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IN THE WAKE
OF
THE PHOENIX

JAMES A. MACKERETH



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TO THE MEMORY
OF MY FRIEND
G. W. M.

IN THE WAKE OF
THE PHŒNIX

IN THE WAKE OF THE PHOENIX

BY

JAMES A. MACKERETH

AUTHOR OF "A SON OF CAIN"
ETC., ETC.

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J. A. M.

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THE INVITATION

COME, girl, we'll loose our wings to-day,
And leave life's cloudy trouble ;
And, tossing in the sunbeam's ray,
We'll make each pleasure double.

For all the winds are turned to glee,
And every rill to joy ;
The wood is keeping jubilee,
And laughing like a boy.

The vale is like a silver cup
Set full with golden wine ;
Our thirsty hearts shall drink it up,
And dance with the divine.

Come out, come out, and shadow shun !
We'll revel, fay and sprite,
And share our loving with the sun,
Our laughter with the light.

Elysium is close to earth,
The gods inviting lean !
Skip, honey, with a song of mirth
We'll span the gulf between !

The vestal hills in shining snow
Kiss all the rounding sky ;
The jocund clouds with cheeks aglow
Entice the fields to fly ;—

So fling the heart to jollity !
The world is wide before us,
And all the winsome ways we see
Lead to the azure o'er us.

Adown the lanes and up the hill
The winds go by for ever ;
Our failing feet, dull laggards still,
Do thwart the day's endeavour.—

Then, sweetheart, forth ! the path is broad,
And leads to all the shires ;
We'll tread again the golden road
Toward the heart's desires ;

And all earth's dumb and dreaming things
 Shall gladden as we go,
And long for petals and for wings
 Beneath the glinting snow.

Though all the woods be songless now,
 Though ne'er a bird be seen,
The bud is pulsing on the bough,
 And pushing toward the green.

Earth's sweet anticipation runs ;
 And frolic raptures dart,
Like those that skip 'neath glancing suns
 From April's happy heart.

A myriad tiny forces strive
 Beneath, about, above,
To prove their little souls alive
 To longing and to love.—

Then trip along, my lightsome fay !
 Not vainly loitering,
We'll take the old and elfin way
 Like lovers in the spring,

And put our puny griefs to rest.

Hark, gossip, how the thorn
Whistles : and all the wind-swung west
Is bugling to the morn.

A crowd of powers on moor and fell
Are fashioning our choice ;
And we—we follow, 'neath a spell,
A wonder and a voice.—

The blood can hear the far, sweet chime
Of vernal daffodils ;
The tinklings faint in summertime
Of harebells on the hills ;

An elfin tramp of bridal hours
Comes on a phantom wind ;
And soul-like scents of unborn flowers
Are moving in the mind.—

Love, we are loved by lives unseen,
And led by hands unknown ;
And raptures, potent and serene,
Are mingling with our own,

And summon us afield, afar !
For moping ne'er were born
We children of a lusty star,
The kindred of the morn.

O ! half the mists that dim man's mirth
Are shadows on a bubble ;
They hasten from the sunlit earth
To hide in caves of trouble.—

Trip, comrade, 'tis a hoyden day !
Since Joy hath flown the hearth
We'll follow him the moorland way,
By croft, and wold, and garth ;

And, piping with the prying wind,
We'll peep in glade and glen,
Search all his happy haunts, and find,
And bring him home again.

Trip, playmate, trip ! the moments fly.
Glum care would fain deceive us ;
There lives no sadness in the sky,
No grudge in earth to grieve us.

O! here, from loveless paths apart,
A child may understand
That he has heaven within his heart,
And God in his right hand!

Away! Pursue the beckoning gleam,
Follow the wonder-call:
One with this winged and starry dream
Where we are dreamers all!

Along! Along! my winsome sprite,
And song from sorrow sever;
Were we but wise the world's delight
Would be our own for ever.

A HYMN TO BEAUTY

I

O BEAUTY, thou that on elusive wing
Soar'st to the heights, and to the soul dost
sing,

Out of the depths of this mortality
Unto the heights, where thou alone canst be,
Borne on strong tides of solemn harmony,
I lift my psalm to thee.

II

Substance of God, effulgence of His mind,
Affluent, immanent, wholly undefined,
Soul-quickener, evermore
A haunting spirit to the outmost shore
Of fluctuant being, in the earth and skies
Inherent, and existing 'yond the bound
That farthest-travelling thought hath ever found
A splendid and beatifical surprise,
August beyond all knowledge, blinding-bright,
Lighten our life and night.

III

Behind the shattered shards of broken truth
Thou shinest, O delight, in that still place
That is for ever toward the triune face,
Nor sufferest ruth ;
Beyond the mists of mind, the surge of sense,
The press of years, and pride's insipience
Thou art ; and, fashioned of th' immortal breath,
Thou shalt not mate with death.

IV

Thou are the purport of the moving years,
Thou comest like a whisper to the North,
And to the South thou art a floating flame,
And all the West is full of votive fears
When thy foot goeth forth :
The Orient wakes remembering thy name.

V

O, multiform and immanent, thou art
Wherever wonder wells at the world's heart :
In echoing cathedrals glazed with heaven,
Where the grave saints in splendid panoplies

Shine toward their Lord ; in hushing cornlands
given

To wavering winds ; in patriarchal trees
That murmur in a drowsy monotone
The antique lullabies of pensive time ;
Commingled with the earth's primeval moan
Thou art a life sublime
In journeying tempests ; art a brooding thing
In valleys wafted by the eagle's wing,
Faint with old peace, where immemorial Pan
Pipes to grey silence with the pipe of peace ;
And in sweet intervals of strife's surcease
Thou art a mandate in the mind of man.
Thine, thine, those subtle hauntings in the dim
Low-lighted stillness that no thought can limn ;
Thou art the melody borne from very far
That melts into a holy evening's breath ;
Soft wavelets fainting round the even-star ;
The darling recollections after death ;
The dear anticipations mid distress ;
The love that lingers when its cause is gone ;
The nimbus thou about life's nakedness
Before the entrance of the Holy One.

VI

Desiring thee sweet souls through bitter places
Follow with adoration and a sigh.

Thou art the pathos upon vanished faces
That steal into the sentience, and the cry
Of the poet's spirit in its ecstasy :

The voice that calls man's feet on, on, and on ;
The light that leads him when the voice is gone ;
The prescience and the grandiose prophecy
Of something 'yond this mean mortality ;
The ambushed glory and the beckoning rapture
The soul may touch awhile but never capture.

VII

Impassionate consummation of passion past,
By gorgeous memories thy name is kissed ;
Thou reign'st serenely o'er a world downcast
With the invulnerable agonist.

Through years conceived not, Spirit, thou shalt be
A prophet and a priest unto eternity.

VIII

Haunting persuader to the means of grace ;
Inspirer and preserver of all song ;
Goal of all griefs ; toward whose supernal face

All shining thoughts, all soaring raptures throng ;
Sprung virginal from the white soul of fire —
O world's desire !
Not without shame affianced to the dust,
And futile-burthened by th' ignoble hour,
We see th' effulgence of thy face august
Gleaming on time, as with a splendid trust,
In quietude of power.

IX

Bland witness of th' emotional thrill of God
In cloud and clod !
O revelation of th' eternal Light
At noontide and still night !
I, drifting down these aisles of the infinite,
A wanderer 'neath the mute and wandering sky,
Foredoomed awhile to die,
To live anon predestined, passing by
These ancient precincts of obsequious death,
I, with no wanton breath,
With sovran and with seemly ecstasy.
Uplift my psalm to thee ;
Not ill-content in a loud land to be
An errant voice where but the wild bee hums
And no foot comes,

Where but the bird's lorn song, the brook's lost
cry

Move under the wide sky.

Yea, from void tumult far and time's vain stress,
A spirit in the jocund wilderness,

By weald, and water, and moon-entangled ways,
Thy minstrel in this pilgrimage of days

I chant thy praise,

I'll chant thy deathless praise until I die.

x

O when time like a mist enfolds my feet,
And thought shines lonely like a star apart
In dreary regions, when no face is sweet,
And squalor like an insult hurts the heart,
O! 'mid the dusk of man's too-long distress,
O! 'mid the toils of time's ungentleness,
Feed, fan my faith, uplift me wholly afar
To where about thy flaming feet th' empyreal
kingdoms are!

Make me thy comrade through each yearning
year,

Meet for high parleying, bounteously brave;
Fuse me with ardour; on titanic cheer

Swing me and save,
Till this pent soul arise
And takes the ramparts of th' impervious skies
With lightning-chargèd eyes.

XI

High Presence, moving over transiency,
Trailing the proud thoughts of eternity ;
O ! sacerdotal symbol of a theme
Ineffable — the glory and the dream
That o'er all harsh downcasting
Broods like the patience of the Everlasting !
Through the deep umbrage of the crowded years,
With splendid hope, with joyance touched of
tears,
Flushed in the blown flame of thy radiancy
With stumbling feet I follow after thee,
Follow with heart that never dare abide,
With yonder-yearning soul, divinely unsatisfied.
O feed me on elations ! Make me free
O' the mirk of time, that so I soar and see
To realms where thou alone hast regency,
Where bane comes not at all, nor any death, nor
sad satiety.

O Evanescence! Perpetuity!

O Face, Form, Spirit, haunting Mystery

Beatified! —

Light of my dreams, till life shall dream no more,

Thy pilgrim still from shore to brightening shore

I follow — follow — follow till I die!

XII

My hymn is as a wind upon great waters

That is gone forth and shall not come again.

Who, who shall harken! Time hath sons and
daughters

That dwell in all unloveliness and pain.

The song is ended, but the sins remain.

Heard at the heart a multitude doth cry,

Faint with long fasting, yearning toward the sky,

“ Hope of our dream — till pain shall dream no
more,

Thy pilgrims still, from shore to darkling
shore

We seek — and seek, nor know thee till we
die! ”

Into our life, unto our land draw nigh.

So soon, so sadly soon

Under the sun and moon
Men's mortal days go by.
Harken their cry :
Eternal Immanence, bless them ere they die !

THE SPLENDID MISTAKE

A TRAGEDY

HOW calm the meadows: calmly the sweet
stars

Thicken about the dreaming deodars,—
See how in slumber all their plummy tops
Soothe the soft night with silence. Calm am I,
Calm with a steadfast calmness, counting all.

I sent for you. You see? You comprehend?
Nay, blame not with cold eyes; I am not foul;
Nor from a distance judge me. O, the world
May give a hundred virtues to a man
To paint him good; 'tis woman knows his vices.
I killed him that I might not wholly scorn.

He had been beautiful in youth. We dreamed—
The lovers' way, and took the deathless vows.
He sinned in secret : long I knew it not,
Close-clouded in my dream. And then I woke,
And saw the horror with the smiling face,
The love that wooed and mocked him in a phial.
So crept the sensual snake into his heart
Until his veins ran poison, and his mind
Reeked with the fumes of folly, and grew dark ;
And the lascivious drug danced in his brain.
He had his hours when all the burthening void
And misty torments of incorporeal hell
Dropped from him, and he saw the lights of heaven,
And the green fields, and the clean, kindly day,
And wept at the hungry kiss forgiveness gave.
And then again the restless lust of dreams,
The craving eyes, the nervous, twitching hands,
The sick, mad smile, the deep incontinent death,—
When over him I bent in dumbness down,
And impotence pathetic stared at shame.

Oh, I was jealous for th' authentic soul,
And loathed the obscene shape that worm-like
crawled

Through the abysmal slime. No might was his,
No proud, sad glory ; not his the singèd wings
Of a tempestuous spirit, foiled and pale,
Down beaten from the burning face of God ;—
For such I could have wept, ah ! such have loved
Before the crowded frowns of angry heaven.
Yet did I love him with a piteous love,
Remembering the proud place of his dreams.
Still, hoping for the heights, I cherished him :
But hope with every midnight died anew,
And every dawn foretold a dwindling joy.
In slow and sad procession passed the years.

Often, when brooding as beside a grave,
I thought how noble it would be if I
By deeply probing that dull lump of flesh,
Grown quiet as with senile gentleness,
Could quicken all the mass into a man —
Make the swift lightnings of th' immortal deeps
Flash through the shadow of time, that sensual
shell,
Startle the dying heart to consciousness,
Till he stood once again before my eyes
A doer and a mind. I thought, and thought,
With terrible persistence, sadly mute,

Thought in the bitter dark, the long, long day,
When he lay by indifferent as death,
Or, woke to whine or wheedle, till one thought
Obsessed me like strong truth, and evermore
The hungry baby of a famished hope,
Hard at my breast it nestled night and noon,
And grew and grew in strength — my thought —
 until

It crept unto my tongue, and grew until
It played about my lips, and grew apace
Until, grown bold, stung by the deep heart's pain,
It burst in words into my silent world ;
And unsurprised I heard, and felt no sin,
Yet calmly feared to feel so unafraid.
So, with these seeing sorrows fixed 'yond time,
I said with reverent heart familiarly :
“ It were no evil thing if I who love,
Who peer beneath the all-deceiving flesh
To the sole-sitting spirit suffering there,
Could set the King-light in those servile eyes,
Make him stand up and look God fair i' the face
For one brave moment, if—O consummation!—
Ere the gleam flickered, and the purpose died,
I could speed him swiftly hence, quick at the soul,

Plumed with proud zeal, and sceptred like a King,
Into the vast straight to the Holiest."

So, like some burning priestess of old gods
Enthroned amid the fires of sacrifice,
Fingering the flames, I put my heart apart,
And to a desperate mission stood subdued,
The meek mate of most high austerity.

Time travelled till this morn. We sat together
Just as we used when wont was ecstasy.
The passive hours stole down the sober air :
There was a vivid stillness on the fields :
It was an hour when sense showed less than soul.
Over his face I watched the ghostly moods
Drifting ; the slow and enervated blood
Remembered its excess ; and his faint mind,
Swayed not toward passions gone, and unperturbed
By passions yet to be, lived to itself.
I drew toward him with smiles and gentleness,
All pitifully calm I came to him,
And chafed his limp hand — thus — with this strong
palm,
And fondled him, and toyed with all the past,
With all the promise of the good that died,

Until his heart was full of piteousness
And wholly mine ; then — for his spirit's sake —
I stood like some strong temptress in the heights,
And, summoning all the forces of my being —
All splendour, and all beauty that can sting
The senses, and all power that can subdue
To the soul's uses the rebellious flesh,
I drew him upward from the clinging slime,
From tears, from tremblings drew him, till he
stood

Soul-passionate like a soaring seraph, poised
A-tip-toe on the peak of proud intent,
Flushed with the glancing glory : fondly then,
While yet his brow was luminous for a crown,
I kissed him on the lips with a long kiss,
My splendid dreamer ! touching him a rose
Hung heavily with petals hued like blood,
I shuddered, and he patted this sad hand.
Around the intense quiet pressed like pain,
The conscious air seemed full of eyes from far,
Of hovering pinions of benignant powers
Watching the instant. Closely-gathered there
We gazed through time together toward the west ;
The graciousness of Occidental skies —

An aureate effluence, sweetening his face,
Stole like a faint and valedictory flame
Down fields of sorrel. We stood heart to heart,
Dominant, infinite, wholly wise for one
Ineffable moment. Not a stain showed he :
He was all dear to God, and white to heaven,
And innocent to me : then swiftly — so —
While breast throbbed, *Love*, and temples trembled,

Love,

I plucked the sudden gleam from nigh my heart,
Crooned one "Farewell," and, smiling, stabbed
him dead.—

You see he wears the startled, faint surprise
Still, and the wavering answer to my smile.

It was well done. I am a proud woman.
He hath passed to the Eternal. The dull flesh
Shall never smirch him more, he shall be white
As children's thoughts that visit God in prayers.
Yea 'yond all clamour, 'yond all dissonance
And perilous soilure he is washed in peace.
The spirit 'neath the deed its judgment is.
Beyond these deeps life's errant sails are set,
And we are plunged in everlastingness.

Therefore had I no fear, doubting not death.

I have been true to that which truest is ;
Amid all degradation I have still
Been faithful to an ever devious love,
Faithful to *him* with a most holy faith
Ev'n to this last . . . My very own—my Love,
Truer to the dear saintship of thyself
Than thou couldst ever be under these skies.
Sirs, like that Other, who died for all of us,
I die for him, and hastening destiny—
Man's godlike privilege, trampling on time,
With confident deed I affirm the deathless soul! . . .
Take me away. I am a proud woman—
I've won *him* heaven ; immortal too, I wait
The judgment of th' Eternal, unafraid.
The rest is as you will.

LA DANSEUSE

SHE moved like silence swathed in light,
Like mists at morning clear ;
A music that enamoured sight
Yet did elude the ear.

A rapture and a spirit clad
In motion soft as sleep ;
The epitome of all things glad,
The sum of all that weep ;

Her form was like a poet's mind—
By all sensations sought ;
She seemed the substance of the wind,
The shape of lyric thought,—

A being mid terrestrial things
Transcendently forlorn,
From time bound far on filmy wings
For some diviner bourne.

The rhythms of the raptured heart
 Swayed to her sweet control ;
Life in her keeping all was art,
 And all of body soul.

Lone-shimmering in the roseate air
 She seemed to ebb and flow,
A memory, perilously fair,
 And pale from long ago.

She stooped to time's remembered tears,
 Yearned to undawned delight.
Ah beauty, passionate from the years !
 O body, wise and white !

She vanished like an evening cloud,
 A sunset's radiant sheen.
She vanished. Light awhile endowed
 The darkness with a dream.

DREAMS

THE padded noises of the moving night
Stirred in the muffled chamber. Faintly
heard,

The wavering moor-wind moaned; and wintry
trees

Shook skeleton limbs, and murmured plaintively.

A lamp burned dimly, like a kindly thought,

Amid a host of shadows ominous.

The heavy air felt conscious of itself,

And smelt of memories long-time undisturbed.

All in that dreary chamber told of dreams,

And of staid joys that died in antique years.

Grave objects, jealous of the genial sun,

And of the waving wonder of the world,

Blinked sullenly whene'er a leaping flame

Chided with lambent tongue the dreariness.

And, like the measured death-watch in still night,

A grim clock ticked against a mumbling wall.

Dumbly, with hoar head propped on tenuous
hands,

One sat and stared at thought, with faded eyes

Wearily fixed, with faintly twitching mouth,
And lips apart. He seemed half man, half ghost,
An eerie being, full of silences,
A thinking substance, a bowed shadow-shape—
The epitome of dusk and loneliness.

The clock knelled midnight, and the chiding chime
Moved through the murmuring chamber, and the
mice

Behind the wainscot scuttled off afraid.

Then he leapt up—he of the hunted heart,
As though the dread pursuers of his soul
Startled his silence with their ogreish eyes,
And snatched him by the hair ; and passionately,
He gave his torture words :

“ O, life ! life ! life !

The barren visions, and the deeds undone !
God ! what it is to look with soul diseased
And weary eyes upon futility ;
To be the sport of phantoms, the pale spouse
Of impotence—that plucks at every dream,
And sates ambition with an empty thought ;
To mount upon the peaks of nothingness,
And feign the exaltation of the stars ;

To feign, and feign till action seems a thing
Fictive, a dream life's apotheosis.

O! I am folly's ape, and time's faint fool.

A hundred men, my colleagues, have I known
Who have wrung tribute from the martial years,
Sailed life's high seas, and touched at echoing
shores

Where hopes found royal havens; men with wills
That won the goals they sought, who, battling,
seized

The cruel iron horns of destiny
And brought him to his knees. But I, doelike,
Have terror sniffed in each propitious gale,
Have trod with fearful feet this buoyant world
While brave men laughed to die. . . . But just
to *dream*—

To live with diffident and devious heart;
To roll in fancy's chariot through the void,
Still cozening action with a subterfuge;
To follow sunbeams like a butterfly;
To steal sweet sadness from abortive tears,
Steeped in the languorous fumes of sentiment.
O, God! the hell of hollow shows!—to *dream*—
To climb for ever unsubstantial stairs;

To dream!—it is to fool felicity ;
 'Tis to be fed on honey, and made null
 By doubts that feed and foster impotence ;
 'Tis to be trained to all incontinence
 Of mind and heart, made bond to all things vain ;
 'Tis to be fanned in regions wonderful,
 To lie with pleasure in the lap of peace ;
 'Tis to avoid life's issues ; at the last
 'Tis to be cursed with weariness, and bowed
 'Neath weight more heavy than the sweltering
 press

Of many battles. . . Dreams :—pale liars all,
 Though aromatic with the attar of heaven.
 Dreams?—Lies, I say, that suck the will to sleep,
 And with the lotus-fumes of fictive joy
 Charm the quick soul to slumber. Lies. Lies all.

“O! to have been a *living* thing—a man—
 To have fought with men, to have striven and
 failed with men!

To have kissed life fully on the regal lips,
 To have proved her deeply to the great heart's
 core!

Locked close in stormy nuptials with the years,
 O fearful soul, then hadst thou known indeed

Th' authentic sweets of labour and of rest ;
The lusty raptures of legitimate hope ;
The pride of triumph, and the shining crown
That decks the forehead of a soul unshamed ;
Known, known the deep, wise amplitude of love
That waits her wanderer in a fond wife's eyes ;
The rush of heaven at the sweet name of *home* ;
The child's delight ; the infant's wonder-cry ;
Sweet thrill of meeting ; and the crowded hush
And shadow of sad imminent farewell ;—
Ah! then, my soul, with life's rare treasures stored,
Thou hadst leapt death toward immortality.—
But *thus* to creep back through the darkness
 home,
A tattered spendthrift from the face of time !

“ O ! aching heart, the vain and hollow years —
The haunting years, and all the faces there !
Memory ! memory ! thou burr of the wide
 waste. . .

One lived there sweeter than a violet's eye,
As gentle as the cloudless evening star ;
She walked this world as with empyreal light ;
And I to her drew near as dew to flower ;

Gracious she was as sheen in stilly meres
When all the west is mute and wonderful ;
And like the moon in waters was she fair.—
She loved ; but I dreamt a rare dream of love.
Our springtide, full of twittering promises,
Slipped into summer with no nesting-time.
Our summer vanished like the flight of flowers :
Still suave inaction toyed with honied wont,
And vacillation kept me faintly far,
And fearful, from the heart's affirmed desire ;—
She was so patient, loving without blame.
So came life's autumn with the drifting bloom,
With slow, sad fadings, and vague questionings :
And lo ! the snow was sprinkled in our hair ;
And dalliance had eaten the good years.
Hard on the treasured precincts of my dream
Stood staring winter's stern reality.
And all my bliss was withered at a breath ;
And all was vanity and passed away ;
And the grave whispered ; and the winds were
 chill. . .
Weeping, we parted 'neath the misty stars,—
Mutely—for ever. . . And when April came

And shook each shimmering copse with tinkling
showers,

And set the ways abloom, the daffodils

Tolled over her. . . . Dreams. . . . Dreams
are murderers ;

They smile, and smile, like houris in the heart,
Seducing acts. We build our hells of dreams.

“ Ah, what a desert in the world am I ;

A phantom among phantoms, breathing death ;

A record of sad nothings. . . .

My life hath been a palterer's platitude.

My days are rooted in impermanence,

And tangled in the briars of all regret ;

And tarrying wisdom comes to lorn despair,

And beckons at the margin of the grave. . . .

Too late for service. . . . Naked, O my soul !

Thou shalt be cast, with all that cumpers, forth ;

Blown down the reaches of the labouring void

With all that hampers the proud-marching stars ;

Be beaten with the winds of many worlds ;

Be sucked into the force of many fires :

And, in the pitiless crucibles of God,

Be fashioned to an *act*—far off divine. . . .

Beyond the dark there shall be no more
dreams. . . .”

He swayed. He sank. He stirred in time no
more.

The low fire paled to ashes. Lustily
The wind, grown madcap, like a wheeling wave
Rushed at the panes, and roared about the world,
And wailed and whistled round the chimneystacks.
The merry mice squeaked on the darkling stairs,
And pattered here and there. Loud whirred the
clock.

A grey light blinked through darkness ; and there
came,

Athwart wide swinging elms and garden trees,
The cheery stirrings of a winter dawn.

And soon, o'er the billowy moorlands weird and
wide,

O'er bristling fields, and woods—whose hoyden
arms,

Reeling, sent thunder through sonorous hills,
The hunter, morn, halloed the baying world.

PADDY MAGREE AND
THE IMP

NOW thus spake the tongue of old Paddy
Magree,
The loneliest mortal in lone Balleree,
Where a bright moon winked through a wych-elm
tree :

“To me that morn croaked a blind old crone
For the feel of a bad bawbee,
‘If ye stand this night by the peat-bog alone
The bride of your life ye’ll see ;
And faith, me boy, she has wealth of her own,
And a calm little cabin for ye.’

“So meself was there by Callachan bog
Wid me mind agape and me mouth agog ;
Yet of girls of me heart came never a one,
Feet from the mountains all were gone.
In the cuddling quiet star listened to star,

And the mists and the midnight held Cullanaghar.
Lone, O, lone were Callachan braes ;
And the peat-moss it was eerie :
And mute 'neath a curse till the end of days
Lay the black depths of Lough Leary.

“ The spell of the night crept over me ;
I bobbed to the moon and St. Timothy,
And talked to meself wid sympathy :
' Whist, loud heart of me, all is still,
Only the white dreams stir on the hill ;
Whist, loud breath of me, far or nigh,
Only the star-bees buzz in the sky :
There's never a life on the moor to-night,
But only the quiet stones.'—
Then the grey marsh quaked in the wan moonlight,
For it covered a witch's bones.
Ugh! I wished meself, with the door between,
The friend of meself in the old shebeen.
I whistled a tune wid a brave man's breath,
But it soughe'd like a wind through the ribs of
death.
And I shivered wid sin. And I minded me there
Of the duck I once stole down at Doondollen Fair.

“ In the pale little churchyard under the steep,
All lit wid the moonlight eerie,
Lay Callachan dead folk fast asleep,
Each fond man hard by his dearie.
A raven croaked in the darkness deep
O'er the wild woods of Lough Leary.
' Hark ! 'tis the hush of the witching time !'
Stealthily there, like a ghost to its crime,
Crept eerily Ballaten's midnight chime.

“ O, the moors by Cullanaghar are lone,
And Callachan shades are deep.
A low wind soughed like a warlock's moan,
And the sad reeds shivered in sleep.
Then sudden a screech came over the hill,
Me sick legs shook, and me blood stood still :
I bethought me there of the huddled crone :
Me sins crept home to me one by one,—
They peeped and pryed wid strange grimaces,
Little blue bodies wid ugly faces ;
They pecked and pricked wid horrible glee
Till me plucked soul cried in its misery,
' St. Patrick, hinny-heart, pray for me !'—
Och ! never a word prayed he !

Though soul never needed such help for sure
As me own sad self on Callachan moor —
For a wild laugh leapt — like a ghoul it flew
 Through the shuddering silence eerie.
Shrieked the owls, ‘Too-hoo!’ and the echoes,
 ‘Hoo!’
In the wild woods of Lough Leary.

“ Then a call like a hunting hell-dog’s bay
Throbbled in the lost hills far away,
And the dim bog, aching wid loneliness,
Twitched wid the pain of its own distress
And sighed like a ghost to the summoning sound ;
And the wan earth whined like a weary hound.
‘ ’Tis the witchhag calling her little white devils
To hold on the mountains their midnight revels.’
I stood like a knight of the riven rood
Wid the icicles bobbing about me blood.
Said I for meself : ‘ Avaunt ! ’ I said,
‘ Hag with the wind’s locks, seeking the dead,
I’m one of the living, and Smiley Magree
Is the name they give me mortality ! ’
‘ Ha-ha ! ’ came back, and ‘ Ha-ha ! ’ went by,
And ‘ Ha-ha ! ’ from far came an elfin cry.

O the red of me body went palsy-white,
And I felt like a toad wid the fear and the cold.
O Nelly O'Lane, thought I, this night
For a sip of the poteen I'd give ye me gold!—
And sure at the beautiful spirit's name
I said to the sin in meself, For-shame!
And I tossed up me hat at the nose of a star,—
And it's there in the bog still at Cullanaghar.
Leapt me heart to me head wid a bump of pain,
And me wits like mice scuttled out of me brain;
In the chill of me chattering misery
Says I, 'Me darlint, it's drunk ye must be';—
For lo! 'gainst the round of the crazy moon
A black dwarf fiddled an elfin tune!
He fiddled, and fiddled, and fiddled, and fiddled,
And capered and pranced in the ring of the moon,
He twitched and twisted, the spidery creature,
Like an eel in a pan or a Galloway preacher.
'Bejabers!' says I, 'be he divil or elf,
I'll catch the sprite for the fame of meself.'
And 'Eh!' he sang, and 'Oh!' he sang,
And his fiddle it squeaked in sympathy;
And 'Oh!' he sang, and 'Eh!' he sang
To the tune of Fiddle-dee-dee:

While anon in the night his gay laugh rang,
That merry mad imp sang he :
‘Black-eyed goblins, hither and play ;
Fays and star-sprites don your shoon ;
Lives in the daylight hidden away
Hail our mother, the Moon !
Frogs of the marsh, and owls of the wood,
Bats and imps of the ivied tree,
Fur and feather, in frisky mood,
Brothers of each degree,
Trip we round to an elfin tune,
Hail our mother, the Moon !’
And then the spalpeen twirled his fiddle
On a star-tipped thumb wid a ‘Hi-diddle-diddle !’
And ‘Ho !’ he laughed, and ‘Ha !’ sang he,
‘The world is me own for company.
When the midnight tells where the violet sleeps,
And the woodbine smells where the starlight creeps,
Then shy little lives creep out to me —
The lone little hunchback of Balleree.
Ah, niver a love will have love for me
While the winds blow over eternity.’

“The tweeny darlint ! he choked wid a sigh,

And he peeped at the stars wid a tear in his eye ;
'Twixt the throes of me heart and the pangs of me
ears

The wells of me head o'erflowed wid tears ;
Me breast was big wid me love's sore trouble,
And, leaping, I said, ' Yer me sad soul's double !'
' O, Hinny, my dear,' said I to he,
' Come, come to me heart and I'll father ye !'

He stopped his jiggling tune for a minute,
And, by the powers ! it was Nick that was in it !
Round and round came a startling sound,
From the mocking air and the tittering ground—
' Hoo-hoo ! Ha-ha !' Wid a bound and a cry,
Begorra ! he leapt right into the sky !

I shouted his name in the wide moonlight ;
St. Patrick ! the land made a noise like the
ocean !

I shrank in meself like a snail for fright,
And hid in the heath from the dreadful com-
motion ;

For over me head hallooed star unto star,
And deep from the shadows the phantoms sang
eerie ;

Groaned the dead in their tombs down in Culla-
naghar,

And the hills sighed like widows aweary ;
And a grief in the midnight went moaning afar
Through the dark haunted woods of Lough
Leary.

Then sudden, all nameless, and gruesome, and
grim,

O'er the heath crept a horror, the moon glimmered
dim,—

Ugh! I felt close behind me the night witch's
daughter

That whoops in the wind and that wails on the
water ;

And I saw me own death staring into me face
With a jowl like a skull's, and a boggle's grimace.
I hiccuped wid fright, but was hungry for glory,
For I thought how me deeds might be passed into
story,

And I thought of the age and the pride of me name,
Of the good of meself, and me passion for fame ;

Then I pictured the loss to me lone future wife,—
And I lifted me heels and I ran for me life !

By marsh and by mire, wid the rage of a gale,
I sped like a fiend wid the fire at his tail,
Down-a-down, deep-a-down into the vale.

And ever behind me to shrivel or shatter
Came the horrible Thing wid a racket and clatter.
I stopped not for danger, I stayed not for air,
On the fury of fear I was hurried afar,
Till I crashed to the middle of Doondollen Square
And dropped at the white marble cross: And
the scar
Ye can see to this day. And indade it was there
I found me sole self when the last lily star
Pricked the dawn's drifting roses o'er Culla-
naghar.

“Oh, the ache in me head it was sorrow to me ;
And a grief in me nature cried, ‘Smiley Magree,
By the sprite that remembers by moor and by
shore,
Ye’ll be haunted through time, yet be lone ever-
more !’

And I looked at meself, and I quaked to discover
The Imp at the heart of me like a fond lover.
I kissed it, I cursed it, I drove it amain,
But back to me breast it came frisking again
Wid its ‘Fal-da-lal-lal !’ and its ‘Hi-diddle-dee !’
And ‘I’ll love ye for ever, sad Smiley Magree !’

“ And I stare at It still wid these same eyes in me
The dread little goblin of lone Balleree.—

And this is me secret : 'Tis the child of the crone

I gave the bad coin to. Alack for me jest !

I've sought her in vain, and her name is not known

Through the whole windy west.

And the years have gone by, but her wrong doth
remain :

And it's never in time I shall see her again.

Yet until I confess to the sybil me sin

The mad little wanton will revel within,

It plagues me old heart wid love to deceive me ;

Like a wife over plain, It refuses to leave me ;

At noontide, at night-time, It sits at me side,

And It mocks me awake, and It troubles me
sleep ;

And I'm far from the days of me strength and me
pride,

And me dreams have gone down to the deep.

But in hours of me liveness It visits wid me ;

It taunts at me hunger, and toys wid me thirst ;

It peeps in the poteen and jibbers wid glee—

And ah ! it's me days that are curst !

When the grief wets me cheek, O ! it's there It
will be,

The dread little goblin of wild Ballereë.
Alas, through the future it's lonely I'll be
In the dark and the light, 'twixt the sea and the
 sea,
For the world knows an imp has wed Smiley
 Magree."

The stars in their stillness stood over the steep,
 And the dews on the woodbine were falling :
And, lost in the night, in the dim meadows deep
 The landrails were calling, were calling.
Came the "hush" of the reeds on the fringe of
 the river
To waves liting seaward for ever and ever.
And no other sound 'neath the moon save the lone
Low lapping of waters on shingle and stone.
Ah ! the laughter of life and its pathos to me,
As I peered in the face of old Paddy Magree !

Fair Callachan hills in the moonlight, O ! fair ;
 And the moist lanes and meadows were cheery.
But the liveness of man made a solitude there
 In the moon-misty woods of Lough Leary.

ARIEL AND THE WIND

*(The sounds in italics to be
imitated by the breath.)*

I RACED with the wind to-day.

O-ho ! the things he did say !

Over the hills we ranged together ;

On the ribs of the earth the rain came sweet ;

And the mists swirled after us over the heather ;

And the swooping clouds flew fleet.

Phew-hue ! wailed the weather.

The forest, crouched like a chidden thing,

To the straining, vibrant earth did cling—

That echoed Adieu

To the wind as he flew.

Ho-ho ! the weather !

Each sibilant reed

Caught the passion of speed,

And the shrill marsh streamed like a feather.

Hail the wild weather !

Phew-hue-hēw !

On the mountain ridges hoary and sterile

We poised a moment, and plucked at a sky
Mad with its mirth, defiant of peril,
Convolved and exultant plunging by
Down the bounding space of the solar way
Like a hoyden out for a holiday.

A tarn looked up with its lonely eye
From a hollow of dreams to the scurrying sky.
A score of hamlets, huddled at ease,
Lay lapt in a quiet of brooding trees.

“ What shall we do in the world to-day ?

Mighty, merry one, say ? say ? ”

“ Let us hurl the waters, and harry the moors,
And toss and tumble the pride of men,
And buffet the churches, batter the doors,
And a saint's nose split in its window pane,
And make the noise of our hullabaloo
At the altar-steps where faint souls sue
Not God but a dream, and torture and tease
A world that is sighing for ease,—
Yea the tranced soul free from the truce of peace,
And foster the creed-smothered flame of truth
Till it flash into living for life's increase—
Life at the flush of its youth !

And strengthen men with the gusto of strife,
And hearten the years with a rush of song
To the rapture of doing, and feed man's life
With force till he stand amid passions rife
Serene, and joyous, and strong!

By croft and coomb, o'er bight and brae
Away! away! away!"

Whew! echoed the earth like a startled mind,
Whoo! tossed the galloping leagues behind,
Hhee-hhee! laughed the flying wind.

And the sun broke loose from the riding rack
And rode down the azure track.

My swift soul leapt with lust for the race,
And whistled and whizzed the wide heather;
And the blood burned hot in the wind-whipt face,
And the heart tugged hard at its tether.

Shee-hue! shrilled the weather;

Hoo! whooped the weather.

Ho the wild weather!

My burly comrade charged his lungs;
Woods flapped when the storm of his breath
rushed forth;

The summits rang, and the chasms roared;
An eddy shook the tumultuous north;

And the shuddering south looked up with a cry ;
And the dancing east made shrill reply,

Like the whistling sweep of a shearing sword,
To the shouting west ; and afar and anigh
Was a riotous rapture of tongues !

And the swift land leapt like a bird and flew
With the whirling sky with a *Phe-ew !*

Up and over and down the heather,
Hand in hand with the boisterous jester,

I sped, a spirit, we together,

I and the wild nor'wester ;

With a resonant crew we flew — we flew !

Shee-hoo ! - hue-hue-hhue !

And slow time waved us a wild adieu :

Whoo-hoo !

Ho the wise weather !

Hail the wild weather !

Hu-hu-hue !

THE MAD MOTHER

Time, sunset. Scene, an old country churchyard with several ancient yew trees ; fir copse and hill in background. A woman passes erratically to and fro among the graves. At intervals she talks to herself, and occasionally calls aloud. An echo answers. As the poem proceeds, the scene gradually darkens.

WHERE roams the vagrant? Hoy! Annette!
(echo) *Annette!*

Annette! Annette! Would'st fly thy mother?
(echo) *Mother?*

Ay, marry, merry-heart, child of this blood —
So temperate now, and of these bones!
(echo) *These bones!*

Ha-ha! she mocks, my joy. Annette!
(echo) *Annette!*

Day goes, comes golden quiet to the hill,
Hushed shadows to the graves. Annette, trip, trip!
What will ye, wanton, toying with my love.

I cannot find my fay ; but the moving winds,
Like widows whispering of their husbands dead,
Will lead her homeward soon. Annette !

(echo) *Annette !*

Loss has sweet eyes. You do not understand
How wise grief makes one, or how kind she is
To minds of mothers when their children go.
Trip, trip, my honey, trip. Annette !

(echo) *Annette !*

I'll catch thee, mischief, ha-ha-ha !' (echo) *Ha-ha !*

'Tis a hard world where live men sit a-cold.
O, I have seen hearts hung with icicles,
And frozen through. But my sweet child and I
We love this holy nook of murmuring bells,
Where the full hours go by with drowsy chime,
And, purring, pass into the sleepy land.
I love my child, and tender Christ, I love
This gentle church beneath the tousled hill
Close by whose mossy wall my only one
Lies, long-time lies, and never stirs at all
Because of unkind hearts. But when none sees
She creeps out like shy flowers do, stealthily,
So glad to see again the waving world.

She is so patient always. Night and morn
Move over her ; the sunset and the dawn
Steal with their gracious stillness to the place ;
The understanding breezes come and go
With all their pretty gossip at all hours ;
She hears, but no word speaks ; she only smiles
Her winsome morning smile as she is used.
When through her curtains peeps the frolic moon
And blinks a-tween the fir trees' dreaming tops,
And the wise owl from out the belfry stares
At the dark names upon the sad white stones
Here in the witch-light, then the amber bees
And golden, glittering butterflies of God
Flutter across the ceiling of the world,
And there she lies clapping her pretty hands,
And smiles at God and me. Oh, marry now
She has such mates, you'd never guess their
names !—

I planted three white snowdrops close to her
Last autumntide for company ; I thought
She would feel lonesome when the snow was down,
When the frost made a stillness in the ground,
And hushed the buds asleep, when on the bough
No sweet bird sang. And very glad she was

When in the timid February sun
Three milk-white nodding faces bobbed to her.
Some daffodils I set too at her feet
To dance for her, and yellow crocuses
Just at her head, more golden than her hair ;
And nigh her hands I put some violets—
You know they *think* so sweetly—Poor, pale
 hands,
Such loving, clinging hands, they creep like
 thoughts
Into my heart. O, she is quite content,
For I come very often night and day
To talk to her, to bring such things as grow
In hedgerows wild that she remembers well—
Pied orchis, and the wood anemone,
And asphodels from spots haunted of heaven,
Faint milkmaids, too, from meadows lush, dew-
 drenched,
Where all the summer-night the landrail calls,
Lending to earth's long loneliness a voice ;
Flowers that she loves from spots that love her
 feet.

We like to steal of amber eventides
Into the quiet aisle when none is there,

While the rich colours reach along the walls,
To sit as once we used in the good time.
But much we fear the stern-faced priest of God ;
He loves not us. But most he hates my child,
Saying that she is dead. Is he not hard
To speak unkindness of my little one ?
I love Christ, and my child. I never go
To service now — he speaks against my child —
He says that she is *dead*, Ha-ha ! (echo) *Ha-ha !*
But on cold sabbath nights when there's no moon,
And frozen stillness wraps old winter's bones,
While all glows bright within, to this dim spot
I steal past the grand window at the east,
Where the proud saints sweep by in splendid flame
Up a great slope of glory toward their god —
I love not their proud god and the hard priest's —
And to this dusky place, where no foot comes,
Under the yews I creep to my Annette,
Waiting so still and patiently ; and while
The whistling north beats the bald hill, and
shakes
The copse and all its creaking skeletons,
And good folks worship warm, we, crouching,
watch

The little window by the ivy-tod,
That no one looks at, where the tender Christ
Sits with bright arms about his feeble ones.
Where roams the pretty winsome? Trip, Annette,
The solemn night is tumbling down the sky,
And passionate clouds, like rich men angry,
Come to threaten widow's babes; cold rain will
 beat,
And winds blow wild on heads unhoused, and
 heaven
Is far, honey, when no stars peep. O, 'tis
A wide, wide world for little feet to roam in,
And dangerous—there are so many graves,
And darkness grows, and loneliness. Come soon,
Thou hast stolen so far from home, my only one.
Trip, honey, trip. Annette! Annette!
 (echo) *Annette!*

THE WOOD WHERE GOD THINKS

I LOVE the shy, green-drenchéd wood
Where shadows pour from pensive boughs ;
It meets my steps with tidings good ;
We two have ta'en the same deep vows.

It welcomes every thought I bring,
Responds to every human touch ;
It seems, like wisdom old, a thing
Serenely mild that's suffered much.

Its green a spirit-balsam yields ;
'Tis cool as morn on Enna's sod ;
Fair as the faint and happy fields
Where play the may-white lambs of God.

Its gloom is like some priestly friend
That's hied from vaunting noonday's gold
To dwell alone and there attend
The shrines of sanctities untold.

That fond insistency of peace
Lies soft as love against my heart ;
There soul and sense from discord cease,
Merged by some spell of mystic art.

There noises are the breath of things
That steal through stilly doors of dreams,
Sounds wafted on translucent wings
With scents of immaterial themes.

There come on noon's quiescent breath
Unbodied lives that rest from light,
Shy secrets hid by lonely death
And cherished by enchanted night.

Oh ! blessings on this lovesome earth
That hath such blessings pure for me !
The dawns that in its dreams have birth
Leave dewdrops of eternity.

A blessing on the gentle ground,
On all the bland and beckoning trees :
Spoil not, nor taint the hush around
For heaven is fair with such as these.

Ah, come ye, come with washen feet,
And bring no plaint nor proud unrest ;
Tune to the sylvan mildness sweet
The rhythms of the braggart breast.

Oh, I will croon in the green glade,
And let my spirit closely press
Against the earth's ; or stand waylaid
By loving leaf-fledged loneliness —

And hear the bird-like silence sing
Which from God's heart that primal morn
Flew ere the world had taken wing
And all the singing stars were born.

I love the shy and shadowy wood
And all the wonders loitering there.
God thinks in my green solitude,
Peace watches with unuttered prayer.

PEACE

MUTE spouse of God, upon whose bosom lies
Time like a child, time of the fevered heart,
Out of this moment of mortality
Toward thee, O mild Unchangeable, we lift
Our hands, our faces mutable uplift,
Like waves that turn their pallor to the moon,
And plead in passing for thy kiss, O Peace.

Sage dweller on the sacred frontiers
Of realms the armoured years shall enter not,
Aloof from all the clangorous march of time,
From riot, and the ravishments of men,—
O, patient listener to the Innermost,
Flow from the noiseless places of the world!
From the deep valleys 'mid a thousand hills—
Where silence sits for ever 'mong her rocks
Poring upon impermanence, flow thence,
Flow from all haunted places where abides

The hush primeval. Come, O Peace, with power :
Strike a great muteness where vain clamour is ;
Flood all the dazed and dissonant courts of time ;
The voices shrill of dizzy vanity
Shame ; and the wanton counsels of the proud
Make dumb as battles that were lost of old.
O, come with power. Possess the breasts of men,
Till all the violent voices of the heart,
Like ghostly cries of lips remembered not,
Cease, and, the body laid a-hush, awakes
The spirit with the clinging eyes of God
And peers through time to wisdom.

Mother of truth,
Mild nurse of all immortal attributes,
Mother of thought, O bid men *think*, and *be* !
From tumult draw our errant steps apart,
And steep our deeds in silence.

Our might is mated to abortion ; we
Have sworn allegiance to a little dust ;
We have no live alliance with the world ;
But unto discord pledge us evermore,
Drawing uneasy breath. On every hand
Through all the fields of mute immensity

A myriad orbs revolve in harmony,
Nor fail, nor falter, without end serene ;
But men, wild captives in a tiny star,
Distrusting all things, craving all things, torn
With rude distractions, piteous, and afraid,
Fret themselves blind, and in their puny hour
Hunger, and feast, curse, laugh, strive, cringe, and
die,

Strange to the Power before whose brooding face
The tremulous eons pass like insects' wings.
We are like infants playing in the sun,
That boast and threaten by the ocean's marge.
Our pride is based upon the soft sea-sand :
The wide waves gather, and the wild winds rise
And beat it and consume. We toil, and toil,
Grave children of illusion, and grow old
With futile cares ; and still the hungry deep
Drives on, and on, and swallows all. Our hopes
Return to us like sighings in the wind,
Like griefs unhoused,—that, unresting ever,
Moan at the midnight upon lorn sea-shores.

O let us turn from sad futility !

For, lo, our wills like withered leaves are blown ;
Our feet are set upon incertitude ;
Our boasted courses lead to a purblind power,
Toward dreams foredoomed, and passions profit-
less ;

And in our homeland, homeless with their tears,
Friendlessly still our festering kinsfolk die.

O ! let us turn from loud futility !

From guile presumptuous of confounding tongues
Turn to the natural mandates of the heart.

A word is whispered down the wandering sea,
And Peace hath heard it in her haunted hills,
Upon her plains, and 'mid her trancēd pines.

Hope, risen 'yond the waters of the west,
Hath fired a hope that lightens through the world !

Gladness is kindled on wide-sundered shores ;

And faces turn toward faces far ; and eyes

Yearn unto eyes, remembering the Kind ;

Hands reach for hands, and hearts are calling
hearts

Like lovers o'er the waste and weltering brine.

The Spring is come: time trembles with a
dream!

Again, leal prophetess of golden hope,
She wreathes with nuptial green th' espous'd
lands;

Glad mated birds build in the budded boughs,
And make the air a medley of sweet sounds;
The wistful primrose with a trusting gaze
Sues the full South. Through all the meadows
mild

The balmy gales are moving. Here and there
The violets waken in the warming woods.
Young April, with the laughter in her heart,
Tosses her twinkling kirtle on the hills;
And May, aloof upon the faint sea-verge,
Comes with the blowing shower-shine in her eyes,
Comes like a lover to a land of love.

O, shall men loiter with dull churlish souls,
With hearts discordant set on muttering wars,
Now, when bright mists are through the moun-
tains thronging,
And all the meres are married to the sun?
Now, when the spring doth prophesy the prime?—

Grave voices plead from green tranquillity ;
And lands, turned joyward, fondly crave for Peace!
Like a great sigh goes up continually
To all the listening sanctuaries of heaven,
To all the thrones and senates in all lands,
From the myriad-hearted nations—*Peace! Peace!*

Awake, O Time, the vernal days are come!
Awake, O World, the Lord of life is nigh!

Mute Spouse of God, upon whose bosom lies
Time like a child, time of the fevered heart,
Toward thee, O mild Unchangeable, we lift
Our hands, our faces mutable uplift,
Like waves that turn their pallor to the moon,
And plead in passing for the gift of *peace*.

GEORGE THE KING

CORONATION NIGHT

THE latest King in time is crowned,
Hailed by a matchless empire's lips,
Proclaimed to every ocean's bound
With salvoes from a thousand ships.

The pomps, the plaudits melt away ;
Like clinging pride of storied wars
They drift, the dust of yesterday,
A moment 'neath the steady stars.

On nipples of unnumbered hills
The lonely beacon-glow expires ;
Lost in the downs the desert rills
Alone salute the stellar fires.

Hushed is the hamlet, dim the hall ;
The smouldering city masks her eyes ;
On shadowy shores no sound at all,
Save where a wave frets once and dies.

Through velvet darkness no foot goes ;
The regal tale is wholly told.
The sleep is on the wild-wood rose
That laps the bones of Kings of old.

A King—a man. God, bless the King !
God, bless our kind whate'er they be !—
Lo, it remains a royal thing
To love *all* men with loyalty.

Not in the panoply of power,
'Mid sullen hush of war's surcease,
Came he, but to his crowning-hour
Passed with the comely pomp of peace.

He bowed in that mysterious fane
Where centuries, tranced in death, appal,
Doomed to the glittering cruel chain
Of kingdom—he, the heir to all.

Above him glory ranged the height ;
About him throbbed the pealing praise ;
Beneath lay crumbled lords whose might
Made majesty in lonelier days.

He stood before a people's face ;
Their homage scorched him like a flame.
Sole-seated in his awful place
He felt the burthen of a name.

Awe gripped him like a phantom hand :
The surge of history upward cast
A hundred ghostly kings that stand
Stupendous, throned on perils past.

Came peers and prelates minist'ring ;
They led him to a pride apart.
Pale in his splendour sat the King,
Lone with his kindly, human heart.

Augustly mild, he knelt him down ;
They made God's sign above his head ;
They crowned him with the awful crown :
Dread thunder drowned a hush more dread.

He moved a subject in a dream,
A stranger to his own desire,
Urged down some proud imperious stream
By fateful forces harsh as fire.

From England's Abbey grand and dim
He rode the roaring London day ;
The lightsome noon was vague to him,
Aloof as pleasure passed away.

Came clouds of faces, tides of cries ;
His flushed heart felt a storm of cheers ;
A mist was in his absent eyes,
And faint, far memories in his ears.

He rode the pleasancesses of praise,
And loitered in the paths of flowers ;
And drifting down the dædal ways
He took the dalliance of the hours ;—

But he was leased to giant care,
And loaned unto an endless quest ;
In brilliant bondage doomed to wear
The livery of the world's unrest,—

Aloof in pleasure and in pain :
 Made alien by a high decree
To joys that simple lives attain
 In homelands of felicity.

On passed the King. The reeling skies
 Rolled thunder to the noon's wide brim.
On 'mid ten million hungry eyes
 A haunted silence followed him ;—

For who in all of thrilling time
 Shall calm the cares that gnaw his breast ?
The burthen of his fate sublime
 Bear ? or add slumber to his rest ?

Lord, help all exiles set on thrones,
 Sold unto care by deathless vows,
Whose feet ensanguine jewelled stones,
 Whose splendours scar their patient brows.

A King—a Man. God lead the King !
 Oh ! haste the kingly race to be !
To all the thrones of nations bring
 Souls that are sealed with sovereignty !

Thrice-weighted is the crown of care
To him who holds a people's trust,
Yet, watched of all, is doomed to wear
The sad impuissance of the dust.

The Georges speak not from the past ;
A greater George, God grant, is ours —
Potent, compassionate, bravely cast
To ride the world's impetuous powers.

'Tis love that makes a land to sing :
Should he our loyal lover be —
Oh ! live our gracious lord the King
Till Britons all are free !

Flown the bland interval of dream.
Return life's rude, diurnal things.
Time's flaunting joys that kingly seem
Are fleet as hopes that mock at kings.

Far off the brave imperial day
Speeds down the void. The pride that shone,
Whirled on eternal wheels away,
Dips to the dawn-gleam — and is gone.

WILL - O' - THE - WIND

HE was like light in a well clear ;
Like noon on a high hill ;
Gay-tranquil as a starlit mere
When winds are still ;
Great gales he loved, the workings proud of the
world's will.

He tramped the cloud-wreathed moorlands grey ;
His life was brave and free
As a gull's that sweeps the streaming day
Blown in from a stormy sea,

With a crooning heart he lived alone
In wastes of the wide heather ;
He'd sit as mute as a moorland stone
For dreaming hours together ;
And he was loved of lives that roam in the wild
weather.

And no man asked him whence he came,
Or probed his quiet mind :
He moved in mystery ; and his name
Was " Will-o'-the-Wind."

Will-o'-the-Wind, hale Will-o'-the-Wind !
When you in time were young
The quest was still for a limpid mind,
For songs from a silver tongue ;
And you were flushed with the great themes that
the gods had sung.

But a fever seized on the heart of man,
And the time-mist swathed his eyes ;
And he fled in fear from the earth, and ran
From the breadth of the lone skies.

But you to the heart of earth were given,
And moved, a gentle guest,
Beneath the benison of heaven
On a brave land's breast,
And felt the calm of the large East, and the call of
the great West.

Here, when hot night held all the hill,
You'd sit with open doors,
And see the stars' pale mistress spill
Wide gleams toward forest floors,
And ships steal on to haven down the faint, far
shores.

From noisy life aloof you stood,
As one who scans the whole,
And feels through all his buoyant blood
The tides eternal roll,
And the great deep and the great height soul of
his soul.

You lived as fearless as a star,
And drew the larger breath
That knew no *near* nor any *far*,

That moves through life and death ;
You held that all the flux of time is a word that a
god saith.

Will-o'-the-Wind ! Will-o'-the-Wind !
With weary feet men wend
And leave their happiness behind,
And follow without end
A fatuous flame, and in all time have no immortal
friend.

Lone spirit of the dappled waste,
Life drenched with natural joy ! —
Aloof from all the barren haste
Of days that but destroy

The livelier hope, the lovelier heed
Of things benignly given
To foster faith and force, to breed
Lives not too mean for heaven !—

Oh ! from the beam-world where thou art
Speak through the dusk, and be

A power upon the pensive heart,
A subtle minstrelsy
Commingling with the moor-wind and the far cry
of the sea !

Indeed oft thus I hear you call
When the deep vales are still ;
Your voice is in the cataract's fall,
In the echoes on the hill ;

You are persuasion in sights fair ;
Your spirit-face I spy
In the lone tarn when the moon's there
And the hush of the sky ;
You pass me softly like a dream that cannot die.

Lone wanderer through the infinite,
The earth is lonelier now
Than in the days when we would sit
On the grey moor's brow,

And follow far the after-flame
Beyond the dimming shore
And the dun deep till the moon came :

It was gladness went before,
It was joy that followed after in the days no more.

Your dust is in its valley grave :
But you have left for me
Your spirit in the wild wave
And the flung tree ;
And all the earth is glad that you were fearless and
free.

Still you will take me by the heart
In the placid golden hours,
And lead me to a world apart
With fairer dews and flowers ;

And we shall see great sunsets pass,
And rarest dawns arise,
And gaze from out enchanted grass
In a grave god's eyes,
And peep in worlds beyond all words with a wild
surprise.

Forgot shall be the name I found,—

Dead, perished out of mind! —
On the grey stone with the yews round
Like sorrows blind ;
A *living* name shall be your own — *Will - o' - the -*
Wind !

Will - o' - the - Wind, fare - you - well.
Will - o' - the - Wind ! hail !
Commotion's in each moorland dell,
And a voice in the rousing vale !
Come in the racing clouds, Spirit ! Ride the good
gale !

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS MORNING

An interior in Bethlehem. The mother of the child Mary — later called Mary Magdalen — is preparing the morning meal.

THE MOTHER (*alone*):

WHITE she seemed as Hermon's snow.
Joseph's wife is Joseph's woe. (*Her
little daughter enters hurriedly.*)

CHILD:

Mother, there are wondrous things
In the stable over the way.
All last night bright whirring wings
Hovered in the air, they say,
And grave wise men and great kings
Entered Bethlehem ere the day.

MOTHER:

Little maiden, run and play. (*Child goes.*)

MOTHER (*alone*).

Lord, forgive her. May she win
Peace. They spurned her at the inn.

(She turns to her work again. Enter child, as before.)

CHILD :

Mother, there's a wondrous light
Shining round the stable wall ;
And a lady, angel-white,
Lies there in a cattle-stall ;
And the Kings have brought to her
Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

MOTHER :

Run away, child, trip away.
Get those dreaming wits awake.
Tut ! such nonsense ! Run and play —
There ! you've caused the cruse to break.
Run away now, run away ! *(Child goes sadly.)*

MOTHER *(alone)* :

Gold, and gems, and costly spice,—
Mary, of thy shame the price.
How the child talks ! Heaven prevent
From *such* sin my innocent. *(Turns to her task
again. Re-enter child, excitedly.)*

CHILD :

Mother ! Mother ! come with me ;
Peep in at the stable door !

Three Kings kneel there patiently
 With their foreheads toward the floor !

(Plucking her mother's dress.)

Mother ! Mother ! come away !

MOTHER :

Tiresome prattler, run and play. *(Child goes
 very sadly.)*

MOTHER *(alone)* :

Nomads loitering through the lands :

Wanton hearts and idle hands.

Childish gossip. I'll be wary ;

Sinners fuss round wives like Mary. *(Looks out
 into the street.)*

How my pretty bird romances ;

Nothing sees she save her fancies. *(Resumes
 her work. Child enters again excitedly.)*

CHILD :

There's a radiant angel-boy !

How I love Him ! Let me take
 Straight to him my favourite toy —

Just this once — for my love's sake —

(Cajolingly)

Pretty, let me,— just for joy.

MOTHER (*kissing her*):

Silly little winsome! Go,

Kiss the mite that you love so. (*Child runs out
with toy. Mother alone*):

Sinless infant, born to woe.

God of David, cleanse *her*; make

Her heart clean for her babe's sake. (*Turns to
her work. Child re-enters, flushed with
excitement.*)

CHILD:

I have kissed His lovely mouth.

Stood the Kings thereby,

The grave, grand Kings from the south,
And the sages nigh.

My one little gift He took,

And He crooned a pretty croon;

And it seemed that He could look

Into darkness, like the moon,

For He gave a cry distressed,

And it hurt me in the breast —

MOTHER (*perturbed*):

Child, there home within your eyes

Themes for sorrows and for sighs.—

CHILD (*impatiently*):

His white mother smiled to see
How His wee hands clung to me. (*Points to a
mark on her wrist.*)

MOTHER (*alarmed*):

Look! your wrist with a cross is sore,—
Brand of sinners! Go no more! —

CHILD (*ecstatically*):

O, the wise men bowed before me,
The Kings spilling fragrance o'er me,
Kissed my hair at the stable door!

MOTHER (*distressed*):

Child, 'mong sinners go no more!

CHILD (*tugging at her mother's dress*):

Pretty Mother, come and see! come and see!

MOTHER:

Little lamb, bide thou with me

In this fold of fair content.

Here Jehovah wardeth thee,

And thy hopes are innocent.

Love is sweet and life is wide,

Weanling lamb, abide.

Go no more, my child, no more.

CHILD (*with distress, pleadingly*):

Mother! Mother, just once more!

Just *once* more!

MOTHER (*firmly*):

Child, no more!

CHILD (*crying aloud piteously*):

Nevermore! O, nevermore! (*The mother, weeping, gathers her in her arms. They go out.*)

AN UNKNOWN VOICE:

In the years we meet again.

I am Now, and I am Then,

Mary — Mary Magdalen.

By the way that thou shalt go,

In the winter of thy woe,

Thou shalt see and thou shalt know,

Thou shalt know and thou shalt see,

Stricken 'neath the dreadful Tree,

On that day when thou shalt cry

Up the dark to the Most High,

While a terror-scourgèd sky

Fulmines over Calvary.

TWINKLEDEW AND TINKLETOE

H EY, Twinkledew ! my frolic sprite,
What mischief's in your heart to-night ?
What prank, romp, riot, impish glee ?
What laughter-guarded mystery ?

You twinkle here, you sparkle there,
A mortal lightsomer than air ;
Your witching glances seem to glass
The tricks of pixies as they pass.

If you were quite as tall as I—
Full three feet nearer to the sky —
You'd wonder how grave time and you
Should treat an elf like Twinkledew :

For here beside your cot I sit,
A grey old grumbler, wanting wit,
Who cannot grasp the elfin mind,
The thoughts that tickle fairy-kind.

O, pity a poor gnomish heart
That fails to feign a pixy's part,
Delighted with your witcheries coy,
Yet alien to your secret joy.

But in the lights of those wild eyes
'Twere ghoulish to philosophise ;
And so we'll frisk a moment through
The wonder-world of Twinkledew.—

Hey-presto ! Lo ! the earth whisks by !
Upon a bat's webbed wing we fly ;
Fantastic signposts pointing stand
With, *Ho ! this way to Fairyland !*

But, Twinkledew, they're sure to say
When we drop down in elfin-day,
“ Why, look !—there comes with Twinkledew
Antiquity !—in trousers, too ! ”

“ O, never mind,” cheeps Twinkledew,
“ Dey’ll quite forgive, I telled dem to.”
Swift past a score of stars we’ve spun,
And now we’re spinning past the sun.

With eyes bewitched, and mouth agog,
I fear I look a golliwog—
I feel an old one,— help me— do !
I’m strangely wobbly, Twinkledew !—

If you but touch a sweet mouth’s tips
Whereon have pressed Titania’s lips
They say your years fly far away
And leave you for an hour a fay ;—

They say you then remember quite
How you were wrapped in moonbeams white
And housed in flower-bells very small
Ere you had human legs at all.—

There ! Now I feel as brave and strong
As joy within a skylark’s song !
See ! swift to meet us come in crowds
The lovely, laughing, leaping clouds !

Look! look! far down beneath us blow
Enchanted fields of long-ago!
Ah, surely 'tis a merry crew
Awaiting us, my Twinkledew.

Already I have clean forgot
All that made dull a mortal's lot,
And by a fay with flitting face
I wander in a wondrous place.—

Saint Puck!— Why 'tis the land I lost
O, long, long since!—the seas I crossed—
The realms I conquered!—can't you spy
The wonder-wood against the sky?—

There when I was a youth of three
Hoofed Pan popped in to dine with me;
(Pipes the sweet quiz, "How long ago?"
I sigh, A hundred years or so.)

'Twas there the funniest creatures grew
That ever walked or ever flew;
'Twas there a strange old lady dwelt
With head of wood and feet of felt;

'Twas there I frisked in wanton joy,
A goblin now, and now a boy.
Speed, Happy-heart, like fancy free,
We'll rove the wilds of Faëry!

I know a tangled meadow-stream
Where lazy lilies lie and dream,
Where all day on a lichened stump
Doth pore the wise old Willow-wump.

O, paths I know that pixies tread
At moonlight on their way to bed;
And mossy spots in ferny dells
That ring with elfin bridal bells;

And there at star-time we will go
And hear the elfin bugles blow;
And, hidden, crouch and listen deep
To tales that flowers tell in their sleep;

Or chase the gossip winds that pry
Round petal beds where pixies lie;—
Along! along! and roam with me
The happy hills of Faëry!—

This way ! this way ! O, up and down
We'll wend by many a winking town !
In whispers let the wee folk know
That I'm old Robin Tinkletoe

Come back again awhile to stand
Among the lights of Fairyland :
They'll dance and shout, " Hoorah ! Hooroo
For Tinkletoe and Twinkledew ! "

And—. . . Hark ! There's nurse upon the stairs,
The tiniest nymph should say her prayers,—
Quick, Twinkledew, bounce into bed,
And say a fairy's prayer instead !

We'll take a trip another night,
Spy out the moon by candlelight ;
And pity folk who cannot go
With Twinkledew and Tinkletoe.

A FATHER TO HIS DEAD
CHILD

LITTLE one, pretty one, the wind was on the
water,

The river rippled onward crooning to the corn ;
In the way that we used we walked, little daughter,
And talked in the old-time morn.

And you held my hand in your wee, fond fingers,
And lisped in your old, wise way ;
And I read in your face—how the love in it
lingers! —

What the little wise tongue couldn't say.

And we sat by the edge of the sedge-grown water,
And you fell in my arms to sleep,
And I put you by—like a dream, little daughter,
And walked on alone to weep.

And I seemed so far from the old days wandered ;
And I came again to the sweet, still place ;
And I sought in my heart what the years had
squandered,
And stared in the dead past's face.

And there was the pool that you sailed your boat in,
And there was the cove where we sang the
rhyme,
And there was the cave that the robber was
caught in,
And the tree that you used to climb.

And there was the hole where you hid the treasure,
And the rock where my little one used to hide—
And your laugh came clear to the old, wild measure
When I peeped round the edge and—spied. . . .

It's all gone by with the winds and the water ;
And you with the rest gone too.
I sing no more into time, little daughter,
The songs that I used to do. . . .

There's trouble in the world to-night, my dearie ;
The wind is a wail, and the waters are wild :
And a lone man sits by his hearthstone dreary
And talks to his long-dead child.

TRESPASS

OR roamer in body, or rover in mind,
Be a man's life rich with reverent love
Let him ride like the jubilant wave or wind,
And range like the stars above ;
For the heights accede to the depth's desire—
That love in the world may take its fill
If love be lit at a sacred fire,
And soul be the lord of will.
And the depths accept what the heights concede—
That beauty lives for a strong soul's need.

Follow it ! hallow it ! by design,
Life that loveth it, it is thine.

I trespassed just as a man will do
When cares are light and the skies blue,
When the sun sits pranking branch and bole,
And the heart is one with the quickening soul.
Through the tangled wood I took my way
'Yond the smear and smirch of the common day ;
And ever about me as I went
Came the cooing of old content.
I saw the birch-leaves twinkling high
Like silver bees in the blue sky ;
The verdant larch-wood's misty bloom,
 With many a faint and feathery spire ;
The pine-tree's proud and brooding gloom
 Poised on a shaft of fire.
And here and there a glancing glade
O'er-splashed with sun and flecked with shade,
And aisles of twilight reaching deep
To downy darkness and old sleep ;
And so to the core of solitude came
Where silence lists for her own name.

Bearded with eld the pollards gray,
Like revellers at the peep of day
That reel and hiccup stumbling home,
With strange grimaces watched me come ;
They startled stood in curious guise
And stared with an antique surprise,
And to the woods grave quiet lent
The hush of their astonishment.
Then out of the dusk a terror broke ;
The grave oaks groaned, and grimly spoke.
A pheasant leapt with a hullabaloo !
The silence stuttered, and half the blue
Shook, and, surprised by the day's deep eye,
A stoat like a shameful sin slunk by.
Little cared I, little cared I,
Roving the wild wood under the sky !

Bursting now from a craggy glen
The landscape bounded into my ken
With wood, and waste, and valley, and stream,
And mellow reaches of limpid day,
With drifting clouds, and an ocean's gleam
Folding it far away ;

And o'er peace reared, by passion wrought,
Stark, dumbly violating thought,
A sylvan monarch, thunder-riven,
With torn limbs supplicating heaven,
High in the azure, far descried,
Stood like a martyr crucified.
On I fled through each haunted grove
Afire with ardour, aflame with love.
Before me lay at every turn
The lovely zephyrs asleep in the fern,
And mists of hyacinths blue as a lake
Wistfully waiting for these to wake,
And beauties about and beauties above
Enticed the wonderful vision of love—
Yea many a sight, to the soul referred,
That thwarts the snare of the subtlest word,
Whose shape, elusive as that of the wind,
Is caught by the spirit and missed by the mind.
On I pressed with devious feet
Through dusk primeval : loud was heard
The perilous boom of the blood's beat,
Or the whirr of a ghostly bird
Drifting by like a shadow cast
From a poisoning sin in the deathless past.

O how for his life shall a man atone

When he fronts himself in a hushed green place,
When stillness strikes to his inmost bone,

And the dumb earth stares him full in the face,
If he have not love for the boughs that bless,
And an intense love for the skies' caress,
If he have not love for the peace of Pan,
Rich love for the cosmical heart of man?

O how for his sin shall a man atone

When he fronts old silence alone—*alone*?

Deeper, deeper, and still more deep

I stole through the wild-wood drenched with sleep.
At every step the stillness bled

A sound, and half of the woodland swooned ;
And tense and eerie shapes of dread

Seemed listening for a wound ;
And the thrilled heart stood like a thing afraid
Of the noise by the drawn breath made.

Yet above in the air and about in the ground
A melody moved that was not sound ;

And the hush like a spirit leaned there and said
What is lost on the living but known to the dead.
Steeped in stillness, at length I came
To the inmost silence that hath no name,
That sentient lives, a vital part
Of Nature, and one with the thinking heart.
And dimly there in the central spot
I stayed where the flux of time was not ;
And, freed of the weight of the world's control,
I looked in the face of my own still soul
Silent, and saw in that radiant hour
Creation, in form like a splendid flower,
Glowing to perfectness bit by bit,
And the smile of a god was over it.
Thrilled with the vision in that lorn place,
 The greenwood round me wide and wise,
I sat with the soul-flush on my face,
 And the mists of the glory in my eyes,
And felt the rhythm that subtly runs
And links man's life with the soaring suns.

Back again o'er the velvet turf
 By cloistered paths I picked my way

Till plain to the ear as the white sea-surf
Sounded the human day.

O the gods rejoice when his instincts lead
A man aside for his soul's need.
And the good green world of flower and tree,
And the soil beneath him, the sky above,
Do follow his steps with sympathy,
Respond to his heart with love.
Little he cares for a human ban
Who carries the passport of King Pan,
Whose soul is made by the gods free,
Who has paid his vows to the gods to be,
Who has caught a secret borne from afar
That sweet earth croons to the morning-star.

But ye that love not go not there.

A terror haunts each dim, lorn, place ;
Lost in the wild-wood's depths, beware
The horror of his face !

Ye that trespass, beware ! beware !
For he stalks the heart with terrible eyes,

And he steals and steals with a ghostly tread ;
Him the fearful, false life vainly flies ;
Where no help cometh, like one that dies,
He is lone with his sin and the ogre that lies
 In wait for the souls that are dead.
Only the spirit whose cause is clean
Shall stand in the deep wood's core serene.

Ah, blest is he that dare journey alone,
Leaving the flame of his hearth-stone,
To follow the quest by desert ways,
 To follow the lead of his soul's desire ;
His spirit shall come to kindly days,
 He shall chant his joy with a deathless choir ;
Great love shall fashion his heart aright,
And he shall exult in the living light ;
Unforgetting, and unforgot,
He shall live by the Law and know it not.

THE PLAINT OF THE SICK SELF IN ISOLATION

*Back to the life-force ! Unify ! Unify !
Wed thy soul to the purpose universal ;
Deeply feel toward the well-spring of harmony ;
Upward live, and be glad. Trust, and cringe
not.*

There's greyness on the moors to-day,
And all the vales are dreary-grey ;
And great blind clouds come groping from the
west.

Doubt creeps to the heart of me ;
Sadness is a part of me ;
And earth, a sombre, thinking thing, is ailing at
the breast.

Trouble's in the world to-day ;
Hushed the grasses — cowed from play ;

Stilly is the foxglove's spire ; fearfully the lily
waits ;
And the plover, weirdly crying,
'Gainst the blue-black light is flying,
Like a soul blown, doomed and dying,
Past the glimmer at God's gates.

Dolorous the dull meads ; clouds, a scourged
funereal throng,
Ashen, huddle mutely, petrified of grief.
Grasshoppers are dumb now ; and dead is the
dove's song ;
Eerie hangs the trancēd leaf.
Menaced all the land lies, passive is the god of it ;
Breathless fallows plaintively plead against the
sky ;
Ah, the world is steeped in fear, every cloud and
clod of it,
Like a panic pain that cannot cry.

Shadows thicken over me :
Mutely, amid mystery,
Grief goes feeling after grief in hollow realms and
fay.

In the grey grass, eerily,
Crakes the lorn bird wearily ;
And the cuckoo sits in a drear tree
Sobbing its voice away.

Darkling where my soul broods, ghostly hands are
wringing now ;
Faces, blanched with perils, peer, yearning for
the day.

Woes more wild than mortals know through the
void are winging now

Mid immortal weeping far away !—

Ah, the near—it is so far,

And the far—it is so near,

I can see it like a star,

I can touch it with a tear ;

But I falter in the vastness—I, a spirit smirched
of fear ;

And the faint heart in its starkness

Cries forlorn in a great darkness

To the source of all of sorrow, and of sobbing, and
of pain,

Of all souls that strive in vain

With the burden and the bane.

And I fall from faith and wonder
On the dumb earth grieving under . . .
Loud about me booms the thunder,
 Live upon me beats the rain. . . .
Wisely on me, wounded lying, while the lightning
 bites the plain,
While the tumult rolls and roars
Down creation's shuddering floors,
 Beats the pitying, pleasant rain.

*Soul that is self-bound, turn from the darkness;
Sick is the lone life, the Whole shall befriend
 thee.*

*Live toward the vastness. Be glad. Trust,
 and cringe not.*

*Fainting, or failing, all effort is God-ward ;
Under and over thee strives the Eternal.*

A MOORLAND SHEPHERD

A MAN of meek and sudden silences,
With yonder-look—as though his feeling
mind

Reached out toward faint far thoughts; of billowy
build

And movement, bounteous limbed, th' epitome
Of the wide amplitude of moor and fell,
Of brackened wastes and heathy hollows wild.

His face a tale of friendly loneliness,
Of summer suns, of winter's serried rains,
Of spacious calms of amber autumntides.

The pensive murmurings of the thoughtful hills
Haunting his heart have made a music there,
So that his voice is like a melody

In lonesome places heard, sweet with gone dreams
And sad with sorrows that are no more seen.

Little he knows of this adventurous world:
To his lorn craggy kingdom 'mong the clouds
At wandering intervals come drifting up

Reports of things, of doings and of times,
Of strange ways of strange peoples, but they come
Like gusts and go, and are remembered not.
The loud events of life's heart-fevered plains
Dint not his mind—attuned to homelier themes,
Set upon nearer issues, humbler hopes,
And in a nameless manner visited
By large sensations—such as in the void
Exulting break at dawn and set of day
In stilly glory wide, that croon in the rain,
And in the tempest crash, and seek for ever
In man's abysmal soul a stirring-place.
The twisting paths those punctual feet have worn
Lead on through patience to a happy peace,
To quiet havens of hope and simple heavens.

That melancholy sequence grows not stale;
The varying days go round the changeless years,
The seasons leave their footprints at his door,
Strew bud and leaf about his cot, and go.
Above his roof the curlew of the waste
Cries eerily of wildness desolate,
But his heart dwells in calm. To his mild eye

The spreading panorama lacketh not
Excitements staid : serenely evermore
The dawn-mists steal among the cheerful fells
And wreathe some straggled farmstead or lone
fold ;

Through winter's frozen silence stares the moon
Over the lowland rack, and the fox barks
Across white ghostly leagues of solitude ;
The summer haze creeps through the fabled vales
Where fretful men abide ; the dusk drops slowly,
And in the dewy stillness odorous
The burns go tinkling through the feeling dark,
And o'er the desert miles the tiny towns
Mock with their sparklets pale the steady stars.
But he upon the plateaux of the wind
Stands 'mid primeval patience passively,
Like some strong spirit self-contained and lone
That, travelling down the dim inane, at last
Rests, hushed, upon the frontiers of a world.

Rarely comes foot into that wilderness ;
Companions has he, neighbour winds and clouds ;
The grey and tranquil landmarks of the waste
Are intimates that have their thoughts and speak.

He holds wise commune with strange timid things,
With little lives that shrink before his feet,
Knows all their simple virtues and their hours.
Stored with most curious lore his mind has too
Unshuttered windows open to the stars,
To all the spacious movements of a world
In perilous order poised, in utter peace
August, and haunted with eternity.
At times, as welcome as a gentle word
After long stillness, on a favouring wind
Comes borne the burthen faint of far-off bells,
Some hamlet's tale of marriage or of death,
And at his ear he sets a horned hand,
And listens long with mobile lips apart,
And eyes a-dream; and at his side his dog —
In that grey loneliness his brother-soul —
Looks up into his misty face with love.
And now and then some distant Sabbath-chime
Creeps through the hills and makes the silence
sweet :
And by his lonely hearth he sits him then,
While sunset scatters gold on whin and fern
Or rolls with conflagration through the fells,

And thinks slow thoughts of God, and time, and
 man,
 Of harmless pleasures past, and tranquil tears,
 And pats his dog ; then mutely sallies forth
 Amongst his ewes and wethers, grieving not,
 And down the lands the glory dies away.

HYMN TO THE MIDNIGHT

O UR way is into vastness : at the gate,
 Hinting the Whole,
 Stands midnight with the benison of fate
 Suing the soul.

I

Hail, holy Night, mother of memories
 Older than time, with all of distance dim ;
 To whom the stars like shining seraphim
 Hymn ever their eternal rhapsodies !
 Out of the dusk of this grave moonlit hour,
 Amid the haunting gentleness of trees,

And dewy grasses dim and drenched with ease
And fragrant with the mid-May's drifted flower,
To thee, O brooder 'mid great silences,
 We lift our praise
Born of the streaming dawns and fluctuant days,
 To thee—more vast than these.

II

August revealer of the infinite,
 That puts aside the silver veil of day
 And all the little tumults that have play
Within the narrow circle of the light :
Noon and its transient norms have taken flight :
 Quiescent in the infinite flux we sway,
Dissolved to thought, dilated, lost in thee
That art mute with the mind of God everlastingly.

III

Great stillness in the depth ; and in the height
 The unimaginable mystery.
O, thou dost gulf us in eternity !
 The paltry pride of personality

Is shrivelled in thy sight !
Immeasurable hosts with cressets bright,
Wide-pinioned for illimitable flight,
 Flame through thy noiseless naves, armi-
 potent Night,
And with high purpose speed
Toward time's diviner deed.

IV

Lo, we are tame with temporalities ;
 Are bowed in bondage to a little earth.
About us flame the mighty witnesses,
 Th' unwearied heralds of the vaster birth,
 But, diffident, we strain each outworn worth,
Or pine, impassive, at a deathful ease and die by
 mean degrees.
We have drunk some cool nepenthe to the lees
And have forgot the heart's regalities,
 Yea, have forgot our starry parentage,
 The heights—our heritage.
No summons thrills us in the wild wind's horn ;
 To us is borne

No quickening mandate from th' illustrious morn ;
Upon a lonely star our souls are left inglorious and
forlorn ;

But here in this wide hour

When day hath lost its guile and earth its power,
When all the world, ev'n as an amorous flower,
Doth sue the windy visits of the mind,
We touch a grandeur in the depths confined,
And in the heights made evident, and grow
Serene as time calm with a god, and go
With all the confident and strenuous flow
Of boundless being, and vastly feel and know.

v

Our day is like a thought that passes by
Beneath earth's drifting, transitory sky ;
Th' eternal calls us faintly—and we die ;
But thou art of the vastness beyond breath,
And the fleet little stillness that is death

Is swallowed up of thee.

Ev'n as the wave that croons upon the shore
Is merged in ocean's multitudinous roar

With all the rilllets liling to the sea —
Ev'n so, O Vast, shall we be merged in thee;
For all our steps are toward immensity :
High fate hath set a signet on our brows
And pledged us with irrevocable vows
Unto a cause that leads through stress and flame,
Through gloom, through glory, and through bitter
 blame,
 By wild and perilous ways
 Of passion and of praise
To puissance and to splendour beyond name.
Oh! feed our thoughts on greatness! make us free,
Leashed to, not cowed by, mortal transiency,
Fearless as suns that speed in jeopardy,
 That dive, that soar
Toward some far indistinguishable shore
 Upon the outmost marge of destiny
Victorious and exultant evermore.

VI

O space! O power! illimitable Night!
With scintillating suns all damascened and bright,

Sued of thy majesty
To sovran flight
O Night ! O Mystery !
With solemn ecstasy

We beat toward lambent citadels of light . . .
Far from us, far, the lily-lustrous day,
The flaunted splendour of the proud sunset ;
Borne are we borne mysteriously away,
Though memories of the earth are with us yet—
The scents of musk-flower and of violet,
The dew-pearl's shine
On fingers of the honeysuckle vine.
Wide are we wafted to enchanted ground
Where silence is the spirit of sweet sound ;
Yea, are up-gathered unto starry bowers :
From some supernal place
We hear the gentle drift of human hours
Like distant rain on misty fields of flowers
Across a dim land's face.
Far — ah ! so far it seems a dream — earth's breath
Is faint as love's fond whispers after death . . .
O, here 'mid groves of some diviner June,

While yet the dim and dreamily tinkling vale
 Waits its shy nightingale,
Under the moon—the mystic, minist'ring moon,
 This starry ceremonial we raise
 Of prophecy and praise
To thee, O Night! to thee meet rapture raise,
 Disclaimer of low deeds that wisdom shuns!
That spills on thought the gleams of wandering
 days
 Flung from unsighted suns—
And lifts us 'yond the moil of human years,
And fleeting verities, and flying fears,
 To hopes that lead us far
To holier havens, loftier loves, and grander tears
 In some sublimer star!—
O, warder of the altars of our gods,
Whose fires burn ever though frail wisdom nods,
'Yond dawns and days, athwart thy deeps we
 cry—
Oh! smite us into greatness ere we die!

Our way is into vastness: at the gate,

Urging the Whole,
Stands Midnight with the benison of fate
Beckoning the soul.

THE SEER IN THE DOOMED
CITY OF DREAMS

DAY long the golden city's drowsy chimes
Made mellow murmurings 'mong the lazy
limes ;

And, unperturbed, the mild magnificent hours,
O'er cloud-wreathed domes and faint sky-kissing
towers,

Sailed like rare dreams across the amorous day,
Floated like dreams on waves of sleep away.

There bronzed beeches, shot with sheen and shade,
Rich shadows made.

The regal cypress, row on ranging row,

Dreamed in the golden glow.

Mellifluent fountains dropped their gracious dews
In diamond lights down glimpsed avenues—
That led the sight to where, in slumberous motion,
Blue-gleamed a balmy, illimitable ocean,
Or where in sunlight flashed the threaded rills
Down the grey, olived hills.

In copious marble basins, tranced and proud,
Aureate in azure, hung each languorous cloud;
And everywhere the captured eye might see,
Enwreathed with floral vines and greenery,
Dim sheets of water where with double grace
Leaned beauty poring on her own fond face.
In burning bronze glowed many a glamorous story
Heaved 'gainst the lustrous depth of spacious
air ;—
Life, tossed in triumph, on his lips the glory,
Toe-poised on doomed Despair ;
All joy, pride, love, lived made immortal there.

In many a leafy-cloistered balcony
Sweet pipe and lyre made din ;
Soft dalliance spake, toying with ecstasy,

Through pipe and mandolin.

There queenly women loitered, proud to please,
And passed like radiant flames ;
Came low upon the faint and languishing breeze
Their lovely names.

And courtly men, like kings of fabled time,
Schooled in mild seemings and suave pleasantries,
Paused, praised, and passed, in that all-perfect
clime
At splendid ease.

Then, nobly-tempered, like a tremulous cry
O'er that blithe city bland,
Thrilling the transcēd muteness of the sky,
The dreamy sea and land,
From glistening belfries deep in shimmering air,
That white 'gainst sapphire shone,
Swelling on the wide noontide grandly there
Crashed the brave carillon.
Moving to music many came and went ;
All, rhythmic, swayed to swaying melody.
To soothe fastidious sense to dim content
Conspired all witchery.

Wheels sparkled past to soft and syren cries,
 Noiseless as lovers' whispers 'neath the stars ;
And at pale airy piers poised in the skies
 Touched the aerial cars —
And glided thence, and rose on argent wings
 That took the rainbow's ray,
And, like life's fair and insubstantial things,
 Vanished away.

Subtly diffused in the glorious afternoon
Came dewy draughts of coolness ; came the croon
 Of doves in misty immemorial trees.
No sound of striving, neither any sigh,
 Stirred 'neath that lucent sky.
And slow through amber pinewoods far away
 Stole the dim grey.

Now he that saw came to a grandiose Square,
With marbles rich and porphyry, and made fair
With tangled pride of iridescent fountains
That, 'gainst the rosy peaks of distant mountains,
Shivering to glory in a sunset haze,
 Fell cool with silver praise,

Or arched convolved like shimmering rainbows
shattered

And by a wind's breath scattered.

There all about him crept the evening's blush,
And plashing waters lisped an endless *Tush*.

Then he, with heart misgiving and oppressed,
Paused there, and read in characters of gold,
Flamboyant, 'twixt two soaring monsters scrolled,
Afar off manifest :

This is the Law. Obey : the breach is Death.

Joy rules this City. Here is all Content.

Here less than Beauty hath stern Banishment.

Let Pain depart. Disease, withhold thy Breath.

Mean Indigence, if here indeed thou art

Within the compass of these affluent walls,

Hide well thy haggard Heart.

The Paragon of Cities proudly saith

To break this Law is Death.

Through him that read that widely-flaunted pride
Grief and high anger ran.

He stepped apart in that blown eventide,

And from a windy eminence he cried

With tremulous lips and wan :

“Be thou accurst, false mother of fair lies!
City, proud-set aloof from stress and strife,
Dead to the splendid agonies of life!
O, barren Dreamer of the dream that dies,
Lo! even now flung dust from whirling doom
Sweeps toward thy tomb.
Magnificently dying, thou smilest well:
Yet in a little span
Thou art not; and but desert stones shall tell
Where Beauty murdered Man!”
And they that heard looked up with languid eyes,
And feigned a staid surprise.

Then that lone Seer in that deluded city
Of selfish dreams lowered his face and wept;
For through the world were stretched hands
pleading pity;
And woes, that in their misery never slept,
Wailed in great darkness to the empty stars;
And all the bitter bars
Of heaven were shut, and heedless man alone
Sat on God's throne.

The dusk crept home. From out that gorgeous
Square

A kindling orb hissed, soared, and high in air
Blazed an impassioned sun that withered sight ;
Unfolding all its spreading streamers bright
That vast corona of keen, blistering light
Drank up all shade from portico and tower,
And flamed unrivalled, a resplendent flower,
Far down the starry vistas of the night.

Sounds passed to peace ; only the waters made
A hushful music where the zephyrs played.

Belated in some lonely, luminous street,
On homeward-faring feet,

A girl with faded poppies in her hair
Crooned in the cool night air :

Dream! . . . Dream! . . . Love, and dream.

Time is but a gorgeous rose.

Dream! . . . dream, in thy gleam

Fadeth grief, and gladness glows.

Gleam, dream : Love's sweet theme

Ends with cold death's deathless snows.

Died eerily the last long-lingering word.

No late foot stirred.

Up the steep dark, unseen, the pale moon crept :
'Neath her own sun the lily-city slept.

But he, the hoar Seer with the burning heart,
Stood on his height, lost to the hours, apart,
Shadowed with thought . . . When darkness on
the hills

Tottered, and all the downward-tinkling rills
Swooned in the mists, and in the listening vales

Lapsed the loud nightingales,

He lifted up his thin hands through the night,
And raised man's bleeding sorrows from the sod,
And paced the mount of vision with his God,

And saw, as in dread light,

From the blind depths, up curdling darkness
borne,

A fiery vengeance breaking toward the brows of
morn,

And cried aloud with words that wailed and wept.

Deep, deep the city slept.

There was no soul that heard,

Nor any heart that stirred. . . .

Again deep trance engulfed him, and he saw

Dumb agonies that gnaw
Love, and sweet hope, yea all fair blossoming ; saw
Lean, loathsome shapes of evil — long-time curled
Snake-like amid the refuse of the world —

Rise hissing dire

With tongues that darted fire.

And, deep withdrawn, he heard a rending cry
As of patience scourged to madness. Seen
through flame

Pressed dazed battalions, lusting but to die
Toward victory, drunk with some new god's
name :

And he that saw marked one stand forth at last
Formless, but yet conceived of passionate form,
Saw him stand mighty, pinioned as with storm,
Stupendous from the throes of battles past,
Tyranny's bane, the dread Iconoclast,
And, horned with doom, blow a tremendous blast ;
And all the hearts that strained in the heartless
years

Heard, laughed, leapt up in wrath, and clamoured,
“ Hail !

Our woes shall judge ! Now let the strong
prevail ! ”

And hate made deaf all mercy at their ears,

And they had no more fears. . . .

Scorched at the soul, in pregnant agony,

Stood he in the white flame of prophecy.

The vision blanched; but as through smoke he

saw

A scaffold: an arraigner of dead Law

Confronted death thereon. Came a far hum

Whose burden in his ears was, *Martyrdom*.

It passed. Dawn stirred. With anguished heart

he wept. . . .

Drenched with rare dreams the doomèd city slept;

And through a breach of darkness tempest-torn,

Like some wild mænad for all fury born,

Rushed the red morn.

ONE, AND INDIVISIBLE

O, rushing wind, and rollicking rain,
And laughing rills on the lea ;
O, roaring woods that strive and strain,
And leaping, loud, live sea ;
O, whistling reeds on the storm-swept mere,
And shouting, shingly shore ; —
I am hale at the heart of you, far and here ;
I am soul of your soul evermore !
And the Power that feeds, and the Presence that
heeds,
Hath quickened us all of yore.

TO ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR

I

THOUGH we have looked on time with other
eyes

You still have laboured in the common cause
With us to weave in honourable laws
Man's wistful yearnings for a world more wise.
Apportioned oft by party, in the guise
Of policy, to quibble o'er a clause,
You ne'er have waved, to win the wide applause,
The trailing streamers of resplendent lies.

Upright in action, and in pleading pure,
In high debate serene—above abuse—
Your eloquence, with wit as swift excuse,
Glanced amid darkness with the light for lure ;
And twinkling fancies, put to friendly use,
Startled the ill, or slyly quipped the cure.

NOT yours the bludgeoned argument, the flare
 Of flaunted thought, shrill gusts of windy
 right ;

But the keen-glancing rapier-thrust of light,
 And bland translucence of the sunlight air ;
 The flame that dances on the deep ; the rare
 Response to subtle gleams and recondite
 Affinities of mind that startle night
 And lay the lambent core of question bare.

Aloof alike from greed and low content,
 You hear the whisper of the morning-star
 Of reason ; and are visited from far
 By vaster arguments ; and toward you set
 Thought-tides from 'yond these mists crepuscular,
 Where triumph's self is tinged with vague regret.

ANOTHER LOST LEADER

TO WILLIAM WATSON

Vide "Morning Post," Nov. 25th, 1910.

WHERE is the heart that cursed hell's
Abdul? — where?

From what abysmal darkness measureless
Cries this wan ghost — with hollow nakedness
Of phantom words beating life's palpitant air?
Drugged by what popped potion moans he there
Who sprang perfervid, on the winged stress
Of passion, 'mong the priestly powers that press
Flaming toward justice, bond to man's despair?

Better drink deep of death than slowly die
To men, and languish in a strenuous time.
O! better lift wild hands against the sky
And curse with impotent mouth some blind
control
Than weave the lotus-lie into unctuous rhyme
With paltering genius and unpinioned soul!

DEMOCRACY

WE stand amid a host of witnesses ;
Great leaders, poising in the clouds of time,
With luminous faces beckon ; lives sublime
Call from their tombs ; august auxiliaries
March with us : like the waves of the great seas
We press for ever toward the sweeter prime,
One with the stars and all proud things that
chime

Serenely impassioned : we are sons of these !

Out of the deep, out of the dark we rise,
A surging people, strong from copious tears
The present is like music to our ears ;
The future is like flame before our eyes :
O, we are stung with the rapture of the years,
And quickened with the dream that never dies !

TO A COMFORTABLE
APOLOGIST

S HALL fervour ape the knave's perfidious part?
And holy anger a pale suppliant kneel
At the mean feet of them that never feel
The passionate white angel in the heart?
Shall sacred Truth at her high altar start,
And blanch and palter like a thief, and steal
At every drunken hour's delirious heel
To flatter folly with a panderer's art?

Not till the last true man doth yield his trust
And drops his proud head fainting 'neath his
scars!

Not while on earth one prophet from the dust
Points with large vision to th' eternal stars!
Not till the Power that beckons and debars
Wipes from man's conscience His tremendous
Must!

TO OUR GOD OF BATTLES

MAKE strong our angers! let our hearts be
stored

With royal indignations of the wise;

Our thoughts from cunning, and our lips from
lies

Keep clean, O Lord, keep clean, O martial Lord!

So shall our hands touch not the things abhorred,

Nor our souls tremble 'neath Thy thunder-skies

In that wild hour when rings the voice: "Arise!

Don now thine armour, soldier, and thy sword!"

When flash Thy legions round these temporal
coasts,

And rocking kingdoms crash in reeking war,

When Hell entrenched in darkness hurls her boasts,

And the long battle joins from shore to shore,

Athwart the tumult riding and the roar

Shall speed Thy fiery athletes, Lord of Hosts!

AT MOONRISE

AN IMPRESSION IN THE GARDEN AT
RYELANDS, GRASMERE

THE breath of the firwood comes faintly ;
A melody trembles and goes ;
Dimly a dreaming cypress tree
Sways to a dreaming rose ;
The mists glide over the garden, and the great
moon grows.

A lattice clinks in the gloaming,
And shuts with a shudder of stars.
Lonesomely, drowsily roaming,
The melody's drifting bars
Commingle with the hushings of the dusky deodars.

No step through the night cometh.
The lone water in sleep
Lisps to its reeds; and hummeth
A torrent's muffled leap
Far in the mountains lonely where the dark lies
deep.

Note in the night that stirreth,
Voice in the vale afar,
Cressèd brooklet that purreth
Moon-tipped on a mossy bar,
Ye come through the gates of remembrance from
a lost Hesperian star!

Ye are steeped in the mystery of passion,
Ye are mild with the meaning of pain. . . .
Grown deeper, my soul in its fashion
Doth kiss the enchantress again:—
Ah! the sweets of the world are but sweeter for
the joys that were vain.

O voice through the dimness that calleth !
 Ah pang in the croon of the stream !
O past, 'yond the mooned lands that thralleth !
 Ah youth, with thy love, with thy gleam !
Dear earth, to thy dust life hath doomed us, and
 the long, long dream !

An owl in the pinewood is calling,
 It breaks not the spell of repose ;
A hush from the mountains is falling,
 And chill the night grows ;
There is mist on the mere and the meadows, and
 the moon's on the rose.

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