THE POETICAL WORKS

of

ANDREW LANG

Vol. III
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of

Edited by Mrs. LANG

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**BALLADS AND FOLK-SONGS**

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BALLADS

The Three Captains

All beneath the white-rose tree
Walks a lady fair to see,
She is as white as the snows,
She is as fair as the day:
From her father's garden close
Three knights have ta'en her away.

He has ta'en her by the hand,
The youngest of the three—
'Mount and ride, my bonnie bride,
On my white horse with me.'

And ever they rode, and better rode,
Till they came to Senlis town;
The hostess she looked hard at them
As they were lighting down.

'And are ye here by force,' she said,
'Or are ye here for play?'
'From out my father's garden close
Three knights me stole away.
'And fain would I win back,' she said,
'The weary way I come;
And fain would see my father dear,
And fain go maiden home.'

'Oh, weep not, lady fair,' said she,
'You shall win back,' she said,
'For you shall take this draught from me
Will make you lie for dead.'

'Come in and sup, fair lady,' they said,
'Come busk ye and be bright;
It is with three bold captains
That ye must be this night.'

When they had eaten well and drunk,
She fell down like one slain:
'Now, out and alas! for my bonnie may
Shall live no more again.'

'Within her father's garden stead
There are three white lilies;
With her body to the lily bed,
With her soul to Paradise.'

They bore her to her father's house,
They bore her all the three,
They laid her in her father's close,
Beneath the white-rose tree.
BALLADS

She had not lain a day, a day,
   A day but barely three,
When the may awakes, 'Oh, open, father,
   Oh, open the door for me.

'Tis I have lain for dead, father,
   Have lain the long days three,
That I might maiden come again
   To my mother and to thee.'
The Bridge of Death

'THE dance is on the Bridge of Death
And who will dance with me?'
'There's never a man of living men
Will dare to dance with thee.'

Now Margaret's gone within her bower
Put ashes in her hair,
And sackcloth on her bonnie breast,
And on her shoulders bare.

There came a knock to her bower door,
And blithe she let him in;
It was her brother from the wars,
The dearest of her kin.

'Set gold within your hair, Margaret,
Set gold within your hair;
And gold upon your girdle band,
And on your breast so fair.

'For we are bidden to dance to-night,
We may not bide away;
This one good night, this one fair night,
Before the red new day.'
Nay, no gold for my head, brother,
Nay, no gold for my hair;
It is the ashes and dust of earth
That you and I must wear.

No gold work for my girdle band,
No gold work on my feet;
But ashes of the fire, my love,
But dust that the serpents eat.

They danced across the Bridge of Death
Above the black water,
And the marriage bell was tolled in hell
For the souls of him and her.
Le Père Sévère

King Louis' Daughter

Ballad of the Isle of France

King Louis on his bridge is he,
He holds his daughter on his knee.

She asks a husband at his hand
That is not worth a rood of land.

'Give up your lover speedily,
Or you within the tower must lie.'

'Although I must the prison dree,
I will not change my love for thee.

'I will not change my lover fair
Not for the mother that me bare.

'I will not change my true lover
For friends, or for my father dear.'

'Now where are all my pages keen,
And where are all my serving men?
‘My daughter must lie in the tower alway,
Where she shall never see the day.’

Seven long years are past and gone
And there has seen her never one.

At ending of the seventh year
Her father goes to visit her.

‘My child, my child, how may you be?’
‘O father, it fares ill with me.

‘My feet are wasted in the mould,
The worms they gnaw my side so cold.’

‘My child, change your love speedily
Or you must still in prison lie.’

‘ ’Tis better far the cold to dree
Than give my true love up for thee.’
A Lady of High Degree

I be pareld most of prise,
I ride after the wild fee.

WILL ye that I should sing
Of the love of a goodly thing,
Was no vilein’s may?
'Tis sung of a knight so free,
Under the olive tree,
Singing this lay.

Her weed was of samite fine,
Her mantle of white ermine,
Green silk her hose;
Her shoon with silver gay,
Her sandals flowers of May,
Laced small and close.

Her belt was of fresh spring buds,
Set with gold clasps and studs,
Fine linen her shift;
Her purse it was of love,
Her chain was the flower thereof,
And love’s gift.
Upon a mule she rode,
The selle was of brent gold,
    The bits of silver made;
Three red rose trees there were
That overshadowed her,
    For a sun shade.

She riding on a day,
Knights met her by the way,
    They did her grace;
'Fair lady, whence be ye?'
'France it is my countrie,
    I come of a high race.

'My sire is the nightingale,
That sings, making his wail,
    In the wild wood, clear;
The mermaid is mother to me,
That sings in the salt sea,
    In the ocean mere.'

'Ye come of a right good race,
And are born of a high place,
    And of high degree;
Would to God that ye were
Given unto me, being fair,
    My lady and love to be.'
For a Rose's Sake

I LAVED my hands
By the water side;
With the willow leaves
My hands I dried.

The nightingale sung
On the bough of the tree;
Sing, sweet nightingale,
It is well with thee.

Thou hast heart's delight,
I have sad heart's sorrow
For a false, false maid
That will wed to-morrow.

'Tis all for a rose,
That I gave her not,
And I would that it grew
In the garden plot.

And I would the rose-tree
Were still to set,
That my love Marie
Might love me yet.
The Fragment of the Fause Lover and the Dead Leman

O WILLIE rade, and Willie gaed
Atween the shore and sea,
And still it was his dead lady
That kept him company.

O Willie rade, and Willie gaed
Atween the loch and heather,
And still it was his dead lady
That held his stirrup leather.

'O Willie, tak' me up by ye,
Sae far it is I gang;
O tak' me on your saddle bow,
Or your day shall not be lang.'

'Gae back, gae back, ye fause ill wife,
To the grave wherein ye lie,
It never was seen that a dead leman
Kept lover's company
Gae back, gae back frae me,' he said,
'For this day maun I wed,
And how can I kiss a living lass,
When ye come frae the dead?

'If ye maun haunt a living man,
Your brither haunt,' says he,
'For it was never my knife, but his
That twined thy life and thee!'
The Brigand's Grave

A Ballad of Modern Greece

The moon came up above the hill,
The sun went down the sea;
Go, maids, and fetch the well-water,
But lad! come here to me.

Gird on my jack and my old sword,
For I have never a son;
And you must be the chief of all,
When I am dead and gone.

But you must take my old broad sword,
And cut the green boughs of the tree,
And strew the green boughs on the ground
To make a soft death-bed for me.

And you must bring the holy priest
That I may sainéd be;
For I have lived a roving life
Fifty years under the greenwood tree.
And you shall make a grave for me,
And dig it deep and wide;
That I may turn about and dream
With my old gun by my side.

And leave a window to the east,
And the swallows will bring the spring;
And all the merry month of May
The nightingales will sing.
The Sudden Bridal

IT was a maid lay sick of love,
All for a leman fair;
And it was three of her bower-maidens
That came to comfort her.

The first she bore a blossomed branch,
The second an apple brown,
The third she had a silk kerchief,
And still her tears ran down.

The first she mocked, the second she laughed—
"We have loved lemans fair,
We made our hearts like the iron stone,
Had little teen or care."

"If ye have loved 'twas a false false love,
And an ill leman was he;
But her true love had angel's eyes,
And as fair was his sweet body."
And I will gird my green kirtle,  
And braid my yellow hair,  
And I will over the high hills  
And bring her love to her.

Nay, if you braid your yellow hair,  
You'll twine my love from me.

Now nay, now nay, my lady good,  
That ever this should be!

When you have crossed the western hills  
My true love you shall meet,  
With a green flag blowing over him,  
And green grass at his feet.

She has crossed over the high hills,  
And the low hills between,  
And she has found the may’s leman  
Beneath a flag of green.

'Twas four and twenty ladies fair  
Were sitting on the grass;  
But he has turned and looked on her,  
And will not let her pass.

You've maidens here, and maidens there,  
And loves through all the land;  
But what have you made of the lady fair  
You gave the rose-garland?
She was so harsh and cold of love,
    To me gave little grace;
She wept if I but touched her hand,
    Or kissed her bonnie face.

Yea, crows shall build in the eagle's nest,
    The hawk the dove shall wed,
Before my old true love and I
    Meet in one wedding bed.'

When she had heard his bitter rede
    That was his old true love,
She sat and wept within her bower,
    And moaned even as a dove.

She rose up from her window seat,
    And she looked out to see;
Her love came riding up the street
    With a goodly company.

He was clad on with Venice gold,
    Wrought upon cramoisie,
His yellow hair shone like the sun
    About his fair body.

Now shall I call him blossomed branch
    That has ill knots therein?
Or shall I call him basil plant,
    That comes of an evil kin?

C 2
'Oh, I shall give him goodly names,
   My sword of damask fine;
My silver flower, my bright-winged bird—
   Where go you, lover mine?'

'I go to marry my new bride,
   That I bring o'er the down;
And you shall be her bridal maid,
   And hold her bridal crown.'

'When you come to the bride chamber
   Where your fair maiden is,
You'll tell her I was fair of face,
   But never tell her this,

'That still my lips were lips of love,
   My kiss love's spring-water,
That my love was a running spring,
   My breast a garden fair.

'And you have kissed the lips of love
   And drained the well-water,
And you have spoiled the running spring,
   And robbed the fruits so fair.'

'Now he that will may scatter nuts,
   And he may wed that will;
But she that was my old true love
   Shall be my true love still.'
Iannoulo

All the maidens were merry and wed
All to lovers so fair to see;
The lover I took to my bridal bed
He is not long for love and me.

I spoke to him and he nothing said,
I gave him bread of the wheat so fine;
He did not eat of the bridal bread,
He did not drink of the bridal wine.

I made him a bed was soft and deep,
I made him a bed to sleep with me;
'Look on me once before you sleep,
And look on the flower of my fair body.

'Flowers of April and fresh May-dew,
Dew of April and buds of May,
Two white blossoms that bud for you,
Buds that blossom before the day.'
The Milk-White Doe

It was a mother and a maid
That walked the woods among,
And still the maid went slow and sad,
And still the mother sung.

‘What ails you, daughter Margaret?
Why go you pale and wan?
Is it for a cast of bitter love,
Or for a false leman?’

‘It is not for a false lover
That I go sad to see;
But it is for a weary life
Beneath the greenwood tree.

‘For ever in the good daylight
A maiden may I go,
But always on the ninth midnight
I change to a milk-white doe.'
BALLADS

‘They hunt me through the green forest
   With hounds and hunting men;
And ever it is my fair brother
   That is so fierce and keen.’

‘Good-morrow, mother.’ ‘Good-morrow, son;
   Where are your hounds so good?’
‘Oh, they are hunting a white doe
   Within the glad greenwood.

‘And three times have they hunted her,
   And thrice she’s won away;
The fourth time that they follow her
   That white doe they shall slay.’

Then out and spoke the forester,
   As he came from the wood,
‘Now never saw I maid’s gold hair
   Among the wild deer’s blood.

‘And I have hunted the wild deer
   In east lands and in west;
And never saw I white doe yet
   That had a maiden’s breast.’

Then up and spake her fair brother,
   Between the wine and bread,
‘Behold, I had but one sister,
   And I have been her dead.’
‘But ye must bury my sweet sister
   With a stone at her foot and her head,
And ye must cover her fair body
   With the white roses and red.

‘And I must out to the greenwood,
   The roof shall never shelter me;
And I shall lie for seven long years
   On the grass below the hawthorn tree.’
FOLKSONGS

French Peasant Songs

I

O FAIR apple-tree, and O fair apple-tree!
As heavy and sweet as the blossoms on thee,
My heart is heavy with love.
It wanteth but a little wind
To make the blossoms fall;
It wanteth but a young lover
To win me heart and all.

II

I SEND my love letters
By larks on the wing;
My love sends me letters
When nightingales sing.

Without reading or writing,
Their burden we know:
They only say, 'Love me,
Who love you so.'
AND if they ask for me, brother,
Say I come never home,
For I have taken a strange wife
   Beyond the salt sea foam.

The green grass is my bridal bed,
   The black tomb my good mother,
The stones and dust within the grave
   Are my sister and my brother.
The Tell-Tales

All in the mirk midnight when I was beside you,
Who has seen, who has heard, what was said,
what was done?
'Twas the night and the light of the stars that espied you,
The fall of the moon, and the dawning begun.

'Tis a swift star has fallen, a star that discovers
To the sea what the green sea has told to the oars,
And the oars to the sailors, and they of us lovers
Go singing this song at their mistress's doors.
On the Death of Lord Tennyson

SILENCE! 'The best' he said) 'are silent now,
That younger bearer of the laurel bough,
Who with his Thyrsis, kindred souls divine,
Harps only for Sicilian Proserpine:
For Arnold died, and Browning died, and he--
The oldest, wisest, greatest of the three--
Dies, and what voice shall dirge for him to-day?
For the Muse went with him the darkling way,
And left us mute! . . . Peace! who shall rhyme or rave?
The violet blooms not on the new-made grave,
And not in this first blankness of regret
Are eyes of men who mourn their Master wet.
New grief is dumb: himself through many a year
Withheld the meed of his melodious tear
While Hallam slept. But no! the moment flies!
And rapid rhymers, when the Poet dies,
Wail punctual, and prompt, and unafraid,
In copious instant ditties ready made.
Oh, peace! Ye do but make our loss more deep,
Who wail above his unawaking sleep.
Our Fathers

NOT ' better than our fathers ', we
Can wisely boast ourselves to be;
And evil may the scribbler speed
Who vaunts the vaunt of Diomede!

Our fathers eighty years ago,
From Princes Street amazed the Row.
From his far castle upon Tweed
The Great Magician came at need,
And every woman, man, and child
Was gladder when the Shirra smiled;
Nay, every tyke about the place
Took pleasure in the Shirra's face!

He, too, was here, the Giant Childe,
Tender, magniloquent, and wild,
Whose lure lay light on lochs and streams;
Whose prose or weeps, or glooms, or gleams,
As shower and shadow flit in turn
O'er moor and tarn and ben and burn;
Whose crutch fell heavier than he knew
On laurelled crest or Cockney crew,—
The mighty Christopher beside him
He that 'gules feared' whene'er they spied him
The Scorpion of the loyal heart,
Who saw youth, love, and friends depart;
Bearing dark sorrows in his breast
Yet held his own and broke his jest—
Crowned, as I deem, are men above,
At once with Scott’s and Carlyle’s love!

With them the Shepherd: never plaid
Of shepherd wrapped so strange a lad.
Second alone was he to him
Who turns all peasant glories dim.
Oh, kindly heart and random tongue!
That erst of fair Kilmeny sung,
And taught how dreadfully he died,
The Sinner, Lost and Justified,
And turned to rhyme and told in prose
The fortunes of the Fallen Rose—

These were our Fathers: truly we
Scarce better men may boast to be!

1 John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854) was denounced as ‘the Scorpion’ in an anonymous pamphlet called Hypocrisy Unveiled, because of his satirical articles in Blackwood’s Magazine.
2 James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd (1770-1835).
Scythe Song

MOWERS, weary and brown, and blithe,
What is the word methinks ye know—
Endless over-word that the scythe
Sings to the blades of the grass below?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
Something, still, they say as they pass;
What is the word that, over and over,
Sings the scythe to the flowers and grass?

Hush, ah hush, the scythes are saying,
Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying,
Hush, they sing to the clover deep!
Hush—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
Hush, and heed not, for all things pass,
Hush, ah hush! and the scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass.
Tired of Towns

‘When we spoke to her of the New Jerusalem, she said she would rather go to a country place in Heaven.’—Letters from the Black Country.

I’m weary of towns, it seems a’most a pity
We didn’t stop down i’ the country and clem; ¹
And you say that I’m bound for another city,
For the streets o’ the New Jerusalem.

And the streets are never like Sheffield, here,
Nor the smoke don’t cling like a smut to them;
But the water o’ life flows cool and clear
Through the streets o’ the New Jerusalem.

And the houses, you say, are of jasper cut,
And the gates are gaudy wi’ gold and gem;
But there’s times I could wish as the gates were shut—
The gates o’ the New Jerusalem.

¹ Lancashire for hunger.
For I come from a country that's over-built
Wi' streets that stifle, and walls that hem;
And the gorse on a common's worth all the gilt
And the gold of your New Jerusalem.

And I hope that they'll bring me, in Paradise,
To green lanes leafy wi' bough and stem—
To a country place in the land o' the skies,
And not to the New Jerusalem.
Pen and Ink

Ye wanderers that were my sires,
Who read men's fortunes in the hand,
Who voyaged with your smithy fires
   From waste to waste across the land—
Why did you leave for garth and town
   Your life by heath and river's brink?
Why lay your gipsy freedom down
   And doom your child to Pen and Ink?

You wearied of the wild-wood meal
   That crowned, or failed to crown, the day;
Too honest or too tame to steal
   You broke into the beaten way:
Plied loom or awl like other men,
   And learned to love the guineas' chink—
Oh, recreant sires, who doomed me then
   To earn so few—with Pen and Ink!
Where it hath fallen the tree must lie,
'Tis over late for me to roam;
Yet the caged bird who hears the cry
Of his wild fellows fleeting home,
May feel no sharper pang than mine,
Who seem to hear, whene'er I think,
Spate in the stream and wind in pine,
Call me to quit dull Pen and Ink.

For then the spirit wandering,
That slept within the blood, awakes;
For then the summer and the spring
I fain would meet by streams and lakes;
But ah, my birthright long is sold,
But custom chains me, link on link,
And I must get me, as of old,
Back to my tools—to Pen and Ink.
Disillusions of Astronomy

I once took delight
In the meteorite;
I was eager his passage to scan,
For I said, "From some far
And mysterious star
He is bearing his message to man.

"In sidereal showers
There is metal like ours;
They have iron, and therefore have wars;
It is easy to think
They may be on the brink
Of a social convulsion in Mars."

So I followed the flight
Of the meteorite;
I was eager his journey to scan;
For I deemed that he came
On his pathway of flame
For the edification of man.
MISCELLANEOUS

But, alas! I have read
That his journey is sped
From the earth, as she once was of yore,
When the globe was red-hot,
And Vesuvius shot
Stones at six miles a second or more.

From Vesuvius' cup
There were rocks that flew up,
Out of gravity's reach; now they fall!
Which accounts for the flight
Of the meteorite,
As I read in Astronomer Ball.

So he brings us no news
From the stars we peruse,
Or in hope, or in terror survey;
He is only a stone
From the world that was thrown
When the earth was an infant at play.

He conveyed us no germs
Of *amæbae*, or worms,
As Sir William conjectured of yore;
Whence he came doth he fall,
Thinks Astronomer Ball:
Life's a mystery, much as before.
And the creeds that come down,
With a smile or a frown,
To the earth, from the world's walls of flame:
Are they guesses and fears,
That flew up to the spheres,
And return to the hearts whence they came?

So Dame Science avers;
But these fancies of hers,
They are vague as the wandering breeze;
And concerning the flight
Of the meteorite,
And the rest--I'll believe what I please.
Zimbabwe

(The ruined Gold Cities of Rhodesia. The Ophir of Scripture.)

Into the darkness whence they came,
    They passed—their country knoweth none,
They and their gods without a name
    Partake the same oblivion.
Their work they did, their work is done,
    Whose gold, it may be, shone like fire
About the brows of Solomon,
    And in the House of God’s Desire.
Hence came the altar all of gold,
    The hinges of the Holy Place,
The censer with the fragrance rolled
    Skyward to seek Jehovah’s face;
The golden ark that did encase
    The Law within Jerusalem,
The lilies and the rings to grace
    The high priest’s robe and diadem.
The pestilence, the desert spear,
Smote them; they passed with none to tell
The names of them that laboured here:
Stark walls and crumbling crucible,
Strait gates, and graves, and ruined well,
Abide, dumb monuments of old,
We know but that men fought and fell,
Like us—like us—for love of gold.
A Review in Rhyme

A LITTLE of Horace, a little of Prior,
A sketch of a milkmaid, a lay of the squire—
These, these are 'on draught' 'At the Sign of the
Lyre!' 1

A child in blue ribbons that sings to herself,
A talk of the books on the Sheraton shelf,
A sword of the Stuarts, a wig of the Guelph,

A lai, a pantoum, a ballade, a rondeau,
A pastel by Greuze, and a sketch by Moreau,
And the chimes of the rhymes that sing sweet as they
go;

A fan, and a folio, a ringlet, a glove,
'Neath a dance by Laguerre on the ceiling above,
And a dream of the days when the bard was in love;

1 At the Sign of the Lyre, by H. A. Dobson, 1885.
A scent of dead roses, a glance at a pun,
A toss of old powder, a glint of the sun,
They meet in the volume that Dobson has done.

If there's more that the heart of a man can desire,
He may search in his Swinburne, for fury and fire;
If he's wise—he'll alight 'At the Sign of the Lyre!'
The Banks of Wye

Once more we watch the fields we knew,
Once more the valley fair,
Moonlight, and silence, and the dew,
Are dreaming on the air:
Ah, silence! not a curlew's cry
To vex the midnight still,
'Tis only Wye goes moaning by
Beneath the shadowy hill.

Say, is it long ago she smiled
Here, in the birchen wood,
With sweetest eyes that ever child
Wore into womanhood?
And now we watch the hills alone,
And Wye, his banks along,
Must sound, for us, a parting moan;
For her—a bridal song.
Well, so doth Heaven or fate decide,
    And time has willed it so:
Farewell to bridegroom and to bride,
    Farewell to long ago!
And years and faces change, and feet
    In alien regions range,
And souls may meet, or ne’er may meet,
    But one can never change.
An Aspiration

When we have cut each other's throats
And robbed each other's land;
And turned, and changed, and lost our coats,
Till progress is at stand;
When every 'programme's' been gone through
This good old world will wake anew!

When science, art, and learning cease
As wealth and commerce die—
The children they of wealth and peace,
With peace and wealth they fly—
Then ghosts will walk, and in their train
Bring old religion back again.
When hunger, war, and pestilence
    Have run their ancient round;
When law has long been banished hence;
    When hate has cleared the ground;
When men grown few, as once they were,
Breathe uncontaminated air—

Till then I fain would sleep, and then
    Be born in other days—
A hermit in some happy glen
    Where some clear river strays;
Nursed in some faith—I know not, I—
Wherein a man might live and die.

Ah, early would I rise to pray,
    And early would I steal
From chapel, in the dawning gray,
    To earn the Friday's meal—
A monk who never dreamed of doubt,
I'd catch uneducated trout!

A priest where woman might not come,
    Nor any household care;
A land where newspapers were dumb
    From scandal and from scare—
That priest I'd be, that land I'd see,
Would fortune work my wish for me!
O Buddha, if thy tale be true,
    Of still returning life;
A monk may I be born anew
    In valleys far from strife—
A monk where Meggatt winds and laves
The lone St. Mary’s of the waves.¹

¹ The ruined Chapel of Our Lady on St. Mary’s Loch at the head of Yarrow, ‘The lone St. Mary’s of the waves’ is a charming line by Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.
All ends in song! Dame Nature toiled

In stellar space, by land, by sea;
And many a monstrous thing she spoiled,
And many another brought to be;
Strange brutes that sprawled, strange stars that flee,
Or flare the steadfast signs among:

What profit thence— to you or me?

All ends in song!

All ends in song! But Nature moiled
And brought forth Man, who deems him free,
Who dreams ’twas his own hand embroiled
The tangles of his destiny:
Who fashioned empires—who but he?
Who fashioned gods, a motley throng:
They fall, they fade by Time’s decree—
All ends in song!
All ends in song! we strive, are foiled,
Are broken-hearted—even we:
Where that old sinful snake is coiled
We shake the knowledgeable tree,
We listen to the serpent’s plea,
‘As gods shall ye know right and wrong’—
And this is all the mystery—
‘All ends in song.’

Envoy

Muse, or in sooth or mockery,
Or brief of days, or lasting long,
Our love, or hate, or gloom, or glee—
All ends in song.
A Dream

WHY will you haunt my sleep?
You know it may not be;
The grave is wide and deep,
That sunders you and me;
In bitter dreams we reap
The sorrow we have sown,
And I would I were asleep,
Forgotten and alone!

We knew and did not know—
We saw and did not see,
The nets that long ago
Fate wove for you and me;
The cruel nets that keep
The birds that sob and moan;
And I would we were asleep,
Forgotten and alone!

... ... ... ... ... ...
The story about the suicide of Orpheus, after the second loss of Eurydice, and about the nightingales that sing over his tomb, is in Pausanias.

'Twas hence the Thracian minstrel went
The second time the sunless way,
And found his twice-lost love, content
'Mid songless shades to be as they;
But the songs died not—all the May
And all through June they flood the vales,
And still on Orpheus' tomb, men say,
Most sweetly sing the nightingales.
The Melancholy Muses

A WEARY lot is his who longs
For something bright in rhyme;
Men, women, children send me songs
Sepulchral or sublime.
The songs are all of bale and blight;
Alas! I do not need them,
For almost every one can write,
And nobody can read them!
Has merriment gone wholly out?
Have all the hearts been broken?
Must every mortal sing of doubt,
From Peebles to Portsoken?
Men rhyme of penalties and pains,
Forgetting joy and wassail;
The Muses dwell with stripes and chains
In Bunyan’s Doubting Castle.
Ah, there have all the pleasures fled,
The Cupids all departed,
The Muses that to dance we led,
Light-footed and light-hearted!
Will ne’er a knight go blow the horn,
   And knock that giant over,
Dispel the dark, let in the morn,
   Give every Muse a lover?
Sad maiden Muses, vowed to pain,
   Too long, perchance, they’ve tarried;
There never will be joy again
   Till every Muse is married!
I WOULD my days had been in other times,
A moment in the long unnumbered years
That knew the sway of Horus and of hawk,
In peaceful lands that border on the Nile.

I would my days had been in other times,
Lulled by the sacrifice and mumbled hymn
Between the five great rivers, or in shade
And shelter of the cool Himályan hills.

I would my days had been in other times,
That I in some old abbey of Touraine
Had watched the rounding grapes, and lived my life,
Ere ever Luther came or Rabelais!

I would my days had been in other times,
When quiet life to death not terrible
Drifted, as ashes of the Santhal dead
Drift down the sacred rivers to the sea!
The Old Love and the New

HOW oft I've watched her footstep glide
   Across th' enamelled plain,
And deemed she was the fairest bride
   And I the fondest swain!
How oft with her I've cast me down
   Beneath the odorous limes,
How often twined her daisy crown,
   In the glad careless times!

By that old wicket ne'er we meet
   Where still we met of yore,
But I have found another sweet
   Beside the salt sea-shore:
With sea-daisies her locks I wreathe,
   With sea-grass bind her hands,
And salt and sharp's the air we breathe
   Beside the long sea-sands!
Mine own true love had eyes of blue,
    And *Willow!* was her song;
Sea-green her eyes, my lady new,
    And of the east her tongue.
And she that's worsted in the strife,
    A southland lass is she;
But she that's won—the Neuk o' Fife,
    It is her ain countrie!

No more the old sweet words we call,
    These kindly words of yore—
'Over!' 'Hard in!' 'Leg-bye!' 'No ball!'
    Ah, now we say 'Two more';
And of the 'Like' and 'Odd' we shout,
    Till swains and maidens scoff;
'The fact is, cricket's been bowled out
    By that eternal golf!'
A Remonstrance with the Fair

There are thoughts that the mind cannot fathom,
The mind of the animal male;
But woman abundantly hath 'em,
And mostly her notions prevail.
And why ladies read what they do read
Is a thing that no man may explain,
And if any one asks for a true rede
He asketh in vain.

Ah, why is each 'passing depression'
Of stories that gloomily bore,
Received as the subtle expression
Of almost unspeakable lore?
In the dreary, the sickly, the grimy
Say, why do our women delight?
And wherefore so constantly ply me
With Ships in the Night?
Dear ladies, in vain you approach us,
    With books to your taste in your hands;
For, alas! though you offer to coach us,
    Yet the soul of no man understands
Why the grubby is always the moral,
    Why the nasty's preferred to the nice,
While you keep up a secular quarrel
    With a gay little Vice;

Yes, a Vice with her lips full of laughter,
    A Vice with a rose in her hair,
You condemn in the present and after,
    To darkness of utter despair:
But a sin, if no rapture redeem it,
    But a passion that's pale and played out,
Or in surgical hands—you esteem it
    Worth scribbling about!

What is sauce for the goose, for the gander
    Is sauce, ye inconsequent fair!
It is better to laugh than to mumble,
    And better is mirth than despair;
And though life's not all beer and all skittles,
    Yet the sun, on occasion, can shine,
And, non Dieu! he's a fool who belittles
    This cosmos of Thine!
There are cakes, there is ale—ay, and ginger
    Shall be hot in the mouth,¹ as of old:
And a villain, with cloak and with whinger,
    And a hero, in armour of gold,
And a maid with a face like a lily,
    With a heart that is stainless and gay,
Make a tale worth a world of the silly
    Sad trash of to-day.

¹ Sir Toby.  Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be
no more cakes and ale?
   Clown.  Yes, by St. Anne! and ginger shall be hot in the mouth too.

Twelfth Night, ii. iii.
The Lover in Hades

Persephone

NOW take and eat, and have release;
And memory, and longing leave;
Then shall the seasons pass in peace
Wherein thou dost not grieve.
Thou wouldest not suffer for love's sake
 Longer, and longer idly crave?

The Lover

The pomegranate I will not take,
Nor drink the mystic wave:
I had a lady, passing dear,
And fair, beneath earth's windy skies
And but one joy I fail of here—
To look into her eyes.
And if she keep my memory,
I know mine shall be sadder yet.
But if she quite forgetteth me,
Yet will I not forget!
[On the centenary of Robert Burns in 1896 Lord Rosebery addressed two meetings held to celebrate it on the same day, first in Dumfries and then in Glasgow. Both speeches were remarkable, casting fresh light on a well-worn theme.]

Lord Rosebery loquitur

Was I ever sae tormentit?
I'm nearly driven dementit.
The things I hae inventit
To speak about the Bard
Are mony and meritorious,
So say the maist censorious;
But, oh! it's fair notorious
To find new things is hard!

Ma very sleep is broken wi't,
The Glorious Shade I've spoken wi't,
Poetic thirst I've sloken wi't,
But, faith! I'm rising oot;
And here's another bust, ye ken,
And talk on it I must, ye ken,
For Paisley pits her trust, ye ken,
In me, and has nae doot.
Faith, a' the Sultan's meenions
I'll curse, and ma opeenions
About the puir Armenians
    I'll speak and mak' ma maen.
Though Robbie never heard o' them,
His heart would hae been stirred for them,
And speaking out my word for them
    Kills twa birds wi' ae stane!
A Song of Patents

A'VE three pair o' patent shune,
An' they're a' for gowfin' in,
But, lord! they gi'e a body unco fà's!
It's forward now ye'll coup,
And now ye'll rax your dowp,
And ye stotter when addressing till your ba's.

But they're patents, ye maun ken,
And the race of thinking men
Maunna dare the things their faithers likit weel;
So we've Companies and Shares
And bonnie Bulls and Bears,
Or the country wad be gangin' to the dé'il!

A've a braw new patent cleek,
Like a Plawtypuss's beak,
And they threip that it is excellent in sand;
But, if I tap my ba'
It slices it in twa;
Yet a' the shop-fowk tell me it is grand!
The name I canna utter
O' my braw new patent putter,
For the name it is derivit frae the Greek;
But I canna hole a ba' off it,
In fact I ha'e a staw ¹ of it—
But no to use a 'patent' wad be weak.

Yestreen I saw a lassie
Foozle wi' a patent brassie,
And I bocht ane on the spot for seven-and-three;
And that same lass has coft her
An amazin' patent loffer,
And she halvit the short hole in twenty-three.

A'm mysel' the sole survivor
O' the last new patent driver,
For it split and killed my pairtners on the green;
And a splinter slew my caddie
(A wiedy's son, pur laddie!)
But—a 'patent' is the sicht for the sair eyne.

For we've 'patents' a', ye ken,
And the race of thinking men
Maunna use the clubs their faithers likit weel;
So we've Companies and Shares
And we've bonnie Bulls and Bears,
Or the country wad be gangin' to the de'il!

¹ staw, a surfeit. ² coft, bought.
MISCELLANEOUS

Fairyland

In light of sunrise and sunsetting
The long days lingered, in forgetting
That ever passion, keen to hold
What may not tarry, was of old,
In lands beyond the weary wold—
Beyond the bitter stream whose flood
Runs red waist-high with slain men's blood.
Was beauty once a thing that died?
Was pleasure never satisfied?
Was rest still broken by the vain
Desire of action, bringing pain,
To die in vapid rest again?
All this was quite forgotten there,
No winter brought us cold and care,
No spring gave promise unfulfilled,
Nor, with the eager summer killed,
The languid days drooped autumnwards.
So magical a season guards
The constant prime of a green June;
So slumbrous is the river's tune,
That knows no thunder of rushing rains,
Nor ever in the summer wanes,
Like waters of the summer time
In lands far from the fairy clime.

Yea, there the fairy maids are kind,
With nothing of the changeful mind
Of maidens in the days that were;
And if no laughter fills the air
With sound of silver murmurings,
And if no prayer of passion brings
A love nigh dead to earth again
Yet sighs more subtly sweet remain
And smiles that never satiate,
And loves that fear scarce any fate—
Alas! no words can bring the bloom
Of Fairyland, the faint perfume,
The sweet low light, the magic air,
To those who have not yet been there:
Alas! no words, nor any spell
Can lull the heart that knows too well
The towers that by the river stand,
The lost fair world of Fairyland.
Ah, would that I had never been
The lover of the Fairy Queen!
Or would that I again might be
Asleep below the Eildon tree,
And see her ride the forest way
As on that morning of the May!
**Omar Khayyam**

WISE Omar, do the southern breezes fling
Above your grave, at ending of the spring,
The snowdrift of the petals of the rose,
The wild white roses you were wont to sing?

Far in the south I know a land divine,
And there is many a saint and many a shrine,
   And over all the shrines the blossom blows
Of roses that were dear to you as wine.

You were a saint of unbelieving days,
Liking your life and happy in men’s praise;
   Enough for you the shade beneath the bough,
Enough to watch the wild world go its ways.

Dreadless and hopeless thou of heaven or hell,
Careless of words thou hadst not skill to spell,
   Content to know not all thou knowest now,
What’s death? Doth any pitcher dread the well?
The pitchers we, whose maker makes them ill,
Shall he torment them if they chance to spill?
Nay, like, the broken potsherds are we cast
Forth and forgotten—and what will be will!

So still were we, before the months began
That rounded us and shaped us into man.
So still we shall be, surely, at the last,
Dreamless, untouched of blessing or of ban!

Ah, strange it seems that this thy common thought—
How all things have been, ay, and shall be nought—
Was ancient wisdom in thine ancient east,
In those old days when Senlac fight was fought,
Which gave our England for a captive land
To pious chiefs of a believing band—
A gift to the believer from the priest,
Tossed from the holy to the blood-red hand!

Yea, thou wert singing when that arrow clave
Through helm and brain of him who could not save
His England, even of Harold Godwin's son;
The high tide murmurs by the hero's grave!

And thou wert wreathing roses—who can tell?—
Or chanting for some girl that pleased thee well,
Or satst at wine in Nashâpûr, when dun
The twilight veiled the field where Harold fell!
The salt sea-waves above him rage and roam!
Along the white walls of his guarded home
No zephyr stirs the rose, but o'er the wave
The wild wind beats the breakers into foam!

And dear to him, as roses were to thee,
Rings the long roar of onset of the sea;
The swan's Bath of his Fathers is his grave:
His sleep, methinks, is sound as thine can be.

His was the age of faith, when all the west
Looked to the priest for torment or for rest;
And thou wert living then, and didst not heed
The saint who banned thee or the saint who blessed!

Ages of Progress! These eight hundred years
Hath Europe shuddered with her hopes or fears,
And now!—she listens in the wilderness
To thee, and half believeth what she hears!

Hadst thou THE SECRET? Ah, and who may tell?
'An hour we have,' thou saidst; 'Ah, waste it well!'
An hour we have, and yet eternity
Looms o'er us, and the thought of heaven or hell.

Nay, we can never be as wise as thou,
O idle singer 'neath the blossomed bough!
Nay, and we cannot be content to die.
We cannot shirk the questions 'where?' and 'how?'
Ah, not from learned peace and gay content
Shall we of England go the way he went—

The singer of the red wine and the rose—
Nay, otherwise than his our day is spent!

Serene he dwelt in fragrant Nashapûr,
But we must wander while the stars endure.

He knew THE SECRET: we have none that knows:
No man so sure as Omar once was sure!
Waitin' on the Glesca' Train

When the holidays come roun',
And on pleasure ye are boun',
For the Trossachs, Brig o' Allan or Dunblane;
You'll be sometimes keepit waitin'
When ye hear the porter statin'
That ye're waitin' on the Glesca' train.

Chorus

Tak' yer time—tak' yer time!
With indifference sublime,
Ye may watch the people hurry micht an' main;
Just tak' a seat an' wait,
For ye canna be ower late,
When ye're waitin' on the Glesca' train.
It's attended wi' expense,
For a lad o' ony sense—
If it's wet or cauld or looks like rain—
The interval mon' fill
Wi' a mutchkin or a gill
When he's waitin' for the Glesca' train. *Chorus.*

There's a frien' o' mine—Mackay—
Constitutionally dry,
Thocht that he had just got time to tak' a drain;
But he somehow lost his way,
An' he's no' foun' to this day,
A' wi' waitin' on the Glesca' train. *Chorus.*

I was ettlin'1 at Kinross,
Where the train is kin' o' cross,
And Bradshaw's no' that easy to explain,
And what was left o' me
Was just coupit at Dundee,
A' wi' waitin' on the Glesca' train. *Chorus.*

But the ploy has merit whiles,
For a sonsie lassie's smiles
Had entrappit aince ma frien' Maclean;
But Maclean he got off it,
For the lass was lost at Moffat,
A' wi' waitin' on the Glesca' train. *Chorus.*

1 etting, aiming.
There's occasions when I think
That the interests o' drink
Is the notion that directors entertain;
And that's may be why ye're waitin'.
When ye hear the porter statin'
That ye're waitin' on the Glesca' train.

Chorus

Tak' yer time—tak' yer time!
With indifference sublime,
Ye may watch the people hurry micht an' main;
Just tak' a seat an' wait,
For ye canna be ower late,
When ye're waitin' on the Glesca' train.
Some say that Helen never went to Troy, but abode in Egypt; for the gods, having made in her semblance a woman out of clouds and shadows, sent the same to be wife to Paris. For this shadow then the Greeks and Trojans slew each other.

WHY from the quiet hollows of the hills,
   And extreme meeting place of light and shade,
Wherein soft rains fell slowly, and became
Clouds among sister clouds, where fair spent beams
And dying glories of the sun would dwell—
Why have they whom I know not, nor may know,
Strange hands, unseen and ruthless, fashioned me,
And borne me from the silent shadowy hills,
Hither, to noise and glow of alien life,
To harsh and clamorous swords, and sound of war?
One speaks unto me words that would be sweet,
Made harsh, made keen with love that knows me not;
And some strange force, within me or around,
Makes answer, kiss for kiss, and sigh for sigh,
And somewhere there is fever in the halls,
That troubles me, for no such trouble came
To vex the cool far hollows of the hills.
The foolish folk crowd round me, and they cry,
That house, and wife, and lands, and all Troy town,
Are little to lose, if they may keep me here,
And see me flit, a pale and silent shade,
Among the streets bereft, and helpless shrines.

At other hours another life seems mine,
Where one great river runs unswollen of rain,
By pyramids of unremembered kings,
And homes of men obedient to the dead.
There dark and quiet faces come and go
Around me, then again the shriek of arms,
And all the turmoil of the Ilian men.
What are they? even shadows such as I.
What make they? Even this—the sport of gods—
The sport of gods, however free they seem.
Ah, would the game were ended, and the light,
The blinding light, and all too mighty suns,
Withdrawn, and I once more with sister shades,
Unloved, forgotten, mingled with the mist,
Dwelt in the hollows of the shadowy hills.
When last we gathered roses in the garden
I found my wits, but truly you lost yours.'

The Broken Heart.

JULY and June brought flowers and love
To you, but I would none thereof,
Whose heart kept all through summer time
A flower of frost and winter rime.
Yours was true wisdom—was it not?—
Even love; but I had clean forgot,
Till seasons of the falling leaf,
All loves, but one that turned to grief.
At length at touch of autumn tide,
When roses fell, and summer died,
All in a dawning deep with dew,
Love flew to me—love fled from you.
The roses drooped their weary heads,
I spoke among the garden beds;
You would not hear, you could not know,
Summer and love seemed long ago,
As far, as faint, as dim a dream,
As to the dead this world may seem.
Ah sweet, in winter's miseries,
Perchance you may remember this,
How wisdom was not justified
In summer time or autumn-tide,
Though for this once below the sun,
Wisdom and love were made at one;
But love was bitter-bought enough,
And wisdom light of wing as love.
Good-bye

Kiss me, and say good-bye;
Good-bye—there is no word to say but this,
Nor any lips left for my lips to kiss,
Nor any tears to shed, when these tears dry;
Kiss me, and say good-bye.

Farewell! be glad—forget;
There is no need to say 'forget', I know,
For youth is youth, and time will have it so;
And though your lips are pale, and your eyes wet,
Farewell, you must forget.

You shall bring home your sheaves,
Many, and heavy, and with blossoms twined
Of memories that go not out of mind;
Let this one sheaf be twined with poppy leaves
When you bring home your sheaves.
In garnered loves of thine—
   The ripe good fruit of many hearts and years—
   Somewhere let this lie, gray and salt with tears;

It grew too near the sea wind and the brine
Of life, this love of mine.

This sheaf was spoiled in spring,
   And over-long was green, and early sere,
   And never gathered gold in the late year
From autumn suns, and moons of harvesting,
But failed in frosts of spring.

Yet was it thine, my sweet,
   This love, though weak as young corn withered
   Whereof no man may gather and make bread;
Thine, though it never knew the summer heat;
Forget not quite, my sweet.
Christmas Violets

LAST night I found the violets
You sent me once across the sea;
From gardens that the winter frets
In summer lands they came to me.

Still fragrant of the English earth,
Still humid from the frozen dew,
To me they spoke of Christmas mirth,
They spoke of England—spoke of you.

But you have reached a windless age,
The haven of a happy clime;
You do not dread the winter’s rage,
Although we missed the summer time.

And like the flower’s breath over sea,
Across the gulf of time and pain,
To-night returns the memory
Of castles that we built—in Spain!
The Nemesis of Art

Written after reading The Tinted Venus, by Mr. Anstey.

Alas! that thou art dear, and not so dear,
As faces fading from the painted wall,
The queens of ages immemorial,
Helen, and grace of golden Guinevere!
Alas! thy kisses are not worth a tear,
One single tear of all the tears that fall
For memory of loves gone out of call,
And these old voices that we shall not hear.
Alas! that thou art fair, and not so fair,
As ladies Lionardo loved to paint,
Set in a frame of curled and golden hair,
Saintlike; with smiles that are not of a saint,
Glad with inexplicable mirth, or faint
With extreme languor and supreme despair.
II

We love like him who gave, long time ago,
To Venus' marble hand his wedding ring;
No more his love's embrace might round him cling,
Nor heart with heart responsive ebb and flow;
Only the goddess-ghost would come and go,
To fan him with the breath of her white wing,
And dull the fever, and assuage the sting,
And comfort him a little in his woe.
And we, like him, have given our hearts away
To beauty that was never clad in clay,
That puts all mortal loveliness to scorn;
A pale, a bitter, and a jealous queen,
With her undying beauty set between
Our loves and us, to make us all forlorn.
Legion

O

H, it’s billy and swag, and it’s do and dare
In the mining camp, in the good free air,
We do golden deeds by the batch!
For we won the Cup on a nobbled mare
Oh, it’s billy and swag and it’s do and dare!
And we pulled off the English match!
And we hunted the Boer as you hunt a hare,
And we brought off a gallery catch!
And you’ll find the Cornstalks everywhere,
In the mining camp, in the good free air;
They are first on the flat, they are all on the square,
Their lads are as brave as their lasses are fair,
And you’ll find the Australians everywhere,
Oh, it’s billy and swag, and it’s do and dare,
From the turf to the last dispatch!
And it’s boot and saddle and devil may care,
It’s won by a hand and a little to spare?,
And the handicap landed from scratch!
TWO loves there were, and one was born
   Between the sunset and the rain;
Her singing voice went through the corn,
Her dance was woven 'neath the thorn,
   On grass the fallen blossoms stain;
And suns may set, and moons may wane,
But this love comes no more again.

There were two loves and one made white
   Thy singing lips, and golden hair;
Born of the city's mire and light,
The shame and splendour of the night,
   She trapped and fled thee unaware;
Not through the lamplight and the rain
Shalt thou behold this love again.
Go forth and seek, by wood and hill,
Thine ancient love of dawn and dew;
There comes no voice from mere or rill,
Her dance is over, fallen still
The ballad burdens that she knew;
And thou must wait for her in vain,
Till years bring back thy youth again.

That other love, afield, afar
Fled the light love, with lighter feet.
Nay, though thou seek where gravesteads are,
And flit in dreams from star to star,
That dead love shalt thou never meet,
Till through bleak dawn and blowing rain
Thy soul shall find her soul again.
The Tournay of the Heroes

Ho, warders, cry a tournay! ho, heralds, call the knights!
What gallant lance for old romance 'gainst modern fiction fights?
The lists are set, the knights are met, I ween, a dread array,
St. Chad to shield, a stricken field shall we behold to-day!
First to the northern barriers pricks Roland of Roncesvau,
And by his side, in knightly pride, Wilfred of Ivanhoe,
The Templar rideth by his rein, two gallant foes were they;
And proud to see, le brave Bussy his colours doth display.
Ready at need he comes with speed, William of Deloraine,
And Hereward the Wake himself is pricking o'er the plain.
The good knight of La Mancha's here; here is Sir Amyas Leigh,
And Eric of the gold hair, pride of northern chivalry.
There shines the steel of Alan Breck, the sword of Athos shines,
Dalgetty on Gustavus rides along the marshalled lines;
With many a knight of sunny France the Cid has marched from Spain,
And Götz the Iron-handed leads the lances of Almain.

But who upon the modern side are champions? With the sleeve
Adorned of his false lady-love, rides glorious David Grieve;
A bookseller sometime was he, in a provincial town,
But now before his iron mace go horse and rider down.
Ho, Robert Elsmere! count thy beads; lo, champion of the fray,
With brandished colt, comes Felix Holt, all of the modern day.
And Silas Lapham's six-shooter is cocked: the colonel's spry!
There spurs the wary Egoist, defiance in his eye;
There Zola's ragged regiment comes, with dynamite in hand,
And Flaubert's crew of country doctors devastate the land.
On Robert Elsmere Friar Tuck falls with his quarter-staff,

Nom De! to see the clergies fight might make the sourest laugh!

They meet—they shock—full many a knight is smitten on the crown;

So keep us good St. Genevieve, Umslopogaas is down!

About the mace of David Grieve his blood is flowing red,

Alas for ancient chivalry, le brave Bussy is sped!

Yet where the sombre Templar rides the modern caitiffs fly,

The Mummer of The Mummer's Wife has got it in the eye;

From Felix Holt his patent colt hath not averted fate,

And Silas Lapham's smitten fair, right through his gallant pate.

There Dan Deronda reels and falls, a hero sore surprised;

Ha, Beauseant! still may such fate befall the Circumcised!

The Egoist is flying fast from him of Ivanhoe:

Beneath the axe of Skalagrim fall prigs at every blow:

The ragged Zolaists have fled, screaming 'We are betrayed',

But loyal Alan Breck is shent, stabbed through the Stuart plaid.

In sooth it is a grimly sight, so fast the heroes fall,

Three volumes fell could scarcely tell the fortunes of them all.
At length but two are left on ground, and David Grieve is one.

Madam, what deeds of derring-do that bookseller hath done!
The other, mark the giant frame, the great portentous fist!
'Tis Porthos! David Grieve may call on Kuenen an he list.
The swords are crossed; Doublez, dégagez, vite! great Porthos calls,
And David drops, that secret botte hath pierced his overalls;
And goodly Porthos, as of old the famed Orthryades,
Raises the trophy of the fight; then, falling on his knees,
He writes in gore upon his shield, 'Romance. Romance, has won!'
And blood-red on that stricken field goes down the angry sun.
Night falls upon the field of death, night on the darkling lea:
Oh send us such a tourney soon, and send me there to see!
Gallia

LADY, lady neat

Of the roguish eye,

Wherefore dost thou hie

Stealthy, down the street,

On well-booted feet?

From French novels I

Gather that you fly,

Guy or Jules to meet.

Furtive dost thou range,

Of thy cab dost change;

So, at least, 'tis said;

Oh, the sad old tale

Passionately stale,

We've so often read.
The Rev. Mr. Kirk of Aberfoyle was carried away by the Fairies in 1691.

People of Peace! a peaceful man,
Well worthy of your love was he,
Who, while the roaring Garry ran
Red with the life-blood of Dundee,
While coats were turning, crowns were falling,
Wandered along his valley still,
And heard your mystic voices calling
From fairy knowe and haunted hill.
He heard, he saw, he knew too well
The secrets of your fairy clan;
You stole him from the haunted dell,
Who never more was seen or man.
Now far from heaven, and safe from hell,
Unknown of earth, he wanders free.
Would that he might return and tell
Of his mysterious company!
For we have tired the Folk of Peace;
No more they tax our corn and oil;
Their dances on the moorland cease,
The brownie stints his wonted toil.
No more shall any shepherd meet
The ladies of the fairy clan,
Nor are their deathly kisses sweet
On lips of any earthly man.
And half I envy him who now,
Clothed in her court's enchanted green,
By moonlit loch or mountain's brow
Is chaplain to the Fairy Queen.
To Correspondents

My postman, though I fear thy tread,
And tremble as thy foot draws nearer,
'Tis not the Christmas dun I dread,
My mortal foe is much severer—
The unknown correspondent, who,
With indefatigable pen,
And nothing in the world to do,
Perplexes literary men.

From Pentecost and Ponder's End
They write: from Deal, and from Dacota;
The people of the Shetlands send
No inconsiderable quota;
They write for autographs; in vain—
In vain does Phyllis write, and Flora;
They write that Allan Quatermain
Is not at all the book for Brora.
They write to say that they have met
   This writer 'at a garden party,
And though' this writer 'may forget'
   *Their* recollection's keen and hearty;
'And will you praise in your reviews
   A novel by our distant cousin.'
These letters from provincial blues
   Assail us daily by the dozen.

O friends with time upon your hands,
   O friends with postage-stamps in plenty,
O poets out of many lands,
   O youths and maidens under twenty,
Seek out some other wretch to bore,
   Or wreak yourselves upon your neighbours,
And leave me to my dusty lore
   And my unprofitable labours!
Partant pour la Scribie

Scribie, on the north-east littoral of Bohemia, is the land of stage conventions. It is named after the discoverer, M. Scribe.

A PLEASANT land is Scribie, where
The light comes mostly from below,
And seems a sort of symbol rare
Of things at large, and how they go,
In rooms where doors are everywhere
And cupboards shelter friend or foe.

There is a realm where people tell
Each other, when they chance to meet,
Of things that long ago befell—
And do most solemnly repeat
Secrets they both know very well,
Aloud, and in the public street!

H 2
A land where lovers go in fours,
   Master and mistress, man and maid;
Where people listen at the doors
   Or 'neath a table's friendly shade,
And comic Irishmen in scores
   Roam o'er the scenes all undismayed:

A land where virtue in distress
   Owes much to uncles in disguise;
Where British sailors frankly bless
   Their limbs, their timbers, and their eyes;
And where the villain doth confess,
   Conveniently, before he dies!

A land of lovers false and gay;
   A land where people dread a 'curse';
A land of letters gone astray,
   Or intercepted, which is worse;
Where weddings false fond maids betray,
   And all the babes are changed at nurse.

Oh, happy land, where things come right!
   We of the world where things go ill;
Where lovers love, but don't unite;
   Where no one finds the missing will—
Dominion of the heart's delight,
   Scribie, we've loved, and love thee still!
'The Fairy's Gift

'Take short views.'—Sydney Smith.

The fays that to my christ'ning came
(For come they did, my nurses taught me,
They did not bring me wealth or fame—
'Tis very little that they brought me.
But one, the crossest of the crew,
The ugly old one, uninvited,
Said, 'I shall be avenged on you,
My child; you shall grow up short-sighted!'
With magic juices did she lave
Mine eyes, and wrought her wicked pleasure.
Well, of all gifts the fairies gave,
_Hers_ is the present that I treasure!
The bore whom others fear and flee,
I do not fear—I do not flee him;
I pass him calm as calm can be;
I do not cut—I do not see him!
And with my feeble eyes and dim,

Where you see patchy fields and fences,
For me the mists of Turner swim—

My 'azure distance' soon commences!

Nay, as I blink about the streets

Of this befogged and miry city,

Why, almost every girl one meets

Seems preternaturally pretty!

'Try spectacles,' one's friends intone;

'You'll see the world correctly through them.'

But I have visions of my own,

And not for worlds would I undo them.
Villanelle

To Lucia

Apollo left the golden Muse
  And shepherded a mortal’s sheep,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

To mock the giant swain that woos
  The sea-nymph in the sunny deep,
Apollo left the golden Muse.

Afield he drove his lambs and ewes
  Where Milon and where Battus reap,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

To watch thy tunny-fishers cruise
  Below the dim Sicilian steep
Apollo left the golden Muse.
Ye twain did loiter in the dews,
Ye slept the swain’s unfever’d sleep,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

That time might half with his confuse
Thy songs—like his, that laugh and leap—
Theocritus of Syracuse,
Apollo left the golden Muse!
Woman and the Weed

Founded on a New Zealand Myth

In the morning of time, when his fortunes began,
How bleak, how un-Greek, was the nature of man!
From his wigwam, if ever he ventured to roam,
There was nobody waiting to welcome him home;
For the man had been made, but the woman had not,
And earth was a highly detestable spot.
Man hated his neighbours; they met and they scowled,
They did not converse but they struggled and howled,
For man had no tact—he would ne'er take a hint,
And his notions he backed with a hatchet of flint.

So man was alone, and he wished he could see
On the earth some one like him, but fairer than he,
With locks like the red gold, a smile like the sun,
To welcome him back when his hunting was done.
And he sighed for a voice that should answer him still,
Like the affable echo he heard on the hill:
That should answer him softly and always agree,
*And oh, man reflected, how nice it would be!*
So he prayed to the gods, and they stooped to his prayer,
And they spoke to the sun on his way through the air,
And he married the echo one fortunate morn,
And woman, their beautiful daughter, was born!
The daughter of sunshine and echo she came
With a voice like a song, with a face like a flame;
With a face like a flame, and a voice like a song,
And happy was man, but it was not for long!

For weather's a painfully changeable thing,
Not always the child of the echo would sing;
And the face of the sun may be hidden with mist,
And his child can be terribly cross if she list;
And unfortunate man had to learn with surprise
That a frown's not peculiar to masculine eyes;
That the sweetest of voices can scold and can sneer,
And cannot be answered—like men—with a spear.

So man went and called to the gods in his woe,
And they answered him—'Sir, you would needs have it so:
And the thing must go on as the thing has begun,
She's immortal—your child of the echo and sun.
But we'll send you another, and fairer is she,
This maiden with locks that are flowing and free.
This maiden so gentle, so kind, and so fair,
With a flower like a star in the night of her hair.
With her eyes like the smoke that is misty and blue,
With her heart that is heavenly, tender, and true.
She will die in the night, but no need you should mourn,
You shall bury her body and thence shall be born
A weed that is green, that is fragrant and fair,
With a flower like the star in the night of her hair.
And the leaves must ye burn till they offer to you
Soft smoke, like her eyes that are misty and blue.

'And the smoke shall ye breathe and no more shall ye fret,
But the child of the echo and sun shall forget—
Shall forget all the trouble and torment she brings,
Shall bethink ye of none but delectable things;
And the sound of the wars with your brethren shall cease,
While ye smoke by the camp-fire the great pipe of peace.'
So the last state of man was by no means the worst,
The second gift softened the sting of the first.

Nor the child of the echo and sun doth he heed
When he dreams with the maid that was changed to the weed;
Though the echo be silent, the sun in a mist,
The maid is the fairest that ever was kissed;
And when tempests are over and ended the rain,
And the child of the sunshine is sunny again
He comes back, glad at heart, and again is at one
With the changeable child of the echo and sun.
Another Way

COME to me in my dreams, and then,
One saith, I shall be well again,
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Nay, come not thou in dreams, my sweet!
With shadowy robes, and silent feet,
And with the voice, and with the eyes
That greet me in a soft surprise.

Last night, last night, in dreams we met,
And how, to-day, shall I forget?
Or how, remembering, restrain
Mine incommunicable pain?

Nay, where thy land and people are,
Dwell thou remote, apart, afar,
Nor mingle with the shapes that sweep
The melancholy ways of sleep.

But if, perchance, the shadows break—
If dreams depart, if men awake,
If face to face at length we see,
Be thine the voice to welcome me.
ONCE the Muse was fair,
Once — when we were young;
Gay and debonair,
Or with pensive air;
    So she came, she sung.

Often, through the noise
    Of the running stream,
Would we hear her voice—
Hear it and rejoice;
    "Dream not 'twas a dream."

Could we see her now
    Come at a command,
Withered on her brow
Were the wreath — the bough
    Broken in her hand.
Nay, as erst the morn
  Floating far away,
More in ruth than scorn
Left her love outworn,
  Once his locks were gray.

So, for ever young,
  Ever fair, the Muse
Leaves us, who have sung
Till the lute’s unstrung;
  Doth her grace refuse.

’Tis not she, but we,
  That are weary now;
Well, howe’er it be,
Her we shall not see—
  Broken is the bough.
To Fiona

FROM the damp shieling on the draggled island
Mountains divide you, and no end of seas.
But, though your heart is genuinely Highland,
Still, you’re in luck to be away from these!

Far from the mountains where the thirsty crofter
Early and eager registers his vote,
Still drinking harder as the day grows ‘softer’,
Fiona, from these thou art happily remote.

Far from the hostels where the baffled tripper
Watches the window and contemplates the rain;
Far from the drenched decks where the oilskinned skipper
Herds the unhappy clients of Macbrayne.¹

Far from the caves where unfortunate Prince Charlie
Served as the pasture of the eager midge,
Fiona, methinks that, after dining early,
Thou art enjoying the delights of bridge.

Yes, Fiona dear, the Highlands, from a distance,
Seem a seductive subject for a lay,
But, when it rains with the usual persistence,
Fiona, perhaps you would rather stop away.

¹ The steamers of David Macbrayne would provide readiest access to the Western Isles during the tourist season.
Lines on the Inaugural meeting of The Shelley Society

"By Jove, J will; he was my father's friend!"

Thus Dr. Furnivall, in choice blank verse,
Replied when he was asked by Mr. Sweet
Sweet of the pointed and envenomed pen,
Wherewith he pricks the men who not elect
Him a Professor, as he ought to be),
'Twas thus, we say, that Furnivall replied
To the bold question asked by bitter Sweet.
"And what that question?" Briefly, it was this—
"Why do not you, who start so many things,
Societies for poets live and dead,
Why do not you a new communion found—
"Shelley Society" might be the name—
Where men might worry over Shelley’s bones?"
"By Jove, I will; he was my father's friend,"
Said Furnivall; and lo, the thing was done!

1 Included not only 'by permission' but 'at the request' of members of the Shelley Society.—Ed.
Then the fresh victim to 'inaugurate',
They called upon the Reverend Stopford Brooke.
Who, being well disposed to them, arose,
And did address them in majestic phrase,
'Forewords', as they are styled by Furnivall,
By Jove, for Shelley was his father's friend.
'A thoughtful and most temperate address'
Was Stopford Brooke's, who, as we learn with grief
From the reporter of this merry fit,
'Knocked Mr. Matthew Arnold out of time'.
Oh, somewhere, meek, unconscious Matt, that sit'st
Below Teutonic limes, somewhere thou'lt read
P the Times, how Stopford Brooke has knocked thee flat!
Then, to the joy of the assembled host,
To them arose intrepid Furnivall
(Young Mr. Shelley was his father's friend),
And proved that Matthew is a Philistine!
Oh, tell it not in Gath; oh, tell it not
Where men do congregate in Ascalon,
That Mr. Arnold tarries in their tents
Disguised, and worships Dagon e'en as they.
Such is the view of Dr. Furnivall.

Then anecdotes of Shelley were brought forth—
Old anecdotes, and such as Captain Sumph
Was wont to tell of Byron and the priest
Who grieved that he was 'not a family man'.
This was the bravest of the anecdotes,
How Shelley at the elder Furnivall’s
(For Shelley was the Doctor’s father’s friend)
Was asked one day, at tea, ‘What he would take’?
And what took Shelley but a dish of milk
(It seems he did not like it in a cup—
A dish of milk, and, butterless, a crust.
Such was the food of this superior mind,
Such the tradition and the influence
That shaped the soul of Dr. Furnivall.

What more? Why not so much as we might hope;
But Mr. Brooke—the Reverend Stopford Brooke,
He who in our religion finds romance—
Declared that Shelley was the poet-priest
Of what he calls ‘the modern Meliorism’.
What that may be we know not; but ’tis thought
To be a kind of pious Socialism,
To be a dallying with dynamite,
With Mr. Hyndman and the other gents
Who lead a mob along the streets and break
The windows, and who scare the little girls.

Then these weird figures went their several ways,
All the Society of Shelleyites.
Much have they added to the public stock
Of information about Shelley’s ways;
Much, very much, it helps us to enjoy
The *Adonais* and *Alastor*, too,
*Prometheus* and *Epipsychidion*.

Oh, happy Shelley! happy in thy friends,
And happy in the culminating chance
When Mr. Sweet inquired of Furnivall
Why he should so neglect so great a bard,
For Shelley was the Doctor's father's friend.
RICHARD III

ACT I.  SCENE I.  London: a Street.

Enter Gloster (reading The Historical Review).

Gloster.  I am a very personable man,
And did not cut my teeth ere I was born,
Still less may be described as 'half made up'.
My humpback is a myth: mine evil deeds
Were falsehoods of Archbishop Morton coined,
Paid for by Richmond, put in currency
By that detested caitiff, Thomas More.

Enter Clarence.

Gloster.  Brother, good day! Thou canst not say I did it!

Clarence.  There is a certain buzzing in my wits:
The new historians distract my mind,
Yet was I Clarence once, and bore a brain.
Gloster (aside). Wiser, perchance, if thou hadst brained a Boar!

But, hist! I am a moral character.

I ask thee, who was guilty?

Clarence. I know not, but—

Gloster. But me no buts! That butt of Malmsey wine is an exploded fable.

Clarence. Certainly.

Yet, somehow, I was fouly done to death

Unhouseled, unanointed, unannealed.

Gloster. 'Twas Richmond, 'twas false, fleeting, perjured Richmond! | Exit Clarence.

SCENE II. The Same.

To Gloster enter The Corpse of Henry VI and Lady Anne.

Lady Anne. Rest you while I lament my Henry's corpse,

While I adore my Henry's holy shade!

Gloster. I did not kill your husband; on the day

Of our late king's deplorable demise

I was not in the Tower—was out of town:

At Sandwich—Mr. Clements Markham proves—

Was I: perchance pursued the devious ball,

And in the Maiden bunker came to grief.
Or if not so, I know not what I did,
Or what foul fiend could take a man to Sandwich.

Lady Anne. Never hung poison on a fouler toad!

Gloster. Nay, hear me swear a good mouth-filling oath
That I can prove a perfect alibi.
Listen, from this 'Historical Review',
Put forth by Master Longman, in the Row,
I'll prove me sackless of that monstrous deed!

Lady Anne. A monstrous deal of sack!

Gloster. Nay, mock me not!

For Mr. Clements Markham makes it plain
That on the fatal day I was afar
From Towers of Julius, London's lasting shame.
'Tis true that Mr. Samuel Gardiner
Has put the matter in another light:
A question 'tis of dates, but what are they?
Myself am strong on Clements Markham's side;
aside Yet Mrs. Markham tells another tale!

Lady Anne. 'Samivel, a halibi.' This likes me well!

Gloster. Then, then we may consider ourselves engaged?

Lady Anne. Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee!

[Exit Lady Anne and Corpse.]
To Gloster enter King Edward, led in sick sic.

King Edward. Alas! 'twas aye my lamentable custom
To make the cold-baked meats to furnish forth
The wedding breakfast! Widows were my bane.
Still fast on one, I wooed another widow,
And all the while was wedded to another.
None knew but the archbishop: thus my sons,
These thrice unhappy children in the Tower,
Are, to speak plainly, illegitimate.
Thou wilt not slay them, Gloster?

Gloster. Fear me not!

My title, the 'Historical Review'
Assures me, is writ plain: there is no need
That I should smother children in the Tower.
'Twas Richmond did it! Mr. Clements Markham,
In spite of the Croyland Continuator,
Has made this view extremely plausible,
(aside) But Mrs. Markham tells another tale!

King Edward. Bless thee: but I feel poorly and would go.

[King Edward is led out sick.}
SCENE IV.

To Gloster enter Hastings.

Hastings. Come, lead me to the block! 'Tis falsely said
That, ere he tried me, Richard had my head!
Gloster. Exactly! The 'Historical Review'
And Mr. Clements Markham vouch for it.
Thou, Hastings, hadst due trial of thy peers;
And so, farewell, a plunger wert thou ever,
Yet could I better spare a better man!

[Hastings is led to the block.]

SCENE V.

To Gloster enter Dighton and Forrest.

Dighton. It is a very palpable relief
To learn, my Forrest, that we never smothered
(At all events, not in King Richard's time),
The most replenished, sweet work of nature,
These everlasting babes within the Tower!
Forrest. Nay; it was Henry VII who bade us smother!
Gloster. What! wed a Princess and work off her brother!

[Exeunt Dighton and Forrest.]
SCENE VI.

To Gloster enter Ghosts.

Ghost of Prince Edward.

Let me not sit upon thy soul to-morrow.
I do misdoubt me 'twas another's hand
That stabbed me in the field by Tewkesbury!

Ghost of Henry VI.

When I was mortal, my anointed body
By some one was punched full of deadly holes;
But who that puncher is who punched with care
Is, bless us all! a very different thing.

Ghosts of Rivers, Vaughan, Grey, and a Number
of Other Ghosts.

We come to offer our apologies,
And to regret that we were much misled
By rumour, painted full of fiery tongues.
'Tis true there was a lot of killing done,
And massacre made merry round the throne;
But liars were the Tudor chroniclers,
Especially the lewd Archbishop Morton.

Gloster. It was not I who did the thing ye wot of?
Ghosts. Apparently it was not! Fare ye well!

[Exeunt Ghosts.]
GLOSTER. Richard's himself again! Now to the field!
    A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!
For there's no way of getting over it,
That, after doing prodigies of valour,
Myself was fouly slain on Bosworth Field,
Unless, indeed, 'tis I was Perkin Warbeck!
A view not broached by Mr. Clements Markham,
Yet tenable, at least, in magazines,
And among modern speculations.
A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!

| Exit fighting. |

CURTAIN.
Ronsard's Grave

Ye wells, ye founts that fall
From the steep mountain wall;
That fall, and flash, and fleet
With silver feet!

Ye woods, ye streams that lave
The meadows with your wave,
Ye hills, and valleys fair,
Attend my prayer!

When heaven and fate decree
My latest hour for me;
When I must pass away
From pleasant day,

I ask that none may break
The marble for my sake,
Wishful to make more fair
My sepulchre.
Only a laurel tree
Shall shade the grave of me;
Only Apollo's bough
Shall guard me now!

Now shall I be at rest
Among the spirits blest,
The happy dead that dwell—
Where— who may tell?

The snow and wind and hail
May never there prevail,
Nor ever thunder fall,
Nor storm at all;

But always fadeless there
The woods are green and fair,
And faithful ever more
Spring to that shore!

There shall I ever hear
Alcaeus' music clear;
And—sweetest of all things—
There Sappho sings.
The Barbarous Bird-gods: A Savage Parabasis

In the *Acharn* of Aristophanes, the Bird Chorus declare that they are older than the gods, and greater benefactors of men. This idea recurs in almost all savage mythologies, and I have made the savage Bird-gods state their own case.

The birds sing

We would have you to wit, that on eggs though we sit, and are spiked on the spit, and are baked in the pan,

Birds are older by far than your ancestors are, and made love and made war ere the making of man!

For when all things were dark, not a glimmer nor spark, and the world like a barque without rudder or sail

Floated on through the night, 'twas a bird struck a light,

'twas a flash from the bright feather'd Tonatiu’s tail!

Then the hawk, with some dry wood flew up in the sky, and afar, safe and high, the hawk lit sun and moon,

1 Tonatiu, the Thunder Bird; well known to the Dacotas and Zulus.
2 The hawk, in the myth of the Galinameros of Central California, lit up the sun.
And the birds of the air they rejoiced everywhere, and they recked not of care that should come on them soon.

For the hawk, so they tell, was then known as Pundjel, and a-musing he fell at the close of the day;

Then he went on the quest, as we thought, of a nest, with some bark of the best, and a clawful of clay.

And with these did he frame two birds lacking a name, without feathers (his game was a puzzle to all);

Next around them he fluttered a-dancing, and muttered; and, lastly, he uttered a magical call:

Then the figures of clay, as they featherless lay, they leaped up, who but they, and embracing they fell;

And this was the baking of man, and his making; but now he’s forsaking his father, Pundjel!

Now these creatures of mire, they kept whining for fire, and to crown their desire who was found but the wren?

To the high heaven he came, from the sun stole he flame, and for this has a name in the memory of men?

And in India who for the soma juice flew, and to men brought it through without falter or fail?

---

1 Pundjel, the eagle hawk, is the demiurge and ‘culture-hero’ of several Australian tribes.

2 The creation of man is thus described by the Australians.

3 In Andaman, Thlinkeet, Melanesian, and other myths, a bird is the Prometheus Purphorus; in Normandy this part is played by the wren.
Why the hawk 'twas again, and great Indra to men would appear, now and then, in the shape of a quail,

While the Thlinkeets' delight is the bird of the night, the beak and the bright ebon plumage of Yehl.¹ And who for man's need brought the famed Suttung's mead? why 'tis told in the creed of the Sagamen strong,

'Twas the eagle-god who brought the drink from the blue, and gave mortals the brew that's the fountain of song.

Next, who gave men their laws?² and what reason or cause the young brave overawes when in need of a squaw,

Till he thinks it a shame to wed one of his name, and his conduct you blame if he thus breaks the law.

For you still hold it wrong if a lubra ⁴ belong to the self-same kobong that is father of you,

To take her as a bride to your ebony side; nay, you give her a wide berth; quite right of you, too.

For her father, you know, is your father, the crow, and no blessing but woe from the wedding would spring,

¹ Yehl: the raven god of the Thlinkeets.
Indra stole soma as a hawk and as a quail. For Odin's feat as a bird, see Bragi's Telling in the Younger Edda.

² Pundjel, the eagle hawk, gave Australians their marriage laws.

³ Lubra, a woman; kobong, 'totem'; or, to please Mr. Max Müller, 'otem'.
Well, these rules they were made in the wattle-gum shade, and were strictly obeyed, when the crow was the king. ¹

Thus on earth's little ball to the birds you owe all, yet
Your gratitude's small for the favours they've done,
And their feathers you pill, and you eat them at will, yes,
You plunder and kill the bright birds one by one;
There's a price on their head, and the dodo is dead, and
The moa has fled from the sight of the sun.

¹ The crow was the hawk's rival.
Pisidicé

The incident is from the Love Stories of Parthenius, who preserved fragments of a lost epic on the expedition of Achilles against Lesbos, an island allied with Troy.

THE daughter of the Lesbian king
Within her bower she watched the war;
Far off she heard the arrows ring,
The smitten harness ring afar;
And, fighting from the foremost car,
Saw one that smote where all must flee;
More fair than the Immortals are
He seemed to fair Pisidicé!

She saw—she loved him—and her heart
Before Achilles, Peleus’ son,
Threw all its guarded gates apart,
A maiden fortress lightly won!
And, ere that day of fight was done,
No more of land or faith recked she,
But joyed in her new life begun—
Her life of love, Pisidicé!
She took a gift into her hand,
   As one that had a boon to crave;
She stole across the ruined land
   Where lay the dead without a grave,
And to Achilles' hand she gave
   Her gift, the secret postern's key.
'To-morrow let me be thy slave!' 
   Moaned to her love Pisidice.

Ere dawn the Argives' clarion call
   Rang down Methymna's burning street;
They slew the sleeping warriors all,
   'They drove the women to the fleet,
Save one, that to Achilles' feet
   Clung, but, in sudden wrath, cried he:
'For her no doom but death is meet,'
   And there men stoned Pisidicé.

In havens of that haunted coast,
   Amid the myrtles of the shore,
The moon sees many a maiden ghost—
   Love's outcast now and evermore.
The silence hears the shades deplore
   Their hour of dear-bought love; but thee
The waves lull, 'neath thine olives hoar,
   'To dreamless rest, Pisidice!'
Villanelle

(To M. Joseph Boumier, Author of 'Les Villanelles')

VILLANELLE, why art thou mute?
Hath the singer ceased to sing?
Hath the Master lost his lute?

Many a pipe and scrannel flute
On the breeze their discords fling;
Villanelle, why art thou mute?

Sound of tumult and dispute,
Noise of war the echoes bring;
Hath the Master lost his lute?

Once he sang of bud and shoot
In the season of the spring;
Villanelle, why art thou mute?
Fading leaf and falling fruit
Say, 'The year is on the wing,
Hath the Master lost his lute?'

Ere the axe lie at the root,
Ere the winter come as king,
Villanelle, why art thou mute?
Hath the Master lost his lute?
Man and the Ascidian

A Morality

'THE ancestor remote of man,'
Says Darwin, 'is th' ascidian,'
A scanty sort of water-beast
That, ninety million years at least
Before gorillas came to be,
Went swimming up and down the sea.

Their ancestors the pious praise,
And like to imitate their ways;
How, then, does our first parent live,
What lesson has his life to give?

Th' ascidian tadpole, young and gay,
Doth life with one bright eye survey,
His consciousness has easy play.
He's sensitive to grief and pain,
Has tail, and spine, and bears a brain,
And everything that fits the state
Of creatures we call vertebrate.
But age comes on; with sudden shock
He sticks his head against a rock!
His tail drops off, his eye drops in,
His brain's absorbed into his skin;
He does not move, nor feel, nor know
The tidal water's ebb and flow,
But still abides, unstirred, alone,
A sucker sticking to a stone.

And we, his children, truly we
In youth are, like the tadpole, free;
And where we would we blithely go;
Have brains and hearts, and feel and know.
Then age comes on! To habit we
Affix ourselves and are not free.

Th' ascidian's rooted to a rock,
And we are bond-slaves of the clock;
Our rocks are medicine—letters—law,
From these our heads we cannot draw:
Our loves drop off, our hearts drop in,
And daily thicker grows our skin.
Ah, scarce we live, we scarcely know
The wide world's moving ebb and flow,
The clanging currents ring and shock,
But we are rooted to the rock.
And thus at ending of his span,
Blind, deaf, and indolent, does man
Revert to the ascidian.
In Tintagel

LUI.
Ah lady, lady, leave the creeping mist,
And leave the iron castle by the sea!

ELLE.
Nay, from the sea there came a ghost that kissed
My lips, and so I cannot come to thee!

LUI.
Ah lady, leave the cruel landward wind
That crusts the blighted flowers with bitter foam!

ELLE.
Nay, for his arms are cold and strong to bind,
And I must dwell with him and make my home!

LUI.
Come, for the spring is fair in Joyous Guard,
And down deep alleys sweet birds sing again.

ELLE.
But I must tarry with the winter hard,
And with the bitter memory of pain,
Although the spring be fair in Joyous Guard,
And in the gardens glad birds sing again!
Romance

M Y Love dwelt in a northern land.  
A gray tower in a forest green  
Was hers, and far on either hand  
The long wash of the waves was seen,  
And leagues on leagues of yellow sand,  
The woven forest boughs between!

And through the silver northern night  
The sunset slowly died away,  
And herds of strange deer, lily-white,  
Stole forth among the branches gray;  
About the coming of the light,  
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green  
Still girdles round that castle gray;  
I know not if the boughs between  
The white deer vanish ere the day;  
Above my love the grass is green  
My heart is colder than the clay!
'A Highly Valuable Chain of Thoughts?

Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne'er a thorn,
No man would be a funker
Of whin, or burn, or bunker.
There were no need for mashies,
The turf would ne'er be torn,
Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne'er a thorn.

Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne'er a thorn,
The big trout would not ever
Escape into the river.
No gut the salmon smashes
Would leave us all forlorn,
Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne'er a thorn.
But 'tis an unideal
Sad world in which we're born,
And things will 'go contrary'
With Martin and with Mary:
And every day the real
Comes bleakly in with morn,
And cigarettes have ashes,
And every rose a thorn.
Love the Vampire

O EΡΩΤΑΣ ὶ ΤΟΝ ΤΑΦΟ.

The level sands and gray,
Stretch leagues and leagues away,
Down to the border line of sky and foam;
A spark of sunset burns,
The gray tide-water turns,
Back, like a ghost from her forbidden home!

Here, without pyre or bier,
Light Love was buried here;
Alas, his grave was wide and deep enough.
Thrice, with averted head,
We cast dust on the dead,
And left him to his rest. An end of Love.

'No stone to roll away,
No seal of snow or clay,
Only soft dust above his wearied eyes;
But though the sudden sound
Of doom should shake the ground,
And graves give up their ghosts, he will not rise!
So each to each we said!
Ah, but to either bed
Set far apart in lands of north and south,
Love as a vampire came
With haggard eyes aflame,
And kissed us with the kisses of his mouth!

Thenceforth in dreams must we
Each other's shadow see
Wand'ring unsatisfied in empty lands;
Still the desired face
Fleets from the vain embrace,
And still the shape evades the longing hands.
'It is told of the last lovers which watched May-night in the forest, before men brought the tidings of the Gospel to this land, that they beheld no fairies, nor dwarfs, nor no such thing, but the very Venus herself, who bade them "make such cheer as they might, for", said she, "I shall live no more in these woods, nor shall ye endure to see another May time."'— Edmund Gorliot, 'Of Phantasies and Omens,' p. 149. (1573.)

W HENCE do ye come, with the dew on your hair?
From what far land are the boughs ye bear—
The blossoms and buds upon breasts and tresses—
The light burned white in your faces fair?

In a falling fane have we built our house,
With the dying gods we have held carouse,
And our lips are wan from their wild caresses,
Our hands are filled with their holy boughs.

As we crossed the lawn in the dying day
No fairy led us to meet the May,
But the very goddess loved by lovers,
In mourning raiment of green and gray.
‘She was not decked as for glee and game,
She was not veiled with the veil of flame—
The saffron veil of the bride that covers
The face that is flushed with her joy and shame.

‘On the laden branches the scent and dew
Mingled and met, and as snow to strewn
The woodland rides and the fragrant grasses,
White flowers fell as the night wind blew.

‘Tears and kisses on lips and eyes
Mingled and met amid laughter and sighs
For grief that abides, and joy that passes,
For pain that tarries and mirth that flies.

‘It chanced as the dawning grew to gray
Pale and sad on our homeward way,
With weary lips, and palled with pleasure
The goddess met us, farewell to say.’

‘Ye have made your choice, and the better part.
Ye chose,’ she said, ‘and the wiser art;
In the wild May night drank all the measure,
The perfect pleasure of heart and heart.

‘Ye shall walk no more with the May,’ she said,
‘Shall your love endure though the gods be dead?
Shall the flitting flocks, mine own, my chosen,
Sing as of old, and be happy and wed?’
Yea, they are glad as of old; but you,
Fair and fleet as the dawn or the dew,
Abide no more, for the springs are frozen,
And fled the gods that ye loved and knew.

Ye shall never know summer again like this;
Ye shall play no more with the fauns, I wis,
No more in the nymphs' and dryads' playtime
Shall echo and answer kiss and kiss.

Though the flowers in your golden hair be bright,
Your golden hair shall be waste and white
On faded brows ere another May time
Bring the spring, but no more delight.'
A Jubilee Ode

THE Illustrated London News
Beholds her jubilee:
How memory brings back the views
Of old she showed to me!

I see the pictures from afar
That pleased a child’s sick-bed—
The woodcuts of the Russian war,
The fields we daubed with red.

An unacknowledged painter, I
Improved the artist’s work—
How very blue I made the sky,
How very brown the Turk!

O pictured page! O happy age!
O combinations quaint!
An empire’s agony, the rage
Of war, were things to paint!

That old, disinterested art
Of ours has passed away;
We primitifs endure our part
In the world’s brawl to-day.
But younger children yet may list
   With penny paints to mar
The bombshell of the anarchist,
   The flames of social war.

Long is the pictured chronicle
   Of peace, of war, or mirth;
A wondrous tale the woodcuts tell
   Of changes on the earth.

Through every land goes forth her hand—
   The *Illustrated News*;
In temples of Roraima stand
   Framed fragments of her views.

Her pictures are the people’s book,
   Those the unlettered please;
And gladly on her pages look
   The Zulus and Chinese.

Whate’er stand fast, long may she last,
   Long may her works remain!
On far-off fields long may she cast
   The fertile chaff of Payn! ¹

A bard, who does not oft torment
   A somewhat faded muse
These elements of ode hath sent
   To hymn the *London News*.

¹ James Payn the novelist.
The Fortunate Islands 1

A Dream in June

In twilight of the longest day
I lingered over Lucian,
Till ere the dawn a dreamy way
My spirit found, untrod of man,
Between the green sky and the gray.

Amid the soft dusk suddenly,
More light than air I seemed to sail
Afloat upon the ocean sky;
While through the faint blue, clear and pale,
I saw the mountain clouds go by:
My barque had thought for helm and sail,
And one mist wreath for canopy.

1 *The Fortunate Islands.* This piece is a rhymed loose version of a passage in the *Vera Historia* of Lucian. The humorist was unable to resist the temptation to introduce passages of mockery, which are here omitted. Part of his description of the Isles of the Blest has a close and singular resemblance to the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. The clear River of Life and the prodigality of gold and of precious stones may especially be noticed.
Like torches on a marble floor
Reflected, so the wild stars shone
Within the abysmal hyaline;
Till the day widened more and more,
And sank to sunset, and was gone;
And then, as burning beacons shine
On summits of a mountain isle,
A light to folk on sea that fare;
So the sky’s beacons for a while
Burned in these islands of the air.

Then from a starry island set
Where one swift tide of wind there flows,
Came scent of lily and violet,
Narcissus, hyacinth, and rose,
Laurel, and myrtle buds, and vine—
So delicate is the air and fine:
And forests of all fragrant trees
Sloped seaward from the central hill,
And ever clamorous were these
With singing of glad birds; and still
Such music came as in the woods
Most lonely, consecrate to Pan,
The wind makes, in his many moods,
Upon the pipes some shepherd man,
Hangs up, in thanks for victory!
On these shall mortals play no more,
But the wind doth touch them, over and o'er,
And the wind's breath in the reeds will sigh.

Between the daylight and the dark
That island lies in silver air;
And suddenly my magic barque
  Wheeled, and ran in and grounded there;
And by me stood the sentinel
  Of them who in the island dwell.
  All smiling did he bind my hands,
  With rushes green and rosy bands;
They have no harsher bonds than these,
  The people of the pleasant lands
Within the wash of the airy seas!

Then was I to their city led:
  Now all of ivory and gold
The great walls were that garlanded
The temples in their shining fold—
  Each fane of beryl built, and each
  Girt with its grove of shadowy beech;
And all about the town, and through,
There flowed a river fed with dew,
  As sweet as roses, and as clear
  As mountain crystals pure and cold;
And with his waves that water kissed
The gleaming altars of amethyst
    That smoke with victims all the year,
And sacred are to the gods of old.

There sat three judges by the gate,
    And I was led before the Three;
And they but looked on me, and straight
    The rosy bonds fell down from me
Who, being innocent, was free;
And I might wander at my will
About that city on the hill,
    Among the happy people clad
In purple weeds of woven air,
Hued like the webs that twilight weaves
At shut of languid summer eves;
So light their raiment seemed; and glad
Was every face I looked on there!

There was no heavy heat—no cold—
    The dwellers there wax never old,
Nor wither with the waning time;
But each man keeps that age he had
When first he won the fairy clime.
The night falls never from on high,
    Nor ever burns the heat of noon;
But such soft light eternally
    Shines, as in silver dawns of June
Before the sun hath climbed the sky!
Within these pleasant streets and wide,
    The souls of heroes go and come,
Even they that fell on either side
    Beneath the walls of Ilium;
And sunlike in that shadowy isle
The face of Helen and her smile
    Makes glad the souls of them that knew
Grief for her sake a little while!
And all true Greeks and wise are there;
And with his hand upon the hair
    Of Phaedo, saw I Socrates;
About him many youths and fair,
    Hylas, Narcissus, and with these
Him whom the quoit of Phoebus slew
    By fleet Eurotas, unaware!

All these their mirth and pleasure made
Within the plain Elysian,
    The fairest meadow that may be,
With all green fragrant trees for shade
    And every scented wind to fan,
    And sweetest flowers to strew the lea.
The soft winds are their servants fleet
    To fetch them every fruit at will
    And water from the river chill;
And every bird that singeth sweet,
MISCELLANEOUS

Throstle, and merle, and nightingale
Brings blossoms from the dewy vale—
Lily, and rose, and asphodel—
With these doth each guest twine his crown
And wreathe his cup, and lay him down
Beside some friend he loveth well.

There with the shining souls I lay
When, lo, a voice that seemed to say,
In far-off haunts of memory,
Whoso doth taste the dead men's bread
Shall dwell for ever with these dead;
Nor ever shall his body lie
Beside his friends, on the gray hill
Where rains weep, and the curlews shrill
And the brown water wanders by!

1 Whoso doth taste the dead men's bread, &c. This belief that the living may visit, on occasion, the dwellings of the dead, but can never return to earth if they taste the food of the departed, is expressed in myths of worldwide distribution. Because she ate the pomegranate seed, Persephone became subject to the spell of Hades. In Apuleius, Psyche, when she visits the place of souls, is advised to abstain from food. Kohl found the myth among the Ojibbeways, Mr. Codrington among the Solomon Islanders; it occurs in Samoa, in the Finnish Kalewala (where Wainamoinen, in Pohjola, refrains from touching meat or drink), and the belief has left its mark on the mediaeval ballad of Thomas of Ercildoune. When he is in Fairy Land, the Fairy Queen supplies him with the bread and wine of earth, and will not suffer him to touch the fruits which grow 'in this countrie'. See also 'Wandering Willie' in Redgauntlet.
Then did a new soul in me wake,
The dead men's bread I feared to break,
Their fruit I would not taste indeed
Were it but a pomegranate seed.
Nay, not with these I made my choice
To dwell for ever and rejoice;
For otherwhere the river rolls
That girds the home of Christian souls,
And these my whole heart seeks are found
On otherwise enchanted ground.

Even so I put the cup away,
   The vision wavered, dimmed, and broke;
   And, nowise sorrowing, I woke;
While, gray among the ruins gray,
Chill through the dwellings of the dead,
   The dawn crept o'er the northern sea.
Then, in a moment, flushed to red,
   Flushed all the broken minster old,
And turned the shattered stones to gold,
   And wakened half the world with me!
[From Truthful James to Mr. Bret Harte.]

William Nye's Experiment

Angel's.

DEAR BRETT HART, 

I'm in tears, 

And the camp's in the dust, 

For with anguish it hears 

As poor William may bust, 

And the last of the Nyes is in danger of sleeping the sleep of the just.

No revolver it was 

Interfered with his health; 

The convivial glass 

Did not harm him by stealth; 

It was nary! He fell by a scheme which he thought would accumulate wealth!
For a Moqui came round
To the camp—Injun Joe;
And the dollars was found
In his pockets to flow;
For he played off some tricks with live snakes, as was
reckoned a competent show.

They was rattlers; a pair
   In his teeth he would hold,
And another he’d wear
   Like a scarf to enfold
His neck, with them dangerous critters as safe as the
   saint was of old.

Sez William, ‘That same
   Is as easy as wink.
I am fly to his game;
   For them rattlers, I think,
Has had all their incisors extracted.
   They’re harmless as suthin’ to drink.’

So he betted his pile
   He could handle them snakes;
And he tried, with a smile,
   And a rattler he takes,
Feeling safe as they’d somehow been doctored; but
   bless you, that sarpent awakes!’
Waken snakes! and they did
   And they rattled like mad;
For it was not a 'kid',
   But some medicine he had,
Injun Joe, for persuadin' the critters; but William's
   bit powerful bad.

So they've put him outside
   Of a bottle of rye,
And they've set him to ride
   A mustang as kin shy,
To keep up his poor circulation; and that's the last
   chance for Bill Nye.

But a near thing it is,
   And the camp's in the dust.
He's a pard as we'd miss
   If poor Bill was to bust—
If the last of the Nyes were a-sleepin' the peaceable sleep
   of the just.
From the East to the West

RETURNING from what other seas
Dost thou renew thy murmuring,
Weak tide, and hast thou aught of these
To tell—the shores where float and cling
My love, my hope, my memories?

Say, does my lady wake to note
The gold light into silver die?
Or do thy waves make lullaby,
While dreams of hers, like angels, float
Through star-sown spaces of the sky?

Ah, would such angels came to me,
That dreams of mine might speak with hers;
Nor wake the slumber of the sea
With words as low as winds that be
Awake among the gossamers!
Love's Cryptogram

[The author (if he can be so styled) awoke from a restless sleep, with the first stanza of the following piece in his mind. He has no memory of composing it, either awake or asleep. He had long known the (perhaps) Pythagorean fable of the bean-juice, but certainly never thought of applying it to an amorous correspondence! The remaining verses are the contribution of his Conscious Self!]

ELLE.

I CANNOT write, I may not write,
I dare not write to thee;
But look on the face of the moon by night,
   And my letters shalt thou see.
For every letter that lovers write,
   By their loves on the moon is seen,
If they pen their thought on the paper white,
   With the magic juice of the bean!
Lui.

'Oh, I had written this many a year,
And my letters you had read;
Had you only told me the spell, my dear,
Ere ever we twain were wed!
But I have a lady and you have a lord,
And their eyes are of the green;
And we dared not trust to the written word
Lest our long, long love be seen.'

Elle.

'Oh, every thought that your heart has thought,
Since the world came us between,
The birds of the air to my heart have brought,
With no word heard or seen.'
'Twas thus in a dream we spoke and said—
Myself and my love unseen;
But I woke and sighed on my weary bed
For the spell of the juice of the bean.
Rococo

(‘My name is also named “Played Out”.’)

When first we heard Rossetti sing,
We twanged the melancholy lyre;
We sang like this—like anything—
When first we heard Rossetti sing.
And all our song was faded spring,
And dead delight and dark desire,
When first we heard Rossetti sing,
We twanged the melancholy lyre.

(And this is how we twanged it —

The New Orpheus to his Eurydice

WHY wilt thou woo, ah strange Eurydice,
A languid laurell’d Orpheus in the shades,
For here is company of shadowy maids,
Hero, and Helen and Psamathoe:
And life is like the blossom on the tree,
And never tumult of the world invades;
The low light wanes and waxes—flowers and fades—
And sleep is sweet, and dreams suffice for me.
Go back, and seek the sunlight,' as of old
The wise ghost-mother of Odysseus said;
Here am I half content, and scarce a-cold,
But one light fits the living, one the dead;
Good-bye, be glad, forget! thou canst not hold
In thy kind arms, alas! this powerless head.

*When first we heard Rossetti sing,*
*We also wrote this kind of thing!*
The Mythologist and Psyche

O BUTTERFLY of fable, flown
From what strange chrysalis unknown
Across the empires overthrown.

Thou flittest with thy fairy wings
Above the strifes of creeds and kings,
Above the wrecks of mortal things.

Thou in thine air of endless peace
Hast seen the nations rise and cease,
Egypt and India, Rome and Greece,

And now hast come within the scope
Of those that peep, and pry, and grope:
Thou art beneath the microscope!

Art fixed within a little room
That looks on London's glare and gloom:
Yet science cannot smirch thy bloom.

But thou wilt spread thy wings on high,
A floating flower 'twixt earth and sky—
No man may break this butterfly!
YES, I bought this old lute at a 'rummaging' stall,
Where seldom do affluent customers call,
For the orderly soul it is likely to vex,
The stall which is littered and laden with wrecks;
Brown books that are commonly suffered to sleep,
With their fancies and faiths in their binding of 'sheep',
The sermons and songs that have slipped from the study,
Odd volumes, gray pamphlets, leaves musty and muddy,
Where a Buddha sits watching with orthodox grin
The religious romance that so often drops in,
And a Venus from Cyprus, a hideous affair,
With a god of the Incas is taking the air.
There’s a saint from a niche (how its profile is smashed!)
And an elegant cat-headed figure of Pasht,
There are gems—mostly false—there’s a broidered old shoe,
There are fans, calumets and a Maori patu,
And a Mexican idol, perhaps Coatliu!
There's a bat that was played with when Mynn was a boy,
There's a racquet—unstrung—and an African toy,
There's a shepherdess (Chelsea), a broken Bow cup,
And a sword that was made e'er our swords doubled up;
There are portraits of ladies that simper and stare,
And our grandfathers' fathers accounted them fair.

In brief, 'tis a very disorderly stall,
And the owner's half blind, and the prices are small;
And it's just three and ninepence I gave for the lute
Which for many a year had been harmlessly mute.
But I've strung it, and patched it, and play'd it, by times,
And rhymed to the music and mused on the rhymes.
It's a worm-eaten piece, and remember it must
The wrecks it has dwelt with, the gods deep in dust,
The bats out of service, the poems unread,
The show in the streets, and the snows on my head.
It is jangled, the lute, and if nobody cares
For its windy old moans upon obsolete airs—
For the accent it caught, which has clung to it yet,
From my Titmarsh's ramshackle wheezy spinet—
Then, methinks, I shall lay it again on the shelf
Where the owner looks forward to sleeping himself,
In uncommon fine company, too, and I trust
'There is very snug lying' up there in the dust.
To Lord Byron

MY Lord,
Do you remember how Leigh Hunt
Enraged you once by writing My dear Byron?
Books have their fates—as mortals have who punt—
And yours have entered on an age of iron.
Critics there be who think your satire blunt—
Your pathos, fudge; such perils must environ
Poets who in their time were quite the rage,
Though now there’s not a soul to turn their page.

Yes, there is much dispute about your worth,
And much is said which you might like to know
By modern poets here upon the earth,
Where poets live, and love each other so;
And, in Elysium, it may move your mirth
To hear of bards that pitch your praises low,
Though there be some that for your credit stickle,
As—glorious Mat—which and not inglorious Nichol.

This, of course, refers to Matthew Arnold.
John Nichol, the Glasgow Professor, and author of Hannibal.
This kind of writing is my pet aversion;  
I hate the slang, I hate the personalities;  
I loathe the aimless, reckless, loose dispersion  
Of every rhyme that in the singer's wallet is;  
I hate it as you hated the *Excursion*.  
But, while no man a hero to his valet is,  
The hero's still the model; I indite  
The kind of rhymes that Byron oft would write.

There's a Swiss critic whom I cannot rhyme to,  
One Scherer, dry as sawdust, grim and prim;  
Of him there's much to say, if I had time to  
Concern myself in any wise with *him*.  
He seems to hate the heights he cannot climb to,  
He thinks your poetry a coxcomb's whim;  
A good deal of his sawdust he has spilt on  
Shakespeare and Moliere and you and Milton.

Ay, much his temper is like Vivien's mood,  
Which found not Galahad pure nor Lancelot brave;  
Cold as a hailstorm on an April wood,  
He buries poets in an icy grave;  
His Essays—he of the Genevan hood!  
Nothing so fine, but better doth he crave.  
So stupid and so solemn in his spite  
He dares to print that Moliere could not write.
Enough of these excursions! I was saying
That half our English Bards are turned Reviewers,
And Arnold was discussing and assaying
The weight and value of that work of yours,
Examining and testing it and weighing;
And proved, the gems are pure, the gold endures.
While Swinburne cries with an exceeding joy,
The stones are paste, and half the gold, alloy.

In Byron, Arnold finds the greatest force,
Poetic, in this later age of ours;
His song, a torrent from a mountain source,
Clear as the crystal, singing with the showers,
Sweeps to the sea in unrestricted course
Through banks o'erhung with rocks and sweet with flowers;
None of your brooks that modestly meander,
But swift as Awe along the Pass of Brander.

And when our century has climbed its crest,
And backward gazes o'er the plains of time,
And counts its harvest, yours is still the best,
The richest garner in the field of rhyme.
(The metaphoric mixture, 'tis contest,
Is all my own, and is not quite sublime.
But fame's not yours alone; you must divide all
The plums and pudding with the bard of Rydal!
Wordsworth and Byron, these the lordly names
And these the gods to whom most incense burns
'Absurd'! cried Swinburne, and in anger flames,
And in an Æschylean fury spurns
With impious foot your altar, and exclaims,
And wreathes his laurels on the golden urns
Where Coleridge's and Shelley's ashes lie,
Deaf to the din and heedless of the cry.

For Byron (Swinburne shouts) has never woven
One honest thread of life within his song;
As Offenbach is to divine Beethoven
So Byron is to Shelley (*this* is strong!),
And on Parnassus' peak, divinely cloven,
He may not stand, or stands by cruel wrong;
For Byron's rank (the examiner has reckoned)
Is in the third class or a feeble second.

'A Bernesque poet' at the very most,
And 'never earnest save in politics';
The Pegasus that he was wont to boast
A blundering, floundering hackney, full of tricks,
A beast that must be driven to the post
By whips and spurs and oaths and kicks and sticks,
A gasping, ranting, broken-winded brute,
That any judge of Pegasister would shoot;
In sooth, a half-bred Pegasus, and far gone
   In spavin, curb, and half a hundred woes;
And Byron's style is 'jolter-headed jargon';
   His verse is 'only bearable in prose'.
So living poets write of those that are gone,
   And o'er the eagle thus the bantam crows;
And Swinburne ends where Verisopht began,
By owning you 'a very clever man'.

Or rather does not end: he still must utter
   A quantity of the unkindest things.
Ah! were you here, I marvel, would you flutter
   O'er such a foe the tempest of your wings?
'Tis 'rant and cant and glare and splash and splutter'
   That rend the modest air when Byron sings.
There Swinburne stops: a critic rather fiery.

Animis cælestibus tanta ne iræ?

But whether he or Arnold in the right is,
   Long is the argument, the quarrel long;
Non nobis est to settle tantas lites;
   No poet I, to judge of right or wrong:
But of all things I always think a fight is
   The most unpleasant in the lists of song;
When Marsyas of old was flayed, Apollo
Set an example which we need not follow.
The fashion changes! Maidens do not wear,
As once they wore, in necklaces and lockets
A curl ambrosial of Lord Byron's hair;
'Don Juan' is not always in our pockets—
Nay, a New Writer's readers do not care
Much for your verse, but are inclined to mock its
Manners and morals. Ay, and most young ladies
To yours prefer the 'Epic' called 'of Hades'!

I do not blame them; I'm inclined to think
That with the reigning taste 'tis vain to quarrel;
And Burns might teach his votaries to drink,
And Byron never meant to make them moral.
You yet have lovers true, who will not shrink
From lauding you and giving you the laurel;
The Germans too, those men of blood and iron,
Of all our poets chiefly swear by Byron.

Farewell, thou Titan fairer than the gods!
Farewell, farewell, thou swift and lively spirit,
Thou splendid warrior with the world at odds,
Unpraised, unpraisable, beyond thy merit;
Chased, like Orestes, by the Furies' rods,
Like him at length thy peace dost thou inherit;
Beholding whom, men think how fairer far
Than all the steadfast stars the wandering star'
The Friend of Man

By a Poet

The dog they style 'The Friend of Man',
I've read it in the prose of Cobbe—
Miss Frances Power—since youth began
I 'never loved' a black and tan,
Yet style me not, with hasty ban,
A snob!

The poets are his friends, they say,
And Byron wrote his epitaph,
As kind, courageous, simple, gay,
Last at the feast, first at the fray:
At Boatswain and at Poor Dog Tray
I laugh!

We meet him first in Homer's verse,
'The dog by the Ægean seas;
He barks at strangers, ay, and worse,
He bites! We learn, in language terse,
That even Argos has the curse
Of fleas!'"
The Temple of Bosh

To the Temple of Bosh in a vision
Was I led in a vaporous land;
Common sense is a butt and derision,
Where the altars of Fantasy stand.
There the Theories dwell that have faded
And the notions that never would wash;
They abide, unimpeached, uninvaded,
In the Temple of Bosh!

There the wheels of Perpetual Motion
Make a musical whirr in the air,
The philosophers there have a notion
That the circle is easy to square;
There the flatt’ners of earth are deficient,
And the Tribes that were lost, they are found;
And the arkite ideas of Bryant
Do greatly abound!
The believers in Home and in Slade'll
Be welcomed as children of grace;
And there's the original cradle
That rocked all the Aryan race.
And hypotheses, lunar and solar,
Of myth, go about and about:
And nobody deems that the whole are
A matter of doubt!

There the spelling is purely phonetic;
Vaccination's entirely forbid;
And the light of the Remnant æsthetic
No more 'neath a bushel is hid.
As 'no remedy' force is suspended
Human life is not worth a golosh—
Let us end, lest our days should be ended
In the Temple of Bosh!
The Member for Crete

EPIMENIDES noted—'tis cited by Paul—
That 'The Cretans are liars, for ever and all'.
If the classical island were blessed with a seat,
Can you guess whom they'd choose as the Member for Crete?

Oh, many would start for so goodly a stake,
Oh, many would run for the seat—and 'the cake';
Munchausen and Mendez would gaily compete,
But they'd not have a chance with the Caucus in Crete!

Ananias is gifted, the Serpent is glib,
They are both of them lenient to fable and fib;
But, like Bannerman, both have been once 'indiscreet'—
Been found out—and they cannot be Members for Crete!

No! the Member must talk with so noble an air
That a perjury comes from his lips like a prayer;
And his words, day by day, he must gallantly eat,
And appear to enjoy it—the Member for Crete!
In a proud indignation the man must excel,
In a voice like a trumpet must charges repel,
And 'I never said one of the words you repeat'
He must say—though he said them—the Member for Crete!

But it seems, and I note it with poignant regret,
That Crete has no chance for a deputy yet;
For the island is chained at the Ottoman's feet,
And they are not electing a Member for Crete!

Epimenides deemed—it's acknowledged by all—
That truth, on the Cretans, would commonly pall;
If the beautiful island were graced with a seat,
We could spare it a choice of a Member for Crete!
Chinook and Chinok

CHINOOK and Chinok were magicians of merit
Who each of them kept a familiar spirit;
They lived, we should tell you, a long while ago,
Between the Red Men and the wild Eskimo;
And the feats of the common magicians they'd mock,
Of the noisy Pow-wow, and the dark Angekok,
But the best of good friends were Chinook and Chinok!

It was nothing to either to fly in the air,
To float like a fish, or to climb like a bear.
It was nothing to either to change by a wish,
His foes into fowls, and his friends into fish!
Thought Chinook, 'I shall ask old Chinok to a feast,
And charm him, for fun, to the shape of a beast,
And when I have laughed at his fright till I'm black,
Why—dear old Chinok! I will alter him back'.
So he sent to Chinok, and he asked him to dine.
Thought Chinok to himself, 'I've an artful design,
For I'll change old Chinook to some sort of beast,
And I'll soon charm him back at the end of the feast!'
So they met, and their medicine-bags laid on the shelf;
But each had a powder he kept to himself—
A powder for making his friend look absurd
By changing him into a beast or a bird;
While each in his medicine-bag stored up another,
By which he'd restore his old shape to his brother.

Then both, when they settled serenely to eat,
Dropped a pinch of the powder unseen on the meat;
And Chinook with a grin, began making his mock:
‘Why, you’re changing’, he cried, ‘to a badger, Chinok!’
And Chinok, who felt rather uneasy, cried ‘Look,
You are changing yourself to a toad, my Chinook!’

Then each of them longed to return to himself,
But the bags with the powders were high on the shelf;
And the badger can’t climb, and the toad could not hop
To the shelf where the medicine-bags lay on the top;
So the pair could not reach them by hook or by crook,
And a badger and toad are Chinok and Chinook!

Yes, a toad and a badger those worthies remain,
And the moral of all is uncommonly plain,
That good luck never comes to a person who pokes
At a host or a guest his dull practical jokes!
SUMMER'S ENDING

THE flags below the shadowy fern
Shine like spears between sun and sea;
The tide and the summer begin to turn,
And ah, for hearts, for hearts that yearn,
For fires of autumn that catch and burn,
For love gone out between thee and me.

The wind is up, and the weather broken,
Blue seas, blue eyes, are grieved and gray;
Listen, the word that the wind has spoken,
Listen, the sound of the sea—a token
That summer's over, and troths are broken—
That loves depart as the hours decay.

A love has passed to the loves passed over;
A month has fled to the months gone by;
And none may follow, and none recover
July and June, and never a lover
May stay the wings of the loves that hover,
As fleet as the light in a sunset sky.
Matrimony

Matrimony—Advertiser would like to hear from well-educated Protestant lady, under thirty, fair, with view to above, who would have no objection to work Remington type-writer, at home. Enclose photo. T. 66. This Office. (Our newspaper.)

T. 99 would gladly hear From one whose years are few—
A maid whose doctrines are severe,
   Of Presbyterian blue;
Also—with view to the above—
   Her photo he would see,
And trusts that she may live and love
   His Protestant to be!
But ere the sacred rites are done
   And by no priest of Rome
He'd ask, if she a Remington
   Type-writer works— at home?
If she have no objections to
This task, and if her hair—
In keeping with her eyes of blue—
Be delicately fair;
Ah, then, let her a photo send
Of all her charms divine,
To him who rests her faithful friend,
Her own T. 99.
Ye Ministers of England

Ye Ministers of England
Who pare the native cheese,
Who care more for the Caucus than
Our safety on the seas;
Your old excuses launch again
Ye forged long, long ago,
As ye prate through debate
Of the things we must not know—
Of the questions about ships and forts
We must not ‘want to know’.

Britannia does need bulwarks
And towers along the steep;
She’s scant of powder, ships and men;
Her rulers are asleep;
The thunder from her phantom fleet
The French can overcrow
With thy might, Melinite,
While the stormy tempests blow—
While the battle rages, short and sharp,
And the stormy tempests blow.
MISCELLANEOUS

The meteor flag of England
May yet terrific burn
Above the ruin of her trade
The ashes of her urn.

Then, then, ye bold officials,
Perchance you'ill come to know
The hate of the State
In an hour of overthrow,
When a ruined people turn in wrath
On you that wrought their woe.
A Dialogue

LUI.

OH, have you found the Fount of Youth,
Or have you faced the Fire of Kôr?
Or whence the form, the eyes, the mouth,
The voice, the grace we praised of yore?
Ah, lightly must the years have sped—
The long, the labour-laden years—
That cast no snows upon your head,
Nor dim your eyes with any tears!
And gently must the heart have beat,
That, after many days, can send
So soft, so kind a blush to greet
The advent of so old a friend.

ELLE.

Another tale doth it repeat,
My mirror; and it tells me true!
But time, the thief of all things sweet,
Has failed to steal one grace from you.
One touch of youth he cannot steal,
    One trait there is he leaves you yet—
The boyish loyalty, the leal
    Absurd, impossible regret!
*These* are the magic: these restore
    A phantom of the April prime,
Show you the face you liked of yore,
    And give me back the thefts of time!
On Calais Sands

On Calais Sands the gray began,
Then rosy red above the gray,
The morn with many a scarlet van
Leap'd, and the world was glad with May!
The little waves along the bay
Broke white upon the shelving strands;
The sea-mews flitted white as they
On Calais Sands.

On Calais Sands must man with man
Wash honour clean in blood to-day;
On spaces wet from waters wan
How white the flashing rapiers play—
Parry, riposte! and lunge! The fray
Shifts for a while, then mournful stands
The victor: life ebbs fast away
On Calais Sands.
On Calais Sands a little space
Of silence; then the splash and spray,
The sound of eager waves that ran
To kiss the perfumed locks astray,
To touch those lips that ne'er said 'Nay'—
To dally with the helpless hands;
Till the deep sea in silence lay
On Calais Sands.

Between the lilac and the may
She waits her love from alien lands;
Her love is colder than the clay
On Calais Sands.
An Old Prayer

My prayer an old prayer borroweth
Of ancient love and memory—

Do thou farewell, till eul and death,
That come to all men, come to thee. 

Gently as winter's early breath,
Scarce felt, what time the swallows flee
To lands whereof no man knoweth
Of summer, over land and sea;

So with thy soul may summer be,
Even as the ancient singer saith,

Do thou farewell, till eul and death,
That come to all men, come to thee.
Plotinus, the Greek philosopher, had a certain proper mode of ecstasy, whereby, as Porphyry saith, his soul, becoming free from his deathly flesh, was made one with the Spirit that is in the world.

A LAS, the path is lost! we cannot leave
Our bright, our clouded life, and pass away
As through strewn clouds that stain the quiet eve,
To heights remoter of the purer day.
The soul may not, returning whence she came,
Bathe herself deep in being, and forget
The joys that fever, and the cares that fret,
Made once more one with the eternal flame
That breathes in all things ever more the same.
She would be young again, thus drinking deep
Of her old life; and this has been, men say,
But this we know not, who have only sleep
To soothe us—sleep more terrible than day—
Where dead delights, and fair lost faces stray,
To make us weary at our wakening;
And of that long-lost path to the Divine
We dream, as some Greek shepherd erst might sing,
Half credulous, of easy Proserpine,
And of the lands that lie 'beneath the day's decline'.
From Omar Khayyám

Rhymed from the prose version of
Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy

The paradise they bid us fast to win
Hath wine and women; is it then a sin
To live as we shall live in paradise,
And make a heaven of earth, ere heaven begin?

The wise may search the world from end to end,
From dusty nook to dusty nook, my friend,
And nothing better find than girls and wine,
Of all the things they neither make nor mend.

Nay, listen thou who, walking on life's way,
Hast seen no lovelock of thy love's grow gray—
Listen, and love thy life, and let the wheel
Of heaven go spinning its own wilful way.

Man is a flagon, and his soul the wine,
Man is a lamp, wherein the soul doth shine;
Man is a shaken reed, wherein that wind,
The soul, doth ever rustle and repine.
Each morn I say, to-night I will repent;
Repent! and each night go the way I went—
The way of wine; but now that reigns the rose,
Lord of repentance, rage not, but relent.

I wish to drink of wine—so deep, so deep—
The scent of wine my sepulchre shall steep,
And they, the revellers by Omar's tomb,
Shall breathe it, and in wine shall fall asleep.

Before the rent walls of a ruined town
Lay the king's skull, whereby a bird flew down;
'And where', he sang, 'is all thy clash of arms?
Where the sonorous trumps of thy renown?'
Disdainful Diaphenia

THERE is no venom in the rose
That any bee should shrink from it;
No poison from the lily flows,
She hath not a disdainful wit;
But thou, that rose and lily art,
Thy tongue doth poison Cupid’s dart!

Nature herself to deadly flowers
Refuseth beauty, lest the vain
Insects that hum through August hours
With beauty should suck in their bane;
But thou, as rose or lily fair,
Art circled with envenomed air!

Like Progne didst thou lose thy tongue,
Thy lovers might adore and live;
Like that witch Circe, oft besung,
Thou hast dear gifts, if thou wouldst give;
But since thou hast a wicked wit,
Thy lovers fade, or flee from it.
Celia's Eyes

Pastiche

Tell me not that babies dwell
In the deeps of Celia's eyes;
Cupid in each hazel well
Scans his beauties with surprise,
And would, like Narcissus, drown
In my Celia's eyes of brown.

Tell me not that any goes
Safe by that enchanted place;
Eros dwells with Anteros
In the garden of her face,
Where like friends who late were foes
Meet the white and crimson rose.
The Daughters of Cecrops

It is a plausible conjecture that the three archaic statues of women discovered in the soil of the Acropolis, near the Erechtheum, represent Aglaurus, Erse and Pandrosus, daughters of Cecrops, the serpent king of mythical Athens. They are in the archaic style of Greek art before the Persian war, and may well have been buried when, at the command of the Delphian Oracle, the Athenians deserted their city, sought their 'wooden walls' and defeated Xerxes at Salamis.

'Go forth, go forth,' the Pythia said,
  'Vex me no more, but flee afar
The fire, the sword, the death, the dread,
  That sweep behind the Syrian car.
Lo! blood drips from the temple wall,
The end is nigh, the end of all!'

The voice from Delphi boded woe;
  The sacred serpent did forsake
His ancient haunts, and would forgo
  The proffer of the honey-cake;
While, men's hearts failing them for fear,
They watched the death of Greece draw near.
The Great King's will—an eastern wind—
Black storms of men before him drave
Cloud upon cloud, with clouds behind,
And every soul of them a slave,
And one hope moving one and all—
To see the last free people fall!

Then ere the warriors took the sea
Men did conceal their holy things,
Their ancient gods that had been free,
And might not brook the breath of kings;
And statues three they buried thus—
Aglaurus, Erse, Pandrosus.

The daughters of the Serpent King
They laid them by Erechtheus' shrine,
In mother-earth; and sorrowing
Betook them to their walls of pine,
And fought at Salamis, and freed
Their land, their gods, and smote the Mede.

Perchance at Salamis they fell,
'The men who knew the secret spot
Where Cecrops' marble daughters dwell,
Forsaken and remembered not.
Howe'er it chanced, in earth they lay
Unknown, unworshipped till to-day.
And twice a thousand years have sped,
And Greece, that was enslaved, is free;
Though her old fanes are fallen—fled
The goddess of the Ægidae;
But these three marble maidens dwell
Unharmed, beside Athéné’s well!

As new arisen they stand to-day,
Fresh from the hand of Canochus;
The re-arisen Hellas may
Defy the lapse of ages thus;
In time’s despite serenely fair,
A marvel in Athenian air!

The laurel of the god of old
Was proof against the thunderstroke.
On laurel’d Hellas Persia rolled
In thunder, and in spray she broke;
Even so this present tyranny
Must break, and leave serener sky!
The Restoration of Romance

1 To H. R. H., R. L. S., A. C. D., and S. W.

King ROMANCE was wounded deep,
All his knights were dead and gone,
All his court was fallen on sleep,
In a vale of Avalon!
Nay, men said, he will not come,
Any night or any morn.
Nay, his puissant voice is dumb,
Silent his enchanted horn!

King Romance was forfeited,
Banished from his royal home,
With a price upon his head,
Driven with sylvan folk to roam.
King Romance is fallen, banned,
Cried his foeman overbold,
Broken is the wizard wand,
All the stories have been told!

1 H. Rider Haggard, Robert Louis Stevenson, A. Conan Doyle, Stanley Weyman.
Then you came from south and north—
    From Tugela, from the Tweed;
Blazoned his achievements forth,
    King Romance is come indeed!
All his foes are overthrown,
    All their wares cast out in scorn,
King Romance hath won his own,
    And the lands where he was born!

Marsac at adventure rides,
    Felon men meet felon scathe;
Micah Clarke is taking sides
    For King Monmouth and the Faith;
For a cause or for a lass
    Men are willing to be slain,
And the dungeons of the Bass
    Hold a prisoner again.

King Romance with wand of gold
    Sways the realms he ruled of yore—
Hills Dalgetty roamed of old,
    Valleys of enchanted Kôr:
Waves his sceptre o'er the isles,
    Claims the pirates' treasuries,
Through innumerable miles
    Of the siren-haunted seas.
Elfin folk of coast and cave,
    Laud him in the woven dance;
All the tribes of wold and wave
    Bow the knee to King Romance!
Wand'ring voices Chaucer knew
    On the mountain and the main,
Cry the haunted forest through,
    *King Romance has come again!*
Boat Song

A DRIFT, with starlit skies above,
   With starlit seas below,
We move with all the suns that move,
   With all the seas that flow:
For, bond or free, earth, sky, and sea,
   Wheel with one central will,
And thy heart drifteth on to me,
   And only time stands still.

Between two shores of death we drift,
   Behind are things forgot;
Before, the tide is racing swift
   To shores man knoweth not.
Above, the sky is far and cold;
   Below, the moaning sea
Sweeps o'er the loves that were of old,
   But thou, Love, love thou me.
Ah, lonely are the ocean ways,
And dangerous the deep,
And frail the fairy barque that strays
Above the seas asleep.
Ah, toil no more with helm or oar,
We drift, or bond or free;
On yon far shore the breakers roar,
But thou, Love, love thou me!
Aesop

He sat among the woods, he heard
The sylvan merriment: he saw
The pranks of butterfly and bird,
The humours of the ape, the daw.

And in the lion or the frog,
In all the life of moor and fen,
In ass and peacock, stork and dog,
He read similitudes of men.

‘Of these, from these’, he cried, ‘we come;
Our hearts, our brains descend from these.’
And lo! the beasts no more were dumb,
But answered out of brakes and trees:

‘Not ours,’ they cried; ‘Degenerate,
If ours at all,’ they cried again,
‘Ye fools, who war with God and Fate,
Who strive and toil—strange race of men.'
For we are neither bond nor free,
   For we have neither slaves nor kings;
But near to Nature's heart are we,
   And conscious of her secret things.

Content are we to fall asleep,
   And well content to wake no more;
We do not laugh, we do not weep,
   Nor look behind us and before;

But were there cause for moan or mirth,
   'Tis we, not you, should sigh or scorn,
O latest children of the earth,
   Most childish children earth has borne!

They spoke, but that misshapen slave
   Told never of the thing he heard,
And unto men their portraits gave
   In likenesses of beast and bird!
Les Roses de Sâdi

This morning I vowed I would bring thee my roses,
They were thrust in the band that my bodice encloses;
But the breast-knots were broken, the roses went free.

The breast-knots were broken; the roses together
Floated forth on the wings of the wind and the weather,
And they drifted afar down the streams of the sea.

And the sea was as red as when sunset uncloses;
But my raiment is sweet from the scent of the roses,
Thou shalt know, love, how fragrant a memory can be.
Central American Antiquities

In South Kensington Museum

'OUTH and crabbed age
Cannot live together;'
So they say.

On this little page
See you when and whether
That they may.

Age was very old—
Stones from Chichimec
Hardly wrung;

Youth had hair of gold
Knotted on her neck—
Fair and young!

Age was carved with odd
Slaves, and priests that slew them—
God and beast;
Man and beast and god—
    There she sat and drew them,
        King and priest!
There she sat and drew
    Many a monstrous head
        And antique;
Horrors from Peru—
    *Huacas* doubly dead,
        Dead cacique!
Ere Pizarro came
    These were lords of men
        Long ago;
Gods without a name,
    Born or how or when,
        None may know!
Now from Yucatan
    These doth science bear
        Over seas;
And methinks a man
    Finds youth doubly fair,
        Sketching these!
Tall Salmacis

WERE an apple-tree a pine,
Tall and slim and softly swaying,
Then her beauty were like thine,
Salmacis, when bouned a Maying,
Tall as any poplar tree,
Sweet as apple-blossoms be!

Had the Amazonian queen
  Seen thee ’midst thy maiden peers,
Thou the coronel hadst been
  Of that lady’s grenadiers;
Troy had never mourned her fall,
With thine axe to guard her wall.

As Penthesilea brave
  Is the maiden (in her dreams);
Ilium she well might save,
  Though Achilles’ armour gleams
’Midst the Greeks; all vain it is,
’Gainst the glance of Salmacis!
The New Blondel

O ma Reine!

ALTHOUGH the minstrel's lost you long,
Although for bread the minstrel sings,
Ah, still for you he pipes the song,
And thrums upon the crazy strings!

As Blondel sang by cot and hall,
Through town and stream and forest passed,
And found, at length, the dungeon wall,
And freed the Lion-heart at last—

So must your hapless minstrel fare,
By hill and hollow violing;
He flings a ditty on the air,
He wonders if you hear him sing!

For in some castle you must dwell
Of this wide land he wanders through—
In palace, tower, or cloistered cell—
He knows not; but he sings to you!
The wind may blow it to your ear,
   And you, perchance, may understand;
But from your lattice, though you hear,
   He knows you will not wave a hand.

Your eyes upon the page may fall,
   More like the page will miss your eyes;
You may be listening after all,
   So goes he singing till he dies.
**The Promise of Helen**

WHOM hast thou longed for most,
   True love of mine?
Whom hast thou loved and lost?
   Lo, she is thine!

She that another wed
   Breaks from her vow;
She that hath long been dead
   Wakes for thee now.

Dreams haunt the hapless bed,
   Ghosts haunt the night;
Life crowns her living head,
   Love and delight.

Nay, not a dream nor ghost,
   Nay, but divine,
She that was loved and lost
   Waits to be thine!
Rhyme of Rhymes

Wild on the mountain peak the wind
Repeats its old refrain,
Like ghosts of mortals who have sinned,
And fain would sin again.

For 'wind' I do not rhyme to 'mind',
Like many mortal men,
'Again' (when one reflects) 'twere kind
To rhyme as if 'agen'.

I never met a single soul
Who spoke of 'wind' as 'wined';
And yet we use it, on the whole,
To rhyme to 'find' and 'blind'.

We say, 'Now don't do that agen',
When people give us pain;
In poetry, nine times in ten,
It rhymes to 'Spain' or 'Dane'.

Oh, which is wrong or which is right?
   Oh, which are right or wrong?
The sounds in prose familiar, quite,
   Or those we meet in song?

To hold that 'love' can rhyme to 'prove'
   Requires some force of will;
Yet in the ancient lyric groove
   We meet them rhyming still.

This was our learned fathers' wont
   In prehistoric times,
We follow it, or if we don't,
   We oft run short of rhymes.
Ballad of the (School-Board) Fleet

Which my name is Stoker Bill,
And a pleasant post I fill,
And the care the ladies take of me is clipping;
And they've made me pretty snug
With a blooming Persian rug
In the Ladies' Model School-board Training Shipping!

There's my Whistler etchings, there,
As are quite beyond compare,
And a portrait of Miss Connie Gilchrist skipping;
From such art we all expect
Quite a softening effect,
In the Ladies' new Aesthetic Training Shipping.

And my beer comes in a mug—
Such a rare old Rhodian jug!
And here I sits aesthetically sipping;
And I drinks my grog or ale
On a chair by Chippendale—
We've no others in our Model Training Shipping.
There's our first Liftenant, too,
Is a fine old (China) Blue,
And you do not very often catch him tripping
   At a monogram or mark,
   But no more than Noah's ark,
Does he know the way to manage this here Shipping.

   But the boys! the boys, they stands
   With white lilies in their hands,
And they do not know the meaning of a whipping;
   For the whole delightful ship is
   Like a dream of Lippo Lippi's,
More than what you mostly see in modern Shipping.

   Well, some coves they cuts up rough,
   And they call æsthetics stuff,
And they says as we've no business to keep dipping
   In the rates; but ladies likes it,
   And our flag we never strikes it;
Bless old England's new Æsthetic Training Shipping!
The Philanthropist

POMONA Road and Gardens, N.,
Were pure as they were fair;
In other districts much I fear
That vulgar language shocks the ear;
But bawling wives or noisy men
Were never heard of there.

No burglar fixed his dread abode
In that secure retreat;
There were no public-houses nigh,
But chapels low and churches high;
You might have thought Pomona Road
A quite ideal beat!

Yet that was not at all the view
Taken by B. 13.
That active and intelligent
Policeman deemed that he was meant
Profound detective deeds to do,
And that repose was mean.
Now there was nothing to detect
Pomona Road along;
None faked a cry, nor cracked a crib,
Nor prigged a wipe, nor told a fib;
Minds cultivated and select
Slip rarely into wrong!

Thus bored to desolation went
The peeler on his beat;
He knew not love, he did not care,
If love be born on mountains bare;
Nay, crime to punish or prevent,
Was more than dalliance sweet!

The weary wanderer, day by day,
Was marked by Howard Fry—
A neighbouring philanthropist,
Who saw what that policeman missed—
A sympathetic 'Well-a-day'
He'd moan, and pipe his eye.

'What can I do', asked Howard Fry,
'To soothe that brother's pain?'
His glance when first we met was keen,
Most martial and erect his mien'
(What mien may mean, I know not I)
'But he must joy again.'
'I'll start on a career of crime, I will,' said Howard Fry; He spake and acted! deeds of bale (With which I do not stain my tale) He wrought like mad, time after time, Yet wrought them blushfully.

And now when 'buses night by night Were stopped, conductors slain, When youths and men, and maids unwed, Were stabbed or knocked upon the head, Then B. 13 grew sternly bright, And was himself again!

Pomona Road and Gardens, N., Are now a name of fear; Commercial travellers flee in haste, Revolvers girt about the waist Are worn by city gentlemen Who have their mansions near.

But B. 13 elated goes, Detection in his eye; While Howard Fry does deeds of bale (With which I do not stain my tale) To lighten that policeman's woes, But does them blushfully.
MORAL

Such is Philanthropy, my friends,
Too often such her plan,
She shoots, and stabs, and robs, and flings
Bombs and all sorts of horrid things.
Ah, not to serve her private ends,
But for the good of Man!
On an Expensive Volume of Verse

They were scribbled in sketch books and fly books,
In lectures, on lochs, by the seas;
And wherefore do people who buy books
Go purchasing these?

A scholar was I, in the way to
Be idle with pencil and pen,
And I rhymed—while the master read Plato—
Of Phæacian men.

When the Ettrick was sullenly frozen
With snows on the hills and the plain,
The tune for my singing was chosen
Of 'The Sirens Again'.

On ladies that never existed
(Or never in space and in time)
I founded my fancies, and twisted
The strands of a rhyme.

It was evil example that brought me
To rhyme, and to run to the Row,
And Swinburne and Tennyson taught me
Whatever I know.
WHAT if we call it fifty years! 'Tis steep!
To climb so high a gradient? Prate of guides?
Are we not roped? The danger? Nay, the Turf,
No less nor more than mountain peaks, my friend,
Hears talk of Roping—but the Jubilee!
Nay, there you have me: old Francesco once
This was in Milan, in Visconti's time,
Our wild Visconti, with one lip askance,
And beard tongue-twisted in the nostril's nook:
Parlous enough—these times—what? 'So are ours'? 
Or any times, i'f eggs, to him who thinks—
Well 'twas in spring 'the frolic myrtle trees
There gendered the grave olive stocks': you cry
'A miracle'!—Sordello writeth thus—
Believe me that indeed 'twas thus, and he,
Francesco, you are with me? Well, there's gloom

1 Robert Browning.
No less than gladness in your fifty years,
'And so', said he, 'to supper as we may.'
'Voltairean'? So you take it; but 'tis late,
And dinner seven, sharp, at Primrose Hill.
The Poet and the Jubilee

Poscimur!

By A. D.¹

A BIRTHDAY Ode for Meg or Nan,
A Rhyme for Lady Flora's Fan,
A Verse on Smut, who's gone astray—
These Things are in the Poet's way;
At Home with praise of Julia's Lace,
Or Delia's Ankles, Rose's Face,
But 'Something overparted' He,
When asked to rhyme the Jubilee!

He therefore turns, the Poet wary,
And thumbs his Carmen Seculare,
To Phoebus and to Dian prays,
Who tune Men's Lyres of Holidays;
He reads of the Sibylline Shades,
Of Stainless Boys and chosen Maids.
He turns, and reads the other Page,
Of docile Youth, and placid Age,

¹ Austin Dobson.
Then sings how, in this golden year
\textit{Fides Pudorquæ} reappear—
And if they don't appear, you know it
Were quite unjust to blame the Poet!
On any Beach

By M. A.†

YES, in the stream and stress of things,
That breaks around us like the sea,
There comes to peasants and to kings,
The solemn hour of Jubilee.
If they, till strenuous nature give
Some fifty harvests, chance to live!

Ah, fifty harvests! But the corn
Is grown beside the barren main;
Is salt with sea-spray, blown and borne
Across the green unvintaged plain.
And life, lived out for fifty years,
Is briny with the spray of tears!

Ah, such is life, to us that live
Here, in the twilight of the gods,
Who weigh each gift the world can give,
And sigh and murmur, What's the odds
So long's you're happy? Nay, what man
Finds happiness since time began?

† Matthew Arnold.
Ode of Jubilee

By A. C. S.¹

Me, that have sung and shrieked, and foamed in praise of freedom,
   Me do you ask to sing
Parochial pomps, and waste, the wail of Jubileedom
   For Queen, or Prince, or King!

Nay, by the foam that fleeting oars have feathered
   In Grecian seas;
Nay, by the winds that barques Athenian weathered—
   By all of these
I bid you each be mute, Bards tamed and tethered,
   And fee’d with fees!

For you the laurel smirched, for you the gold, too,
   Of magazines;
For me the Spirit of Song, unbought, unsold to
   Pale priests or queens!
For you the gleam of gain, the fluttering cheque
   Of Mr. Knowles;
For me, to soar above the ruins and wreck
   Of Snobs and ‘Souls’!

¹ A. C. Swinburne.
When aflush with the dew of the dawn, and the
Rose of the mystical vision,
The spirit and soul of the men of the
Future shall rise and be free,
They shall hail me with hymning and harping,
With eloquent art and Elysian—
The singer who sung not but spurned them,
The slaves that could sing 'Jubilee';
With pinchbeck lyre and tongue,
Praising their tyrant sung,
They shall fail and shall fade in derision,
As wind on the ways of the sea!
Jubilee before Revolution

By W. M. 1

‘TELL me, O Muse of the shifty, the man who wandered afar’,
So have I chanted of late, and of Troy burg wasted of war—
Now of the sorrows of menfolk that fifty years have been,
Now of the grace of the commune I sing, and the days of a queen!
Surely I curse rich menfolk, ‘the Wights of the Whirlwind’ may they—
This is my style of translating "Apνιαι—snatch them away!
The rich thieves rolling in wealth that make profit of labouring men,
Surely the Wights of the Whirlwind shall swallow them quick in their den!

1 William Morris.
O baneful, O wit-straying, in the burg of London ye dwell,
And ever of profits and three per cent. are the tales ye tell;
But the stark, strong Polyphemus shall answer you back again,
Him whom 'No man slayeth by guile and not by main'.
(By 'main' I mean 'main force', if aught at all do I mean;
In the Greek of the blindfold bard it is simpler the sense to glean.)
You, Polyphemus shall swallow and fill his mighty maw,
What time he maketh an end of the Priests, the Police, and the Law;
And then, ah, who shall purchase the poems of old that I sang;
Who shall pay twelve-and-six for an epic in Saga slang?
But perchance even 'Hermes the Flitter' could scarcely expound what I mean,
And I trow that another were fitter to sing you a song for a queen.
Lang, Andrew
Poetical works
v.3