small things seem
 great
Below ; but up unto the watch-tower get,
And see all things despoiled of fallacies ;
Thou shalt not peep through lattices of eyes,
Nor hear through labyrinths of ears, nor learn
By circuit or collections to discern.
In heaven thou straight know'st all concerning it,
And what concerns it not shalt straight forget.

JOHN DONNE

(From "An Anatomy of the World," 1611.)

"How that vast Heaven"

How that vast heaven entitled First is rolled,
If any glancing towers beyond it be,
And people living in Eternity,
Or Essence pure that doth this All uphold :
What motion have those fixed sparks of gold,
The wand'ring carbuncles which shine from high,
By sprites, or bodies cross-ways in the sky,
If they be turned, and mortal things behold :

How sun posts heaven about, how night's pale queen
With borrowed beams looks on this hanging round ;
What cause fair Iris hath, and monsters seen
In air's large fields of light, and seas profound—

Did hold my wand'ring thoughts ; when thy sweet
eye

Bade me leave all, and only think on thee.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN, 1616.

The City Celestial

About the holy Cittie rowles a flood
Of moulten chrystall, like a sea of glasse,
On which weake streame a strong foundation stood,
Of living Diamonds the building was,
That all things else, besides it selfe, did passe.

Her streetes, in stead of stones, the starres did pave,
And little pearles, for dust, it seemed to have,
On which soft-streaming Manna, like pure snowe, did
wave.

In mid't of this Citie celestiall,
Whear the eternall Temple should have rose,
Light'ned th' Idea Beatificall :
End, and beginning of each thing that growes,
Whose selfe no end, nor yet beginning knowes,
That hath no eyes to see, nor ears to heare,
Yet sees, and heares, and is all-eye, all-eare,
That no whear is contained, and yet is every whear

Changer of all things, yet immutable,
Before, and after all, the first, and last,
That mooving all, is yet immoveable,
Great without quantitie, in whose forecast,
Things past are present, things to come are past,
Swift without motion, to whose open eye
The hearts of wicked men unbrested lie,
At once absent, and present to them, farre, and nigh.

It is no flaming lustre, made of light,
 No sweet concent, or well-timed harmonie,
 Ambrosia, for to feast the Appetite,
 Or flowrie odour, mixt with spicerie.
 No soft embrace, or pleasure bodily,
 And yet it is a kinde of inward feast,
 A harmony, that sounds within the brest,
 An odour, light, embrace, in which the soule doth rest.

A heav'nly feast, no hunger can consume,
 A light unseene, yet shines in every place,
 A sound ; no time can steale, a sweet perfume,
 No windes can scatter, an intire embrace,
 That no satietie can ere unlace,
 Ingrac't into so high a favour, thear
 The Saints, with their Beaw-peers, whole worlds
 outwear,
 And things unseene doe see, and things unheard doe
 hear.

Ye blessed soules, growne richer by your spoile,
 Whose losse, though great, is cause of greater gaines,
 Here may your weary Spirits rest from toyle,
 Spending your endless eav'ning, that remaines,
 Among those white flocks, and celestiaall traines,
 That feed upon their Sheapheards eyes, and frame
 That heav'nly musique of so woondrous fame,
 Psalming aloude the holy honours of his name.

GILES FLETCHER, 1587-1623
 (*From "Christ's Triumph after Death"*)

The Death of Troilus

The wraththe, as I began yow for to seye,
 Of Troilus, the Grekës boughten dere ;
 For thousandës his hondës maden deye,
 As he that was with-outen any pere,
 Save Ector, in his tyme, as I can here.

But weylaway, save only goddës wille,
Dispitously him slough the fiers Achille.

And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
His lightë goost ful blisfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seventh spere,
In convers letinge every element ;
And ther he saugh, with ful avysëment,
The erratik sterrës, herkeninge armonye
With sownës fulle of hevenish melodye.

And doun from thennës fast he gan avyse
This litel spot of erthe, that with the see
Embracëd is, and fully gan despyse
This wrecched world, and held al vanitee
To respect of the pleyn felicitee
That is in hevene above , and at the laste,
Ther he was slayn, his loking doun he caste ;

And in him-self he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deeth so faste ;
And dampned al our werk that folweth so
The blindë lust, the which that may not laste,
And sholden al our herte on hevene caste.
And forth he wentë, shortly for to telle,
Ther as Mercurie sorted him to dwelle.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VI

The Renewal

Now in the visitation of swift sight
That makes me for this happy moment wise
Beyond all wisdom of philosophies,
I feel even through this transitory flesh
The pang of my creation dart afresh ;

The bonds of thought fall off, and I am free ;
There is no longer grief nor joy for me,
But one infinity of life that flows
From the deep ocean-heart that no man knows
Out into these unnumbered semblances
Of earth and air, mountains and beasts and trees,
One timeless flood which drives the circling star
In furthest heaven, and whose weak waves we are,
Mortal and broken oft in sobbing foam,
Yet ever children of that central home,
Our Peace, that even as we flee we find ;
The Road that is before us and behind,
By which we travel from ourselves, in sleep
Or waking, toward a self more vast and deep.

LAURENCE BINYON, 1898.

Humanity

There is a soul above the soul of each,
A mightier soul, which yet to each belongs :
There is a sound made of all human speech,
And numerous as the concourse of all songs :
And in that soul lives each, in each that soul,
Though all the ages are its lifetime vast ;
Each soul that dies, in its most sacred whole
Receiveth life that shall for ever last.
And thus for ever with a wider span
Humanity o'erarches time and death ;
Man can elect the universal man,
And live in life that ends not with his breath,
And gather glory that increaseth still,
Till Time his glass with Death's last dust shall fill.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON, 1864.

Last Lines

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere :
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity !
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee !

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts : unalterably vain ;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity ;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void :
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

EMILY BRONTË, 1848.

Above Tintern Abbey

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

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1798.

“ Principio Cælum ac Terras ”

Principio cælum ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.
Inde hominum pecudumque genus, vitæque volantum,
Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus.
Igneus est ollis vigor, et cælestis origo
Seminibus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant,
Terrenique hebetant artus, moribundaque membra.
Hinc metuunt, cupiuntque ; dolent, gaudentque :
neque auras
Respiciunt clausæ tenebris et carcere cæco.

VIRGIL, *Æneid*, VI 724-34.

In the Beginning

In the beginning : earth and sky and flowing fields of
sea,
And stars that Titan fashioned erst, and gleaming
moony ball,
An inward spirit nourisheth, one soul is shed through
all,
That quickeneth all the mass, and with the mighty
thing is blent :
Thence are the lives of men and beasts and flying
creatures sent,
And whatsoe'er the sea-plain bears beneath its marble
face ;
Quick in these seeds is might of fire and birth of
heavenly place,
Ere earthly bodies' baneful weight upon them comes
to lie,

Ere limbs of earth bewilder them, and members made
to die.

Hence fear they have, and love, and joy, and grief,
and ne'er may find

The face of heaven amid the dusk and prison strait
and blind.

WILLIAM MORRIS,

The Æneids of Virgil, vi. 724-34.

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